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Japanese Discourse Markers: An Analysis of Native and Non-native Japanese Discourse

Diploma thesis

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I hereby certify that the present thesis is based on my own research work. I further declare that all reference materials contained therein have been duly acknowledged.

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TRANSCRIPTION CONVENTIONS

Japanese personal names which appear in the text are written according to English conventions, that is to say, the forename is represented first, surname last.

The revised version of the Hepburn Romanization system was used for transcription of Japanese script throughout the work.

Illustrative examples of Japanese language conversation were presented according to the following format: (1) Japanese text was transcribed and rendered in italics in the first line (2) with the English translation in single inverted comas following in the second line.

Slovak language discourse examples are rendered in Slovak orthography.

Transcription generally complies with the conventions based on Gail Jefferson's notation system, represented in the table below.

Transcription conventions	
A:	indicates speaker
[ ]	overlapping of speech in contiguous lines, [denoting beginning of the simultaneous speech,] its end
:::	lengthened syllables
CAP	indicates louder voice
a-	abrupt stop
…	ellipsis
,	continuing intonation
.	falling intonation
?	rising intonation
@	indicates laughter
< >	non-verbal expressions

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1   Introduction

Occurring frequently in various contexts, ranging from formal lecture to casual conversation between close friends, discourse markers are generally said to be an indispensable part of spoken language. Their high occurrence in spoken language is not accidental, since they fulfil multiple socio-pragmatic roles, their employment resulting in facilitating interaction among people and mitigating face-threatening acts.

Discourse markers are especially frequent in the Japanese language, which, reflecting the specificity of Japanese culture, conceptualized in key values like *omoiyari* 'empathy', *enryo* 'reservedness', *wakimae* 'discernment', *giri* 'obligation', *amae* 'dependence upon another's benevolence', respectability, or interdependence, is said to pursue the maintenance of harmonic relationships, eventually seeking consensus and "unification of understanding between the speaker and addressee" (Goto 1998: 1; also see, Wierzbicka 1997; Doi 2002). Thus, taking into account all these factors, it might be said that the Japanese formulate their discourse in order to avoid confrontation, so as to comply with the group conventions, and expressing themselves rather indirectly while displaying affection by means of emotional appeal.

Let us now illustrate how these culture-specific aspects might be projected into the Japanese spoken language in practice, with a particular focus on discourse markers as indexes of these features. For these purposes, a sample of natural spontaneous conversation was chosen as the representative mode of the category of spoken discourse (see Halliday 1989).[1] The sample features two Japanese native speakers, presumably friends, living in the United States engaged in casual conversation discussing a part-time job experience of one of the speakers.

> C: *...dakara nanka sa::, ... kotchi ichinenkan kite::*
>   'so, umm, I came here for one year aaand'
>   *... nihon ni kaetta no ne. natsuyasumi.*
>   'I went home to Japan, you know? (For) summer vacation.'
> A: *... nn.*   3
>   '...uh huh.'

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[1] Halliday claims that the ideal form spoken language is dialogue, which, on the other hand, more often than not involves embedded sequences of monologue. Halliday further argues that spoken language, as delimited against the written variety, is characterized by relatively low lexical density, higher proportion of speech fragments, or elliptic utterances. In addition, rather than by means of clauses, spoken language is organized by means of tone units, whose boundaries are signalled by discourse markers, unfilled pauses or intonation (see Halliday 1989; cf. Flowerdew & Tauroza 1995: 435)

C: *... hajimete kita toki ni ... nde, sankagetsu, zutto nihon ni iru aida ni,*
        'The first time I came. And, for the whole 3 months, while I was in Japan,'
        . . . sabu<@ we:: @> . . sandoitchi?
        'Subway Sandwich?'

A: *... nn,*   6
        '…uh huh.'

C: *asoko de watashi baito shiteta no ne.*
        'I had a part-time job there, you know?'

A: *a sabuwē?*
        'Oh, Subway?'
        [nn] nn.   9
        'Uh-huh, uh-huh.'

C: *akasaka:: ... mitsuketen*
        'the Akasaka branch.'

