

CHAPTER 2

THEORITICAL FRAMEWORK

This chapter addresses a number of essential elements linked to the present research paper with the intent of enhancing understanding and context regarding the research questions. This will be followed by a discussion of the concept of discourse markers (DMs) in pragmatics as the linguistic area that comes closest to the issue of discourse markers (DMs), for it is fundamental to appreciating language use in context. The elaboration then proceeds to discourse markers and their definitions, the characteristics of DMs in Brinton's (1996) theory and lastly functions of DMs in the process of communication in particular according to Brinton's (1996) theory. Lastly, the last item of this chapter would discuss and review of previous related studies in relation with this research.

2.1 Discourse Markers in Pragmatics

Communication is a basic need for human beings; language is the medium for expressing ideas that help people share what they are going through and forge connections with one another (Keyton, 2011: 29). Word order, the arrangement of words to make a sentence, is based on the function of the word set by the language, such as nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs. These four sections of speech are essential to the way that sentences are written and understood, and the words adapt to the context in which they appear, often switching them to meet situational cues (Amer, 2024: 253). But there is still great opportunity for misunderstanding given that different people may have different interpretations of the same language depending on individual or cultural or contextual considerations. Enter pragmatics, the study of context in linguistics, which allows people to understand what is communicated not just in terms of what is said, but in terms of what is meant (Yule, 2000: 3). I believe that the study of pragmatics allows for an examination of language within a situational context which reduces ambiguity and facilitates communication. This practical view is especially important in the field of discourse markers which show how to change, control the turn-take of conversation, and convey meaning in other situations.

Pragmatics is one of the advanced fields of linguistics which explores the significance of context to language in use and tends to be referred to as an extensive approach in discourse studies. This discipline consists of three main ideas, which are context, meaning and communication and they build up a structure to study the applied linguistics beyond the literal meaning of the language. Pragmatics, according to Parker in Rohmah (2020: 18), is the study of language in relation to its users and emphasizes how language would convey meaning in a particular context, and how these contexts themselves could alter the interpretation of information. This perspective underlying pragmatics reveals the subtlety through which human beings communicate—meanings are not fixed; rather, they change with situational contingencies. Prutting (1984: 75), similarly mentions that pragmatics is the science of implicatures where context further enhances the use of language through the use of cues beyond the level of the word itself. This perspective sets pragmatics as one of the ways toward understanding not of what is said but rather what is meant; this often varies greatly with social or cultural backgrounds.

Within the scope of linguistics, discourse markers or DMs for short, play an important role within the subfields of pragmatics and discourse analysis. According to Yule as cited in Rohmah (2020: 18), there are four distinguished definitions of pragmatics, which are: pragmatic is a study to understand a speaker's utterance (speaker meaning); the study of contextual meaning; the study of how communication happens and what the speaker means (interpretation of meaning); and the study of expression to relative distance (Communication as action). Speaker meaning addresses the speaker's intended message, which means that a person's speech or utterances may have different meanings from the explicit words spoken. While contextual meaning shows that an utterance uttered by the speaker are related to the context of either where or when the utterance is uttered by the speaker. Moreover, interpretation of meaning is the study of how the listener gets communicated instead of what the speaker actually says. Lastly, communication as action studies that language serves as a tool for achieving social goals, such as persuading or affirming (Yule, 2000: 128). While Aijmer (2002: 12) discusses that discourse markers are used to indicate the relationship between utterances and also

to organize the text or conversation. Meanwhile, Kates (1980: 15), defines pragmatic as the study of how language is used in communicative interactions. Thus, in analyzing discourse markers compatibility, a pragmatic functions approach can be drawn upon. In deeper analysis, the researchers described the context of the conversation and measured it to gain a deeper understanding of how DMs functions.

Hence, pragmatics are associated with discourse markers, as the communication is under the control of these discourse markers. DMs have been studied as performing different pragmatic functions in conversation; their roles are contextually dependent with respect to the appearance of the DMs (Alami, 2015: 1). As an illustration, DMs have not been regarded as stylistic dwells or even as anything unnecessary to an interpretation but rather vital pragmatic aspects that oriented readers and listeners during conversation (Brinton, 1996: 35).

2.2 Discourse Markers

2.2.1 Definitions of Discourse Markers

In linguistics, many terms refer to the use of language, mainly referring to a conversational context. Some include the term "discourse markers." Discourse markers are specific words or sets of words such as "anyway," "right," "okay," "as I say," and "to begin with." These linguistic elements enable the links, structuring, and control of both spoken and written discourse while also displaying our attitude (Cambridge Dictionary, 2024). The discourse markers are typically composed of words or phrases which do not carry substantial meaning in a sentence; however, they are quite vital when it comes to the composition of discourse and guiding listeners or readers through a conversation.

