

PECULIARITIES OF PRAGMATIC MARKERS IN LANGUAGE**Osmanov Mustafu Tashtanovich,****Samarkand branch of Tashkent State University of Economics.**osmanovmustafu1971@gmail.com

Annotation: This article explores the unique characteristics and functions of pragmatic markers (PMs) in language. Pragmatic markers, such as *well*, *you know*, *like*, and *actually*, serve as discourse organizers that help manage interaction, express speaker attitudes, and enhance coherence in conversation. The article highlights key peculiarities of PMs, including their non-syntactic nature, context-dependent meanings, and multifunctionality. It emphasizes that these markers are particularly common in spoken language, where they aid in turn-taking, politeness strategies, and topic transitions.

Key words: *discourse markers, modal particles, interjections, response tokens, multifunctionality.*

Pragmatic markers are words or phrases that convey various functions or meanings in discourse, such as expressing attitude, managing interaction, signaling structure, or creating coherence. They are often considered as optional or peripheral elements of language, but they play a crucial role in shaping and reflecting the context, purpose, and relationship of the speakers or writers. In this article, you will learn about some common types and examples of pragmatic markers and how they are used in different genres and situations. Pragmatic markers can be classified into different types according to their functions or meanings, with some of the most common being discourse markers, modal particles, interjections, response tokens, and fillers. Pragmatic markers, or discourse markers, allow for writers/speakers to communicate their stance or attitudes toward the information conveyed. They make room for negotiating the certainty of statements, functioning to 'linguistically situate the intention of the writer, while priming the reader/ listener to align with this intention'[1].

Discourse markers are words or phrases that signal the organization, connection, or transition of ideas, like "well", "however", "so", or "by the way". Modal particles express the speaker's attitude, stance, or mood, such as "maybe", "actually", "really", or "indeed". Interjections are words that express emotions, reactions, or evaluations, for example "wow", "ouch", "yuck", or "great". Response tokens indicate the listener's feedback, involvement, or alignment; examples include "yeah", "uh-huh", "right", and "mm". Finally, fillers are words or sounds that fill pauses,

hesitation, or uncertainty; these can include "um", "er", "like", and "you know". Pragmatic markers can be found in various genres and situations, such as spoken conversation, written text, online communication, or academic discourse. These markers are used to manage turn-taking, topic shifting, or rapport building in spoken conversation; organize arguments, emphasize points, and address readers in written text; convey tone, attitude, or emotion in online communication; and express stance, position, or evaluation in academic discourse[2]. Additionally, they can enhance clarity, coherence, and persuasiveness of the text. Some studies have even shown that pragmatic markers can improve the readability and comprehension of written texts. Furthermore, they can reveal the underlying assumptions, perspectives, and values of the speakers or writers.

In short, pragmatic markers are essential for effective communication and critical thinking. Pragmatic markers are not fixed or rigid in their functions or meanings; they can vary depending on the context, genre, situation, or intention of the speakers or writers. Therefore, it is important to be aware of how they are used in different settings and how they can affect interpretation and interaction of the discourse. To use them appropriately and effectively, be consistent and coherent with your purpose, tone, and style; be clear and concise in your structure, connection, or transition of ideas; be polite and respectful when showing consideration, cooperation, or rapport; and be flexible and adaptable to the expectations, norms, or conventions of your discourse community. Pragmatic markers are powerful tools that can enrich and enliven your discourse. With an understanding of how to use them wisely, you can communicate more effectively in various genres and situations.

As it was mentioned above, Pragmatic markers (PMs) are linguistic elements that contribute to discourse coherence, interactional functions, and speaker intentions rather than the core propositional content of an utterance. They exhibit several peculiarities in language use, including:

1. Non-Syntactic Role

- PMs often function independently of grammatical rules. They do not fit neatly into traditional sentence structures but still contribute to meaning.
- Example: *Well, you know, like, I mean.*

2. Context-Sensitive Meaning

- Their interpretation depends on the situational context, tone, and speaker intention.
- Example: *Okay* can indicate agreement, topic shift, or acknowledgment.

3. Multifunctionality

- The same PM can serve multiple roles: as discourse organizers, politeness markers, or hesitation fillers.