A: *ā. hai hai hai,*
        'Oh, yes yes yes.'

C: *[de, sugoi ironna hito ga ki-]*   12
        'And, an amazing variety of people ca-'

A: *[ja chī bī esu, ne, no mae [da ne].*
        'So, it's right in front of TBS, right?'

C: *[so so] SO SO.*
                            'Right right right right.'

                                                    (Jones & Ono 2001: 9-15)

Yet very short, the conversational fragment reflects some of the specificities of the Japanese language presented above. The sample is clearly highly interactive. The interaction displays a certain kind of interdependence of the interlocutors. First, both speakers are commenting on each other's speech, eliciting confirmation, assuring, or acknowledging. In order to negotiate the meaning and reach consensus, the participants apparently cooperate, yet not only by means of assurance and confirmation-eliciting devices (the so called *aizuchi* or 'backchannel utterances', e.g. *nn, hai*, or sentence-final particles, e.g. *no, ne;* which both belong to the category of Japanese discourse markers), but they even help each other construct the story chipping in details as in line 13, where the speaker A provides information on the whereabouts of the part-time job instead of the speaker C, who, indeed, was expected to tell the story. Nevertheless, none of the above is perceived to be interruptive by the Japanese native speakers; on the contrary, it is valued as a sign of concern and involvement on the part of the hearer in relation to the speaker's speech.

In addition, it is not only the features of Japanese culture the sample exemplifies, moreover, it is also illustrative of the spoken variety of the Japanese language, with the discussion of which this section opened. It is evident that natural conversation is in many respects a unique speech mode. First, it is characterised by a high degree of fragmentation. The individual utterances are normally relatively short, so the intended message is delivered only bit by bit. Moreover, these short pieces of information are separated by pauses. The spoken discourse is usually unplanned and the pauses help speakers to save time to plan their following conversational move while still keeping the floor. Sometimes the pauses are filled with items like discourse markers, lengthened vowels, or ingressive air. The desired meaning is further negotiated by means of repetition, repairs, postponing, lengthening or intonation (see Jones & Ono 2001).

Next, the spoken discourse is normally addressed to a partner. During conversation, the speakers try to appeal to one another emotionally in order to effectively deliver the message through, employing various devices such as sentence modality, exclamatory expressions or interactional discourse markers (see Maynard 1998: 14). In addition, conversation is highly interactive. In fact, it is based on exchanging messages. However, it must not be viewed as simple delivering and receiving of messages on 'the sentence after sentence' basis: the turns often overlap, that is, the turns are uttered simultaneously, the message can even be carried over a number of turns, and can be often interrupted or unfinished. In addition, the speakers even interfere in their partner's speech and help each other construct their discourses mutually, as it was mentioned above.

Apart from that, the speakers facilitate the mutual understanding of the proposed message by employing various devices like repetition, stress or discourse markers, which are said to function as textual coordinates or signposts for the addressee in a sense that they provide the participants with clues how to interpret the upcoming or the prior discourse. For instance, *dakara* (therefore, so) in the onset of the conversation can be understood as introducing a proposition causally related to the previous context or as a reformulation of what has been said; *de* or *nde* (and, therefore; lines 12 and 4, respectively) signal the introduction of additional information as well as the speaker's intention to continue.

As demonstrated above, discourse markers fulfil different roles within a number of domains, namely, textual (signalling relationships between discourse segments), interpersonal (soliciting response, signalling the intention to continue the turn, etc.), or cognitive (implying the speakers' mental processes), and their frequent appearance in speech suggest that they are important part of the native speakers' talk. Moreover, their

use encodes various unique aspects of the Japanese communication style involving interdependence of the speakers, the strife for creation or maintaining of harmonious interpersonal relationships, or the profound sense of empathy and affection.

Although there appears to be numerous universals in languages and their ways how to express meanings covered by these items, it can be presumed that each language has developed its own set of discourse markers. Given they are culture-specific, it might be expected that they are often untranslatable into other languages. Moreover, their meaning is more often than not such complex that it would be difficult even to paraphrase it. This, in turn, suggests that their acquisition by learners of a foreign language might be problematic (see Wierzbicka 2003: 341; Yoshimi 1999b).