Although discourse makers have been studied by many researchers, there is no commonly agreed upon definition of discourse marker. However, most scholars agree on comparable ideas in their analysis. Different studies have also recorded different labels for discourse markers. For example, Fortuno (2006: 99) mentions that different terms have been used by different researchers, such as pragmatic connectives, cue phrases, discouse signaling devices, discourse connectives and pragmatic markers. Discourse markers also remarkably contrast their definitions

across studies. According to Schiffrin 1987: 57), discourse markers are made up of a number of forms with a related set of word classes (conjunction (and, but, for) (where to be clear conjunction is understood broadly here and includes other word classes, e.g., interjections (oh), adverbs (now, then), and lexicalized phrases (you know, I mean). Schiffrin asserts that discourse markers are cluster of words in the phonological forms of conjunction, interjection, adverbs, and lexicalized phrases that function as linguistic expression. According to Redeker (1990: 367), a discourse marker is a lexical item or a phrase, pronounced in a certain way, whose primary function is to alert the listener to a certain type of connection between the following utterance and the immediately preceding discourse. For example, according to Redeker (1990: 369), a discourse marker is a word or phrase which creates a connection between the speaker and the addressee in a particular discourse. The other definition of discourse marker is come from Fraser (1999). According to Fraser (1999: 931), discourse marker is a lexical class mainly from syntactic classes such as conjunctions, adverbials and prepositional phrases. Except under certain circumstances they indicate a linking relation between the interpretation of S2 and that of S1. Discourse marker is an expression which can be a signal that takes on the use of certain forms of discourse, Fraser (as cited in Schiffrin, 1987: 117) also has the same idea about discourse marker. Similar to Schiffrin, Fraser has the same view which is expression as signaling use in some discourse.

In addition, Schiffrin in Rohmah (2020: 19) defines discourse markers (DMs) through two main frameworks: operational definitions and theoretical definitions. The operational functions refer to the practical identifications of discourse markers based on how they function within conversation to manage interactions and transition between ideas (Rohmah, 2020: 19). In this view, DMs are understood not as grammar or vocabulary items but as functional units in spoken language. As an example, Schiffrin (1987: 40) looked at linguistic markers such as 'well,' 'so,' 'and,' and 'but,' how they work in conversation to indicate points of transition, to link thoughts, and to clarify the relationship between parts of connected speech. Every marker comes with its own conversational cues — "well" is expressive of a change in direction or a note of hesitation, "so" indicates causation

or summarization, "and" is continuing, and "but" usually indicates opposition. Furthermore, Schiffrin's theoretical definition in Rohmah (2020: 20) places discourse markers within a larger discourse model focusing on the importance of discourse markers to the organization of discourse and discourse coherence. So this model is structured within five planes of talk: Exchange Structure (ES), the rule based organization of turns and interact in a conversation; Action Structure (AS) centered on the intentions and actions expressed by speakers; (Ins): Ideational Structure, the flow of content and ideas inside a discourse; Participation Framework (PF), which concerns about the role of the speakers and the listeners point of view in interaction (PF); and finally, Information State (IS), which concerns the knowledge and beliefs that participants share with each other. According to Schiffrin, these markers are crucial in live interactions where a speaker and a listener are constantly adapting and responding to each other, staving off miscommunication and making it easier for each party to follow the flow of conversation and comprehend what it is that the other person is trying to convey (Rohmah, 2020: 20). As such, Schiffrin particularizes how DMs can both serve in connecting ideas and at the same time how they are context sensitive and thus indispensable in the management of the highly interactive and real-time fluid nature of oral communication. Schiffrin as cited in Rohmah (2020: 20), asserts that effective communication arises from the integration of all elements of conversation, including the role of discourse markers in enhancing discourse coherence by positioning utterances within specific contexts of dialogue.