- Example: *So* can indicate a conclusion (*So, let's begin*), a hesitation (*So... what do you think?*), or topic shift.
4. High Frequency in Spoken Language
- PMs are more prevalent in conversation than in formal writing.
 - Example: *Like* is frequently used in casual speech (*He was like, 'Wow!'*).
5. Prosodic and Intonational Features
- PMs often depend on intonation patterns, pauses, and emphasis for their pragmatic effect.
 - Example: *Well*, (rising intonation) suggests uncertainty, while *Well*. (falling intonation) signals a decision.
6. Social and Interactional Functions
- They help manage conversation flow, politeness, and interpersonal relationships.
 - Example: *You know* invites the listener's agreement, while *Actually* can introduce a correction.
7. Cross-Linguistic Variability
- Different languages have unique PMs with culturally specific uses.
 - Example: English *you know* vs. French *tu vois* vs. Spanish *¿sabes?* all signal shared understanding.

In the past few years, pragmatic markers or metalinguistic monitors have been under scrutiny by different researchers. Erman (2001), Aijmer (2002; 2004), McCarthy and Carter (2006) and Fung and Carter (2007) have examined pragmatic markers in written and spoken discourse[3]. However, studies concentrating on how Brazilian university students of English use such markers in spoken interlanguage are virtually non-existent. Considering that developing students pragmatic awareness is an essential part of their academic literacy, this paper aims to shed light upon how a group of Brazilian university students use pragmatic markers in their oral presentations. Upon the implications of this use, we will also focus on the way learners interact in English with their scientific community. The learners in this study were undergraduate students taking the course English for Academic Purposes taught at a Federal University in Brazil. In order to better understand how Brazilian university students taking this course use pragmatic markers in their spoken language, we compared the results of our learner corpus with a native speaker corpus, focusing on underuse and overuse of the most significant patterns drawn from the data.

In fact, it follows studies stating that it is impossible to ignore text type (written or spoken) context and the relationship between interlocutors. Arguing along the same lines, this paper follows the assumption that the term 'pragmatic marker' suggests a high degree of context

sensitivity, as is also acknowledged by Andersen. An important issue concerning pragmatic markers is their multifunctionality. Their function and use vary depending on different issues ranging from discourse markers linking units of discourse, and then being responsible for coherence, to modal items within a more interpersonal dimension. Ois way, as pointed out by Fung and Carter[4], such markers are pragmatically significant and socially sensitive. The literature in the field shows that pragmatic markers are not an easy term to define and definitions are usually associated with different approaches to their study, as well as with the functions related to them.

Fraser (1999) defined pragmatic markers as a pragmatic class, or as lexical expressions drawn from the syntactic classes of conjunctions, adverbials, and prepositional phrases which “signal a relationship between the segment they introduce, S2, and the prior segment, S1” (Fraser 1999, p. 63). In the example below, the pragmatic marker In spite of, relates the explicit interpretation of S2 to a non-explicit interpretation of S1. In S2, there is an implied proposition associated with S1, which is referenced by the use of In spite of that.

(1) S1 We left late.

(2) S2 In spite of that, we arrived on time[5].

As we can see in (1), example taken from Fraser (1999), speakers can choose between hedges and approximators when they wish to minimize (or maximize) the effect of the message being communicated. Examples such as I think, maybe and kind of represent some of the most common face-saving markers (Goffman 1967) used by speakers in different contexts. Erman explains that, in the case of German studies on modality, interlocutors tend to concentrate more on the expressive attitude of the speaker towards the propositional contents of the utterance. His notion is closely related to Kriwonossow’s subjective modality and to Bublitz’ emotive modality. Both perspectives are oriented towards the speaker’s attitude and also to the relationship between speaker and hearer[6].

In summary, it should be noted that Pragmatic markers are an essential component of human communication, serving functions that extend beyond grammatical structure to facilitate interaction, coherence, and speaker intent. Their unique characteristics—such as their flexible placement in sentences, context-sensitive meanings, and multifunctionality—highlight their dynamic nature. These markers are particularly prominent in spoken language, where they help manage discourse flow, express attitudes, and maintain interpersonal relationships. Additionally, pragmatic markers vary across languages and cultures, reflecting different communicative norms and social conventions. Their prosodic features, such as intonation and pauses, further influence their interpretation, making them highly adaptable tools in conversation. Despite their frequent

use, they are often dismissed in formal language studies; however, their significance in effective communication cannot be overlooked. Understanding the role and peculiarities of pragmatic markers enriches linguistic analysis, enhances comprehension, and improves language proficiency. By recognizing their impact, speakers can become more adept at navigating social interactions, making their communication more natural, fluid, and contextually appropriate.

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