Discourse markers do exist in the Slovak language and they are employed very frequently. Nevertheless, Japanese is due to its cultural specificities said to utilize a broader range of these items and with considerably higher frequency (Yoshimi 1999b). Given the situation, Slovak learners of Japanese could be therefore expected to underutilize Japanese discourse markers in terms of frequency and their repertoire, as well as the accuracy of the discourse marker use in their Japanese language speech production. Taking this hypothesis as a point of departure, the purpose of this study is thus to investigate to what extent the Japanese language learners, whose mother language is Slovak, are able to master the use of discourse markers in Japanese, focussing on frequency, the range of discourse markers and the accuracy of their use in Japanese.

The present work is theoretically and methodologically based on a number of influential studies on discourse markers within the framework of Western linguistics, departing from the pioneering work on discourse markers by Deborah Schiffrin (1987), whose operational definition of discourse markers and the criteria for discourse marker membership are exploited in the present work with a few reservations. In addition, a number of studies of Japanese provenience stemming from Japanese linguistics were taken into account as well, to establish an analytical framework that would be applicable on the Japanese context, since the category of Japanese discourse markers is significantly varied and broader than the English or Slovak one.

The present work first introduces the influential studies formulated from the point of view of Western linguistics and summarizes the outcomes of these studies, focussing primarily on generally accepted characteristics of English discourse markers, which could, however, be to a certain extent applicable universally. The introductory chapter then closes with a definition of discourse markers employed in the analysis.

The two following chapters serve the purpose of clarifying the situation as concerns discourse marker use in Japanese and in Slovak, respectively. Referring to the studies of the Japanese or Slovak origin, the chapters survey the fundamental function of discourse markers in the respective language and provide some suggestions considering the motivation of native speakers to employ discourse markers in their talk in both languages.

Chapter 5 then considers discourse markers within the framework of second language acquisition and provides some useful insights on where the problems, learners of a foreign language usually encounter in acquiring discourse marker use as part of the pragmatic competence, stem from.

Basing on the theoretical framework established in the previous chapters, the rest of the thesis will be devoted to the research conducted by the author. After the necessary methodological aspects are described along with some limitations of the method employed in present work and the introduction of factors that were hypothesized to influence the discourse marker use, the attention will then be shifted to the outcomes of the analysis and the discussion of findings. Finally, in the conclusion, the work will summarize the findings and draw conclusions concerning the learners' discourse marker use.

2 Discourse markers: An Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to introduce major works which initiated or significantly contributed to the discussion on discourse markers, along with general characteristics of discourse markers as described by authors who concentrate on English discourse markers. However, as it will be seen later, these characteristics might be applicable, to a certain extent, to many different language contexts universally.

2.1 Previous research on discourse markers

The body of work on what is most often referred to as discourse markers is undeniably broad. In what follows an overview of the most influential studies in discourse markers analysis will be introduced depicting briefly the perspective and method applied in analysing the phenomenon, as well as introducing definitions, characteristics and roles of discourse markers presented in these studies.

2.1.1 Halliday and Hasan's approach: Conjunctive items as cohesive devices

In their seminal work on cohesion in English Halliday and Hasan[2] (1976) propose five principal cohesive devices, i.e. **reference, repetition, substitution, ellipsis**, and **conjunction**, which assist in discourse creation indicating various relations in an underlying structure of the text. Among these, expressions conveying **conjunctive relations** and their functions in discourse partially parallel items that have currently been referred to as discourse markers. Conjunctive items, such as *and, but, because, I mean, by the way, to sum up* generally express additive, adversative, causal or temporal meanings. The authors claim that the crucial role of the conjunctive items is to work as a cohesion device contributing to coherence of a text. In other words, the importance of conjunctive items lies in their capacity "to mark interpretive dependencies between propositions, and thus create texture" (Schiffrin 2003: 56).

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[2] Halliday, M.A.K., & Hasan, R. (1976). *Cohesion in English*. New York: Longman Publishing Group.