My study on discourse marker used a theory by a researcher namely Brinton (Laurel J. Brinton). Brinton (1996: 80) compared those with other discourse markers and assert that discourse markers have numerous pragmatic functions at both the textual and interpersonal level of discourse. In the communicative environment of language, discourse markers in a communicative act are fairly significant for speakers in allowing them to shed meanings upon the listeners (Brinton 1996: 79). Although the grammatical formulation of what the speakers utter is correct and acceptable but when the speakers omit 27 discourse markers, the communication still appears to be clumsily by non-native or unnatural. As Brinton observes, discourse markers are those lexical expressions whose function

is mainly to indicate the relationships between segments of discourse, rather than to enhance the propositional content (Rohmah, 2020: 23). They are used to signalize the speaker's intention, switch topics, or display an emotive attitude towards unfolding events in a conversation. DMs may not always contribute propositional meaning, they do ease the hearer's processing by indicating the context required for intend interpretation of the speaker's utterance and how it is relevant (Brinton, 1996: 78). So, DMs are phonologically small items that have little or no referential meaning, but they serve a procedural purpose or pragmatic. In this theory, Brinton use the term "pragmatic markers".

Although labeled discourse markers, or pragmatic markers, these linguistic elements are not primarily examined within written discourse or formal text, but rather in the oral context of communication, where they organize and manage the flow of real-time conversation. While much of the literature on discourse analysis addresses discourse structure in written language, the focus of research on discourse markers emphasizes their function in spoken interactions. Some researchers, including Brinton (1996) and Fraser (1999), consider verbal interaction to be the specific domain of discourse markers. Discourse markers (DM), which help to cue listener interpretation and coherence in speech (Brinton, 1996: 30) or add systemic labeling to the relationship between contextually related units of information (Fraser, 1999: 137; Halliday, 1973: 90) are some of the devices that can improve the clarity or flow of conversation.

In summary, even though discourse marker has countless definition, the idea of a discourse markers is never really going reach outside of the range of their definition. Related to the previous experts that explains the definition of discourse markers from their perspective views, I perceives that discourse markers are most probably a linguistics expression which serves as a connection to the meaning delivered in a language in a communication process, especially in oral communication. Such variation in terminology illustrates not only the range of perspectives existing, both domestically and internationally, within the field on some basic terms but also indicates variability in how DMs have been operationalized across studies. For this research paper, however, the theoretical framework will follow Brinton's perspective on pragmatic markers or discourse

markers. This methodology will limit the types and functions to those already described in Brinton's theory and narrow the focus on these elements as they pertain to DM usages within communication contexts.

2.2.2 Characteristics of Discourse Markers

In her 1996 work, Brinton introduces a framework for analyzing discourse markers (DMs), describing them as seemingly insignificant expressions often encountered in spoken language. Brinton as cited in Ramadani (2019: 23), has pointed out that DMs are one type of seemingly low-profile expression, which occur frequently in spoken discourse. Not all DMs, which are also called discourse markers, contribute propositional meaning. Rather, they step up to assist listeners in cueing in on the context needed to understand the speaker's words as they were intended, also on contextualization and relatability (Ramadani, 2019: 23). So, DMs are linguistically impoverished items with little or no referential meaning, but which may play a functional or pragmatic role. They assist in providing the necessary context for interpreting what a speaker meant when they said something. In this theory, the term "pragmatic markers" is employed by her. According to numerous scholars, the primary role of DMs is to indicate the significance of an utterance within the context. DMs are mainly found in spoken language rather than in written discourse. She counts 33 "pragmatic markers" among her inventory, including *ah, actually, after all, almost, and, and (stuff, things), like that, anyway, because, but, go "say," if, I mean/think, just, like, mind you, moreover, now, oh, ok, or, really, right/alright, so, say, sort/kind of, then, therefore, uh, huh/mhm, well, yes/no, you know, and you see* (Rohmah, 2020: 21). These phonologically small things are mainly spoken-discourse properties, and denote crucial elements used in negotiation of talk and contribution to contextual opacity (Rohmah, 2020: 21). DMs primarily stem from spoken rather than written communication. The prevalence of DMs can be attributed to the casual nature of oral interactions and the grammatical "fragmentation" arising from limited preparation time, leading to the practical use of pragmatic markers (Ötsman, 1982, 170).

Brinton in Ramadani, 2019: 23) argues that while DM has commonly been used to refer to "seemingly empty expressions found in oral discourse," she

proposes the term pragmatic markers, as pragmatic "better captures the range of functions filled by these items." (Ramadani, 2019: 23). Brinton recognizes the lack of consensus on what can be classified as pragmatic markers, yet she presents a list of thirty-three markers that have been studied and outlines various typical characteristics of these words. These characteristics were subsequently reorganized by Jucker & Ziv (1998: 21) based on linguistic levels: phonological and lexical, syntactic, semantic, functional, and sociolinguistic characteristics. According to Brinton (1996: 35) and Jucker & Ziv (1998: 21) as cited in Castro (2009: 60), the characteristics of discourse markers are classified as follows:

- a) Discourse markers are more prevalent in spoken language as opposed to written contexts.
- b) They are typically brief and frequently phonologically simplified.
- c) Their inclusion is discretionary.
- d) Discourse markers serve various functions and can operate at both local and global levels.
- e) They are positioned either outside the syntactic framework or loosely connected to it without a clearly defined grammatical role.
- f) Discourse markers are frequently found at the beginning of sentences, though they may always appear in such positions.
- g) They constitute distinct intonational units.
- h) Discourse markers are often viewed negatively from a stylistic perspective and may carry a certain stigma.
- i) They convey minimal or no propositional content.

