The Functions of Discourse Markers in Newspaper Text

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ABSTRACT

The article deals with the functions of discourse markers in newspaper text. This study is determined by the need for a comprehensive description of discursive markers as functional language units necessary to assess the connection of an utterance with a certain situation in the real world, and, more broadly, to ensure the coherence of the discourse as a whole.

The study of discursive markers is a relatively young, but at the same time actively developing area of linguistic research, which was formed within the framework of a functional approach to language. The intensity with which discursive markers as a special class of linguistic units have been studied in recent decades is primarily due to the attention of researchers to the problem of the semantic and pragmatic organization of discourse and the role that discursive markers play in organizing the overall semantic integrity of communication.

Discursive markers as a special class of linguistic units have become the object of linguistic research relatively recently, however, a fairly large number of articles and monographs have already been devoted to their classification and description of their functions in oral and written communication [Schiffrin 1988, Baranov 1993, Discursive Words 1998, Schourup 1999, Fischer 2000 , Discursive Words 2003, Kobozeva 2004, Podlesskaya 2009, Lutzky 2012, Borisova 2013, Viktorova 2014a, Nikitina 2014, Bogdanova-Beglaryan 2015, Shilikhina 2015, Pragmatic Markers

2017]. Attention to discursive markers is primarily due to the turn of linguistics towards the speaker [Azhezh 2003] and the cognitive processes that accompany speech activity, as well as the important role that these linguistic units play in ensuring the overall semantic integrity (coherence) of discourse [Schiffrin 1988, Lenk 1998b, Fuller 2003, Taboada 2006, Redeker 2014].

Many researchers point out the important role of discursive markers in understanding the utterance/text [Baranov 1993, Stede 2000, Blakemore 2002, Podlesskaya 2009, Kamensky 2014]. For example, according to Diana Blackmore, discursive markers are metapragmatic signals that serve as a kind of instructions for cognitive processing of an utterance [Blakemore 2002]. The Israeli researcher J. Maschler [Maschler 2009] explains the existence of these units with an organizing, in fact, metadiscursive function. In the most general form, we can say that in a statement, discursive markers become one of the tools for a kind of "fine tuning" of the meaning of what was said, allowing the speaker to correlate the statement with the real situation, evaluate it

from the point of view of reliability / unreliability, comment on the illocutionary purpose of the statement, express their own emotional attitude to the information being communicated, to manage the process of understanding what was said, etc.

The appearance of discursive markers in speech or text each time indicates a conscious choice made by the speaker in accordance with the immediate context of communication, his ideas about what knowledge the interlocutor can or should have, etc. Wed opinion of A.A. Kibrik and V.I. Podlesskaya: "The discursive process is based on the speaker's plan - an internal mental task that the speaker has before the formation of the external language form ... In the process of implementing this plan, the speaker makes numerous choices, and the language form is already the result of these choices" [Tales about dreams 2009 , With. 31].

Discursive markers of epistemic evaluation have repeatedly become the object of linguistic research. However, compared to markers of confidence in the reliability of information, discursive markers of problematic reliability have been studied less frequently. In this regard, the relevance of the study is determined by the need for a comprehensive description of this group of discursive markers as functional language units necessary to assess the connection of an utterance with a certain situation in the real world, and, more broadly, to ensure the coherence of the discourse as a whole. In addition, it is relevant to study the historical process of the formation of a group of discursive markers of problematic authenticity: such an analysis allows us to trace a chain of regular semantic-pragmatic transitions that lead to the emergence of a new discursive meaning in language units.

A comprehensive description of discursive markers is in demand in the teaching of foreign languages, since the possession of discursive markers is an important component of communicative competence both for a native speaker and for those who study a language as a foreign language. In addition, data on the functioning of discursive markers in various areas of communication are necessary for their more accurate lexicographic description.

Another area of practical application of the obtained data is the translation activity. It is known that each language has its own set of discursive markers. Establishing the features of the functioning of these language tools is necessary for the further selection of adequate translation equivalents and minimization of semantic losses in translation. Due to their ambiguity and context dependence, discursive markers also present a problem for automatic natural language processing [Stede 1997]. Therefore, the description of the most typical contexts in which markers of problematic validity function can be required in machine translation, information retrieval, and automatic text processing systems to solve the problem of disambiguation. Finally, the results of the study can be used in teaching theoretical courses in general linguistics, general semantics and lexicology, impact theory, stylistics, and intercultural communication.