2.1.2   Deborah Schiffrin: Discourse analysis perspective

Schiffrin's pioneering work on discourse markers (1987) represents a discourse analytic approach and introduces an operational definition of discourse markers. [3] Focussing primarily on expressions *and, because, but, I mean, now, oh, or, so, then, well*, and *y'know*, Schiffrin considers discourse markers as "**sequentially dependent elements that bracket units of talk**" (1987: 31). She further explains that discourse markers are expressions recruited from different word classes. They are **facultative** or **syntactically detachable** (their potential omission from a syntactic structure would not result in destructing the grammaticality of a syntactic structure), **utterance-initial** items that mark the relationship of the foregoing and ongoing discourse and assist in setting the utterance in a particular context.

In accordance with Halliday and Hasan (1976), Schiffrin claims that by employing discourse markers, speakers contribute to the overall **coherence** of discourse. [4] Furthermore, she argues that discourse markers "provide **contextual coordinates** for utterances: they index an utterance to the local contexts in which utterances are produced and in which they are to be interpreted" (Schiffrin 1987: 326). More specifically, discourse markers locate the utterances on one of the proximal or distal axis within the participation or textual contexts (see Schiffrin 1987: 324; see section 2.4.1 of this work for a further clarification).

Schiffrin proposes that these linguistic items can function on either one or across five various **planes of speech**, that is to say, **participation framework** (displaying the speaker's or hearer's productive and receptive processes; e.g. *oh, y'know*), **information state** (marking, for instance, information state transitions; e.g. *so, then*), **ideational structure** (marking the progression of ideas), **action structure** (marking actions such as clarification, e.g. *well, oh, but*), **exchange structure** (functioning as turn-taking or turn-management devices; e.g. *y'know, and, well*) (see Schiffrin 1987: 316-317; cf. Schiffrin 2003: 57). Schiffrin states that discourse markers primarily function on one plane (e.g. *and* operates primarily on an ideational plane, *well* in the participation framework), nevertheless, their use is not limited to this only one plane.

In addition, her study demonstrates that discourse markers can operate on **local** and/or **global** levels, displaying relationships "between adjacent utterances" and/or "across wider spans and/or structures of discourse" (Schiffrin 2003: 57; cf. Lenk, 1997).

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[3] Schiffrin, D. (1987). *Discourse Markers*. Cambridge, New York & Melbourne: Cambridge University Press.

[4] While Halliday and Hasan are concerned with cohesion in written discourse, Schiffrin's main focus is on oral form.

2.1.3 Bruce Fraser: Pragmatic approach

While Halliday and Hasan focus on text and Schiffrin on spoken discourse, that is, larger segments of speech, Fraser is interested in discourse markers with relation to sentences (see Schiffrin 2003: 58); more precisely, "how one type of pragmatic marker in a sentence may relate the message conveyed by that sentence to the message of a prior sentence" (Schiffrin 2003: 58).[5]

According to Fraser (1996, 1999, 2005), discourse markers are one of four categories of pragmatic markers, "the linguistically encoded clues which signal the speaker's potential communicative intentions" which are "separate and distinct from the propositional content of the sentence" (Fraser 1996: 2).[6] Fraser argues that discourse markers "signal a relation between the discourse segment which hosts them, and the prior discourse segment" (Fraser 2005: 3). Illustrative of this group are, for example, *and, but, so, although, anyway*, or *however*. Discourse markers, in Fraser's words, contribute only to the '**procedural meaning**'. This means that "they [only] provide instructions to the addressee on how the utterance to which the discourse marker is attached is to be interpreted" (Fraser 1996: 22), yet, unlike words bearing content meaning, they do not denote notions. Their significance is in their capacity to make the relationship between discourse segments they are attached to explicit (see Fraser 1996: 22).