Since the oral discourse is simply delineated by characteristics of speech, the information presented in that first classification may be deemed as factual. Usually, speakers do not have enough time to think about what they say in speech, and these discourse markers help the listeners understand the topics or messages they are trying to convey (Rohmah, 2020: 37). Thus, discourse markers work as spontaneous but necessary tools that cover underlying areas of not being intelligible to communicate live in a more fluent and connected manner.

2.2.3 Functions of Discourse Markers

Over the last three decades, the number of articles and books on discourse markers (DMs) has grown immensely, each arriving with different theoretical dimensions or approaches. This diversity of nomenclature underlines that they serve multiple roles in discourse. There is no consensus on how to label these pieces of language. Different scholars have studied these elements using other terms such as DMs (Schiffrin, 1987), Pragmatic Marker (Brinton, 1996; Fraser, 1996), Discourse Connectives (Blakemore, 1989), Discourse Operators (Redeker, 1991), Cue Phrases (Knott, 1993), Discourse Particles (Abraham, 1991; Kroon, 1995; Schourup, 1985)/Pragmatic Particles/Pragmatic Expressions (Erman:1987). Other, although rarer, terms are discourse signaling devices, indicating devices, Phatic connectives, pragmatic connectives, pragmatic operators, pragmatic formatives semantic conjuncts and sentence connectives. This variation in terminology illustrates not only that relevant literature includes diverse perspectives, both local and global, within the field on a core aspect of DMs but also differences in DM conceptions and applications across studies. For this research paper, however, the theoretical framework will follow Brinton's perspective on pragmatic markers or discourse markers.

Meanwhile, the theory of Brinton (1996) was used by the researcher in this study, which she views discourse markers as grammatically optional and semantically empty but not pragmatically non-optional or superfluous and perform various pragmatic functions (Rohmah, 2020: 23). Discourse markers are pragmatic markers that help express pragmatic meaning of something uttered in a discourse (Brinton, 1996: 34). Brinton elucidates that discourse markers not only fulfill the role of signaling discourse elements within the organization of discourse but also play a pragmatic role; the term pragmatic markers encompass a wider array of functions beyond just discourse markers (Brinton, 1996: 39). At the core of Brinton's suggested description of DMs as "phonologically brief elements that lack substantial referential meaning but fulfill pragmatic or procedural functions" (Brinton, 1996: 1) is the idea that DMs primarily operate within the pragmatic/meta discourse domain of communication and offer minimal to no propositional significance to the discourse's meaning. Thus, Brinton's main idea in defining DMs

as "short sounds that do not mean much but help with how we talk" is that they mostly help guide our conversations and don't add much to what's being said.

Brinton (1996) categorizes the functions of discourse markers (pragmatic markers) under two umbrellas: at textual and interpersonal functions (Brinton, 1996: 38). The interpersonal function of a discourse marker is inherently related to its textual function, so that the analysis of a discourse marker must take into consideration these two aspects. Discourse markers carry an inherent semantic meaning that affects how they are used in speech or discourse. Textual function has eight functions based on Brinton's Function Inventory and interpersonal function has two functions. As with textual function is mostly a concern of discourse coherence. Interpersonal function of Discourse Markers relates closely to the reactions, responses, and relationship bonds of the speaker during interaction (Brinton, 1996: 35-40). The DMs of Brinton's Dichotomy is a compiled list as such:

Table 2.2 Brinton's Dichotomy of Discourse Markers Functions

Category	Function
Textual Function	Opening frame marker
	Closing frame marker
	Turn takers (turn givers)
	Fillers (turn keepers)
	Topic Switchers
	Information indicators
	Sequence/relevance marker
	Repair markers
Interpersonal Function	Response/reaction markers or back-channel markers
	Confirmation-seeking marker, Face saver