And so, discursive markers are one of the hard-to-define phenomena of language and speech. They are distinguished into a special class not on the basis of formal criteria, but on the basis of general functional characteristics, namely, the role that discursive markers play in speech and text. As mentioned above, in the most general form, this function can be defined as ensuring the coherence (coherence) of discourse [Schiffrin 1988, Baranov 1993, Jucker 1998, Podlesskaya 2009, Borisova 2014]. At the same time, the part-of-speech attribution of discursive markers fades into the background, although researchers note that most often discursive units belong to the categories of particles, introductory words, or modal words [Discursive Words 1998]. Many units that today are classified as discursive markers are described in detail in works devoted to the corresponding parts of speech [Vinogradov 1975, Kobozeva 1981, Nikolaeva 2005, Uryson 2011]. In addition to individual lexical units, some constructions (to be honest) and introductory sentences also fall into the class of discursives (As was said earlier...). Thus, discursive markers are a class of linguistic units that do not have clear boundaries. Applying the provisions of the theory of fuzzy sets [Zadeh 1976], as well as the field model, we can talk

about the existence of a core and periphery within this class: units related to the core implement the maximum set of characteristics of discursive markers, while peripheral units will demonstrate only some some of these features.

In the broadest sense, discursive markers perform a metacommunicative function: their task is to correlate the utterance with the situation of communication, the views of the speaker, and the general semantic organization of the text [Degand 2015, Maschler 2015]. As noted earlier, discursive markers are not part of the propositional content of the utterance, but play a key role in regulating the understanding process [Borisova 2014]. They show how the utterance should be integrated into the general outline of the discourse [Shilikhina 2014]. In addition, these units "... most directly reflect the process of interaction between the speaker and the listener, the position of the speaker: how the speaker interprets the facts that he reports to the listener, how he evaluates them in terms of their degree of importance, plausibility, probability, etc. It is these units that govern the process of communication: they express truthful and ethical assessments, presuppositions, opinions, correlate, compare and contrast different statements of the speaker or speakers with each other, and so on. [Baranov 1993, p.7].

Thus, discursive markers play a crucial role in the communicative organization of the utterance and the interaction of discourse participants. It is this multifunctionality that explains the attention of linguists to what functions various markers implement in discourse. Thus, the work [Borisova 2014] considers the role of discursive words in the identification of a denotation and the establishment of a reference. Often discursive words, indicating the referential status of a name, simultaneously increase attention to the object and convey the speaker's attitude to what is being said. Another important aspect of the functioning of discursive markers is the establishment of certain relationships between the speaker and the addressee [Hyland 2007, Levontina 2007]. This function is especially important in a written text, where there is no direct contact between the author and the reader. [Stede 1997, Stede 2000] propose the following taxonomy of the functions of discursive units:

1. Structuring function, within which sub functions of introducing a new topic or digression from the topic, signals of changing the roles of the speaker and listener, a sub function of correcting what has been said, etc. are distinguished.

2. The coherence-marking function, within which M. Stede and B. Schmitz single out an indication of information that is known to both the speaker and the listener, as well as references to what was said earlier.

3. The function of expressing the speaker's point of view (attitudinal function), which includes the expression of a positive or negative assessment, a neutral attitude to the information being reported, marking familiarity with the information or, conversely, surprise.

4. The smoothening function, to which the authors also include the function of filling in pauses and holding the role of the speaker [Stede 1997].

5. The function of highlighting a significant fragment of discourse - thanks to it, the listener can determine which part of the information being communicated is the most important for the speaker. This classification covers only a part of the functions that discursive markers are capable of performing. In particular, it does not include the function of a "cognitive" signal, when a discursive marker can show how the speaker processes and structures information.

In general, it should be noted that the allocation of functions of discursive units largely depends on how researchers define the boundaries of this group of language and speech units: the wider the understanding of discursive markers, the more functions it becomes possible to identify. Closely related to functions is the question of the meanings expressed by discursive markers and the problem of describing these meanings in explanatory and translation dictionaries.

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