There are, according to Fraser, four principal subgroups of discourse markers:[7] **topic change markers** (*by the way*), **contrastive markers** (*however, instead*), **elaborative markers** (*what is more*), and **inferential markers** (*for this reason*).[8]

More importantly, Fraser's includes among discourse markers only lexical expressions. His definition of discourse markers restricts non-verbal gestures, syntactic structures, and aspects of prosody (i.e. intonation or stress) or any expressions other than

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[5] However, Fraser (2005) is no longer speaking about discourse markers in relation to sentences, but rather to "discourse segments", as a term used instead of utterance to avoid controversy associated with the latter term (see Fraser 2005).

[6] Fraser (1996, 1999,) states there are four types of pragmatic markers, namely, **basic markers**, **commentary markers**, **parallel markers** and **discourse markers**. Basic markers signal the illocutionary force of the basic proposition, encompassing lexical phrases and expressions (e.g. *I regret, admittedly, I promise, please*, etc.), as well as sentence mood (declarative, interrogative, etc.). Commentary markers provide a comment on a separate proposition. They are further subdivided into assessment markers (*fortunately, sadly*), manner-of-speaking markers (*frankly, bluntly speaking*), evidential markers (*certainly, conceivably*) and hearsay markers (*reportedly, allegedly*). Parallel markers "signal a message in addition to the basic message" (Fraser 1996: 4). Included in this category are the so called deference markers (*sir, your honour* as addressees; or, *John, in god's name* as explanations) and conversational management markers (*now, well, ok*), the latter type being considered to be discourse markers by Schiffrin (1987).

[7] In a more recent work, Fraser deletes the topic change markers and replaces them by temporal markers (see Fraser 2005).

[8] For a more detailed survey with numerous examples refer to Fraser (1996).

lexical ones from being discourse markers. Furthermore, Fraser seems to consider only markers functioning on the textual level, disqualifying those inherently interpersonal, i.e. functioning within what Schiffrin calls the participation structure, e.g., *well, ok, oh*.

2.1.4   Diane Blakemore: Relevance theory

Diane Blakemore considers discourse markers, referring to them as "discourse connectives", within the relevance theory framework (cf. Sperber and Wilson 1986). Blakemore maintains that discourse markers might be thought of as being capable of conveying a type of Gricean conventional implicature[9] (see Blakemore 1992: 148) and is especially interested in how discourse markers limit the scope of these implicatures, in other words, how discourse markers impose constraints on the process of the addressee recovering the implied meaning of an utterance (see Blakemore 1992).

According to Blakemore, discourse markers do not have representational meaning (content meaning), they do not denote notions from the real world, yet, they encompass procedural meaning, "which consists of instructions about how to manipulate the conceptual representation of the utterance" (Fraser 1999: 936; cf. Blakemore 1992).

Discourse markers as constraints on contexts may work on at least four levels:

(1) Discourse markers like *so, therefore,* or *also* may give rise to a contextual implication.

(2) Items such as *after all, moreover*, or *furthermore* may "strengthen an existing assumption by providing better evidence for it."

(3) Information conveyed by an utterance can be also relevant in a way that it "may contradict an existing assumption," illustrated by, for example, *however, still,* or *but*.

(4) Finally, discourse markers *anyway, incidentally*, or *by the way* may "specify the role of the utterance in discourse" (see Blakemore 1992: 138-141).[10]

2.2   Note on terminology

As it is also evident from the above review, discourse markers have been investigated within a number of theoretical frameworks, e.g. relevance theory, conversational or discourse analysis, argumentation theory, computational linguistics, formal or cognitive

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[9] A **conventional implicature**, as opposed to an **ordinary conversational implicature** (an implicit proposition that can be inferred from what is said on the basis of pragmatics), is an implicit proposition which is encoded in a particular linguistic expression, thus not necessarily inferred (see Schourup 1999: 243).