2.2.3.1 Textual Function

Brinton outlines ten functions, classifying them into two primary groups according to the linguistic modes identified by Halliday as cited in Rohmah (2020: 23). The initial group pertains to the textual function, addressing the way in which speakers arrange meaning in discourse. According to Halliday in Rohmah (2020: 23), this includes structuring spoken or written communication cohesively as well as ensuring that each segment of discourse is interconnected in a manner that is both cohesive and contextually suitable. The textual function manifest includes the theme-focus structure of discourse, new information distribution and cohesive relations (Rohmah, 2020: 23). These cohesive relations consist of conjunctive relations, which couple text elements and are classified into 4 types: additive, causal, adversative & temporal. These relations make possible the discourse as a text with meaning not only words, but each word has the meaning in context (Rohmah, 2020: 23). Within the textual, Brinton takes this further by suggesting functions. For instance, as cited in Rohmah (2020: 23), they include signaling the beginning or end of discourse or change of topic (boundary-markers), aiding in written discourse structure through chunking, and turn-taking cues (spoken).

The eight elements in textual functions include opening frame markers, closing frame markers, turn takers (or turn givers), fillers (also known as turn keepers), topic switchers, information indicators, sequence/relevance markers, and finally, repair markers. Each element performs wider range of a function, and its definition and explanation may differ when practiced in discourse and governed by context and other influential factors (Rohmah, 2020: 24).

Opening markers open a new sentence or utterance. They are employed as a means of starting conversation and asserting the hearer has a duty to pay attention. Opening markers enable speakers to invite listeners into talk and indicate the start of discussion. Markers like 'ok', 'right', or 'well' function to position a listener toward what is coming next. Closing marker differ from frame opening markers, that are located at the finish of discourse. Depending on the context, their classification and role differ. For example, the marker 'right' is able to serve as an

opening marker at the beginning of a statement (as in example 4), but it can also function as confirmation seeker elsewhere (Rohmah, 2020: 24).

End of utterance/discourse indicates the use of closing frame markers. They mainly serve to signal the end of a turn, so it will be vocalized with more clarity that they are done speaking. Closing markers: e.g., *anyway*, *so*, *that's it*. Discourse markers are important for providing closure in discourse and how speakers seamlessly take over a given topic (Rohmah, 2020: 24). On the other hand, some DMs like 'right' or 'okay' may end an utterance but are not closing functions; they work to signal agreement and verification. The classification of these markers is largely context and interactionally dependent.

DMs such as 'okay', 'and', 'yeah', and 'well' are also used to assist speakers in turn-taking during speech. During turn-taking, the listener employs these markers as indicators that he or she is prepared to take the floor and reply to the speaker. In contrast with turn-giving, if a speaker uses those markers invites the hearer to give response and take their turn in the conversation. Both turn-takers and turn-givers help the participants of a conversation to organize who speaks and when (Rohmah, 2020: 24).

Turn keepers (fillers) are strategic pauses that enable speakers to preserve the space of conversation while gathering or formulating their ideas. Some speakers use fillers to occupy the floor or continue with their train of thought, especially when they still need time to construct their ideas. For instance, 'mhm' or 'and'. Even if this sounds like pseudo talk, there is an actual purpose behind all of this. Fillers may seem like something that doesn't add meaning, but we use them quite strategically to prevent gaps in discourse. In this function we frequently use utterances markers like 'um', 'uh' or 'you know' (Rohmah, 2020: 24). They indicate to the listener that there is still more from the speaker, so we could keep the flow of conversation and prevent interruptions.

Topic switchers are used to mark a change of topic or signals only partial shift. 'By the way', 'moving on', and 'now' are markers that signal a shift in conversational topics. This often took place in a conversation because it did not preclude the idea of their only being one topic at once, during any given

conversation. In other words, the switches where we saw DMs in use correspond to a shift from topic A to B (i.e., the speaker used DMs as switches). In academic discourse, we often use topic switchers as a way to structure systematic presentations or discussions (Rohmah, 2020: 25).

Information indicators were used to indicate information in its status of being new or given. These markers would be used based on the speaker's intention to communicate new information, or familiar information to her listener. This made it easier for the speaker to pass cognitively heavy information to a listener by employing discourse markers in this way. Furthermore, it helped the listener understand what the speaker is trying to say. Some examples of those words are 'and', 'because' and 'so' (Rohmah, 2020: 25).

One of the textual functions of DMs used to mark sequential dependencies were "sequence or relevance markers. These markers connect a conversation which is either logical or temporal. They connect ideas, so they are important to keep the coherence of the text. For instance, like 'so' 'and then', and 'because' link thoughts or stress relevance especially in complex or nuanced conversations (Rohmah, 2020: 25). The transition from one segment to another needs to be coherent — because of the specific ways how each segment relates with each other—, so we use words like 'then', 'after that' or 'since'. These are particularly helpful in narratives or explanatory where temporal or causal connections matter (Rohmah, 2020: 25).

Repair markers are used to correct or clarify what was said earlier. Examples include 'well', 'I mean', 'you know', and 'etcetera'. Such markers in the learning process of addressing misunderstandings or errors as to convey effective meaning. Repair markers are important for the precision of discourse in interaction, particularly in a fluid and spoken manner(s) (Rohmah, 2020: 26).

Examples of DM in textual functions as cited in Castro (2009: 66):

a) **Item = well**

(Line 1) S1: uh ↓Ok, and did you get any presents?

(Line 2) S2: yeah,

(Line 3) S1: ↑what?

(Line 4) S2: well

(Line 5) S1: [presents.]

(Line 6) S2: I: *for my mom a: portable DVD

Analysis:

In Example 1, 'well' is used as a discourse marker. S1 poses a question to S2 in line 1, which S2 answers in line 6. The student previously used "well" to introduce their response in line 4. In this instance, "well" functions as a **response marker** for the student and is therefore considered in the analysis. For instance, Brinton's (1996) theory mentions that the discourse marker "well" tends to describe textual functions such as the ability to organize information or to indicate changes in the text. Well, here is a response marker that signals the student is about to answer. It foreshadows their genuine response in Line 6 and shows them considering the question before replying (Castro, 2008: 66).

b) Item = well

Line 1 T (Teacher): Y-you (bis) went to VISIT your family.

Line 2 S3: *si*. yes. to visit ↓yes. ↓and no more.

Line 3 T: uh. ↓cool. and what about you Ester?

Line 4 S4: E: well, I sleep a lot.

Analysis:

Conjoining lines 1 and 2 we see the phrase "and no more" from student 3 mark the end of her turn. As a consequence, the teacher lands the next turn (line 3) on Student 4, who initiates their turn by means of the discourse marker "well" after a filler. The analysis of the data revealed that at times, giving up the floor is not explicitly marked by students; rather, teachers sometimes use discourse markers like "ok" or "well" to signal the end of a student's turn. The word "well" (E:) comes right after a filler (E:), which we can take here as holding the function of a hesitation marker. The word "well" functions as a **turn-taking** signal, opening their reply ("I slept a lot."). This lends credence to the conclusion that in this case where "well" is used as a discourse marker, it serves to signal that an answer will follow. In contrast to Student 3's explicit closure ("and no more"), Student 4 does not mark the end of

their turn. Instead, the implied simplicity of their statement ("I slept a lot") leaves the floor open for further elaboration or a follow-up question, if prompted by the teacher. The absence of a closing DM here suggests that relinquishing the floor can indeed be unmarked (Castro, 2008: 66).

2.2.3.1 Interpersonal Function

The interpersonal functions of discourse markers have been examined from a variety of angles in linguistic research. According to Hyland (2004: 20), this kind of metadiscourse is concerned with the projection of the writer/speaker's presence, with interaction and engagement with audiences. This interactional emphasis reflects the way discourse markers function in communication (written and spoken) as they affect the process, maintenance, and outcome of a discussion between interactants. Adapted from Brinton (1996), Aijmer (2002) and Hyland (2004) Kopple (1985), the interpersonal functions have some subcategories characterized of these nuances underlying connective roles in discourse. Basically, discourse markers fulfill interpersonal functions in a way that assists speakers in hedging from their utterances. These linguistic markers potentially act as hedge or mitigator and can reduce the possibility of conflict while enhancing relational solidarity between interlocutors (Halliday, 1973: 82). Discourse markers are linguistic tools which, through framing responses and displaying attitudes and reactions to others' utterances, provide the basic means to which conversational partners strive for mutual understanding.

In addition, the interpersonal function includes appeals to the speaker's position, opinions and assessments as well as efforts to create social bonds. Such markers disclose information about both the personal attitudes of the speaker and their interactive purposes (Halliday, 1973: 78). Based on the classifications of the interpersonal function of DMs emphasized by Brinton as cited in Rohmah (2020: 28), two main umbrellas can be discussed in their subcategories: **subjectively**, which comes under responses and reactions and **interpersonally**, that emphasizes cooperation and an intermediated face. This sense of categorization emphasises the various subtle roles that speakers and listeners play in achieving comprehension or avoiding conflict.

The subjective function of DMs concerns the expression of individual responses, reactions, or attitudes regarding the discourse. These markers typically indicate that a listener is following, would like to be tentative, or wish to continue listening without interrupting the flow of the speaker. More often than not, markers are back-channel signals—that is, non-intrusive verbal signals like "uh-huh," "yeah," or "I see" that signal active listening and comprehension. Unlike explicit turn-taking mechanisms, subjective DMs do not try to turn the spotlight of the conversation to the listener but, rather, to reinforce the speaker's narration. In a dialogue, for example, a listener can say "Oh, really?" to indicate interest or surprise without attempting to interrupt. These markers tell you that someone is actually attending, engaged, empathic, and that there is delicate negotiation of the relationship between speaker and listener (Rohmah, 2020: 28).

The relational function of DMs works at a larger relational level, bringing cooperation, closeness, and understanding into the picture. These markers appear for confirming mutual ideas, ensuring comprehension, or seeking verification. Thus, tags like "Isn't it?" or "Don't you agree?" perform a confirmation-seeking function whereby interlocutors mutually agree on something to ensure the convergence of conversational goals. Another important feature of interpersonal DMs, which also emanates from the politeness principle, is the face-saving markers. These markers facilitate social harmony by framing divergences through tact, by dressing up disagreements, or by euphemizing potential conflicts (Rohmah, 2020: 28). "Well, I see your point, but." or "You might be right, however." are phrases that show how speakers negotiate divergent opinions without eroding the interpersonally supportive relationship. The politeness emphasis reflects that discourse is a collaborative act that the dignity of the listener is as important as one's point.

So, in short, discourse markers are effective and necessary use in communication. They act both subjectively and interpersonally in making for the avoidance of relations and conflicts, as well as depositing a collective bolster of understanding in one's discourse outside. They are, according to Schiffrin (1987: 30), cohesive devices that order interaction, but also align, while Brinton (1996: 30)

emphasizes their role as means to convey speaker attitudes and track discourse flow.

2.3 Previous Related Studies

There have been a wealth of previous studies dealing with discourse markers, but most reflect formal contexts such as classrooms or conferences. This research, on the other hand, examines discourse markers in informal situations specifically, particularly in the casual and laidback conversations between two gamers. I will review approximately five studies that align closely with the research topic and theoretical approach. However, each of these studies are diverse in terms of the research subject and the technique that had been used by each of the authors. Thus, the authors of the research on “Bigfoot” YouTube video, will formulate the research through those studies as references that are related based on the topic conducted.

Some prior studies are related to my research. One of the studies was led by Fei and Zou (2023) titled “The Functions and Meaning Potentials of Discourse Markers in the TV Talk Show Discourse”. They examine what functions and meaning potentials discourse markers (DMs) together have in a television setting with the TV talk show The Ellen Show. Using both qualitative and quantitative methods, they used Brinton’s dichotomy of DM functions—textual and interpersonal—and examined a specialized corpus (E-SEC) with transcriptions of 34 episodes. Textual DMs (63%) such as "and," "so," and "but" were predominantly used for coherence, turn-taking, and topic shifts, while interpersonal DMs (37%) such as "yeah" and "well" helped express attitudes and maintain relationships. Several of the DMs were also mentioned as being multifunctional, with some markers performing both functions depending on context. Although our study differs to an extent from research on DMs in casual conversation settings, it shares an orientation toward their functional and contextual roles in a half-planned formal context.

Second was the study of Priyono & Rofiq (2021) entitled "Discourse Markers Of Humor Analysis In Trevor Noah’s Stand Up Comedy" that analyse the

use of discourse markers (DMs) in humor, particular in Trevor Noah's work with the title Prince Harry & Meghan Markle - The Royal Wedding Live at the O2 London. The researchers used a descriptive qualitative approach and used Brinton's framework to discover where DMs take textual and interpersonal function. They identified 11 varieties of DM, for example "ah," "like," "and," and "well," which had different pragmatic functions, including switching topics, introducing new information or expressing agreement. It was a formal stand-up comedy performance. The two prevalent DMs were the word "like" (11 times) and "and" (9 times). Priyono and Rofiq conducted a study like this research which examined the functions of DMs, but it focuses on one genre Humor, while this study focused on informal, casual conversations between two people.

Third was a research work conducted by Subekti and Santi (2019) entitled "Analysing Discourse Markers in Popular YouTube Videos"; it focused on the use of DMs within informal spoken discourses, particularly popular YouTube videos. With a descriptive qualitative method, the transcript videos of three YouTubers were analyzed. Then, the Fraser framework was used to identify DMs and their functions. The data showed that "and" was the most common DM, occurring 105 times, followed by "like," 68, "just," 56, "really," 36, and "but," 30. These markers then performed functions such as continuation, hesitation, example-giving, and contrast. The informal setting allowed for insights into natural, spontaneous speech. This research investigates the functions of DMs in conversational settings, similar to what Subekti and Santi did; however, while those two authors choose their study subjects with several YouTube videos, this research covers only one video from a YouTube channel.

The fourth one is the study of Mahmud et al. (2023) entitled "Discourse Markers in Students' Individual Presentation of Indonesian Classroom" which aims to explain DMs that performed in an individual conversation in a classroom. The functions of DMs were found to include pause fillers; sequencing and hesitation devices; marks of the speaker's intentions. Some common DMs were "e," "emm," and "so," which are used to maintain the fluency of oral communication (or conversational flow) or organize the stream of thoughts. Qualitative discourse

analysis of transcriptions of student's presentations, guided by a communicative framework developed by Schiffrin. The presentation environment was formal since it was set in a classroom. The frequency and functions of DMs underlined the importance of DMs in creating effective communication during presentations. Although this study focuses on formal educational settings, it is related to this research by focusing on how DMs facilitate interaction and convey meaning despite differing contexts and casual informal conversations.

Finally, the last study that relevant to this research is research by Rohmah (2020) titled "Discourse Markers in Conversation of PUBG Gamers Video", which studies about types of discourse markers (DMs), their functions, and frequency found in PUBG gamers' virtual conversations. Employing Brinton's theory (1996) and a qualitative descriptive design, the research analyzed one video of gameplay: it located fourteen types of DMs ("ok," "yeah," "my opinion," and "well"). The markers for which they categorized into their functions such as turn-takers, fillers, repair markers and confirmation seekers were grouped together with turn-takers being the most frequent. Results indicated that DMs were used in more spontaneous, informal contexts to keep a conversation flowing - for example 'no, no and no' or repeated sequences such as 'yeah, yeah, yeah'. The study was able to find over a total of more than 36 instances of DMs.

Based on the previous studies above, I conclude that the theories of DMs can be applied in different venues whether formal or informal. The examples have emphasized the discourse markers as fundamental elements in all acts of communication between speakers, so it would be easier to build coherent discourses that provide signals regarding the relationship among ideas or whether a discourse requires less attention due to a pause or other reasons. DMS are found in a variety of contexts; academic, casual, professional and even online. This universality enables DMs to achieve specificity in their role. Therefore, it is not constrained by context but rather adapt to the communicative demand of the settings. The inventory of DMs is compiled in Table 2.3, based on previous studies using Brinton's (1996) theory:

Table 2.3 Inventory of Brinton's Discourse Markers

Ah/uh/um	If	Right/all right/that's right
Actually	I mean/think	So
After all	Just	Say
Almost	Like	Sort of/kind of
And	Mind you	Then
And (stuff, things) like that	Moreover	Therefore
Anyway	Now	Uh-huh
Basically	Oh	Well
Because	O.k	Yes/no
But	Or	You know
Go "say"	Really	You see

This thesis draws on past research, particularly Rohmah's study of DMs in PUBG conversations, as it uses the same underlying theory, Brinton's Discourse Marker Theory (1996), at its core in analyzing players' interactions. This thesis differs from Rohmah's, which identified the DMs used by players in informal PUBG game settings; this thesis tries to delve into the use of DMs in playing a horror game. Rohmah referred to one gaming channel and chose gameplay at random by the YouTuber playing along with random people she had picked up from PUBG. Meanwhile this thesis however looks at gameplay and interactions between the two gamers, "Fooster" and "Fisk," during a recorded session of playing Bigfoot. Our themes differ in that I have focused on the interaction of "Fooster" and "Fisk" playing Bigfoot, while Rohmah's work has revolved around analysis concerning the gameplay of PUBG. I will try to fill in the gap in the existing literature regarding how DMs can facilitate communication and coordination in high-pressure cooperative environments such as horror gaming, with particular attention to facilitating player communication at an extraordinary level.

This thesis was conducted because there is minimum of studies on how DMs function within the specific context of multiplayer online gaming conversations, particularly horror games, on platforms such as YouTube. While their use has been well documented in traditional communication settings, their place within virtual and dynamic gaming environments, where communication is fast paced and very often emotionally charged is still underexplored. Therefore, my research come to present something new in this field of pragmatic study, so that people know about how these markers functions in a conversation.