[10] These four categories more or less parallel Fraser's classification into inferential markers, elaborative markers, contrastive markers and topic change markers, respectively (see Fraser 1996).

linguistics, etc. Although the approaches and their notions of discourse markers are diverse, which results in a great abundance of information on the topic, there still seems to be a lack of agreement with regard to an unequivocal definition, as well as to delimiting the membership of the category. Quoting Schiffrin, "it is difficult to synthesize the results of past research into a set of coherent and consistent findings and, thus, to integrate scholarly findings into an empirically grounded theory" (2003: 65).[11]

Understandably, definitions differ according to what data (hypothetical sentences, recordings of actual speech), medium (written, spoken language) and/or theoretical paradigm have been employed, and what the focal interest of a particular researcher was. Despite these discrepancies, majority of the above mentioned terms are used with overlapping reference, sometimes even interchangeably. Thus, for the sake of simplicity, the present study will adhere to the term 'discourse marker' as understood and used by Schiffrin (1987) or Lenk (1997), for this term is used probably most frequently and has none of the undesirable connotations of, for example, 'particle' or 'connective'.[12]

2.3   Characteristics

Irrespective of the applied approach, there seems to be a general consent with regard to what characteristics these 'mystery particles' may have in common (Longacre 1976, cited in Lenk 1997). Therefore, before a comprehensive definition of discourse markers is presented let us consider some distinctive characteristics of discourse markers.

In what follows, several features of discourse markers will be discussed, taking into account those generally agreed upon, as well as those being differently interpreted or subject to a greater controversy.

Following Schourup (1999) and Müller (2005), the following can be considered features of discourse markers: connectivity, non-truth-conditionality, optionality, orality, position within a discourse unit, and multi-categoriality. While some attributes, i.e. multi-

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[11] Moreover, the range of approaches applied to analysing these items is so varied that, as Blakemore (2004: 221) claims, it is difficult even to say whether some twenty or more terms which have been so far used to address these items – for example, 'mystery particle' (Longacre 1976, cited in Lenk 1997), 'discourse marker' (Schiffrin 1987; Lenk 1997), 'pragmatic marker' (Fraser 1990; 1996; 2005; Brinton 1996), 'discourse particle' (Schourup 1983), 'discourse connective' (Blakemore 1992), 'discourse operator' (Redeker 1991), 'cue marker', 'pragmatic particle' (Östman 1982; Gupta 1992) refer to the same phenomenon.

[12] For a comprehensive explanation of the difference between discourse marker and particle see Schiffrin 1987; Schourup 1999; Lenk 1997.

Mosegaard Hansen accounts for the difference between discourse marker and connective as follows: "not all items which are capable of assuming a discourse marking function actually fit the traditional description of particles as monomorphemic, non-inflectable items, and the label "discourse particle" is therefore misleading because of its formal component" (2005: 10).

categoriality, position and orality, are not always reliable indicators in determining the status of discourse markers, categories as syntactic and semantic **optionality**, **non-truth-conditionality** and **connectivity** seem to be criterial for the discourse marker status (see Schourup 1999: 233).

2.3.1 Connectivity

What seems to be the primary characteristic of discourse markers is their capacity to connect the stretches of discourse (see Mosegaard Hansen 2005; Blakemore 1987: 105; Fraser 1996: 186; Lenk 1998: 52). Their function is to mark the relations between the foregoing and the ongoing discourse between which discourse markers appear. As Crystal puts it, discourse markers can be thought of as "the oil which helps us perform the complex task of spontaneous speech production and interaction smoothly and efficiently" (Crystal 1988: 48, cited in Müller 2005: 1).

Many researchers claim that discourse markers connect successive segments (see Schiffrin 1987; Fraser 1999). While there is some truth in the argument that discourse markers typically mark the relations between immediately adjacent stretches of discourse, it may not always be the case. Lenk (1997; 1998) maintains that besides these so called 'local markers' (e.g. *and, but*), which work on the local level between neighbouring segments, there are other working on a more global discourse level signalling relations between segments further apart (e.g. *however, anyway*).[13] Consider, for instance, this example from Fraser where 'however' does not establish connection with the immediately preceding utterance, but is logically related to the immediately preceding utterance:

> A: *I don't want to go very much.*
> B: *John said he would be there.*
> A: *However, I do have some sort of obligation to be there.*

(Fraser 1999: 938)

Furthermore, discourse markers do not necessarily have to tie two discourse segments. In some cases, it is not two linguistic contexts that are connected by means of a discourse marker, but an utterance can be anchored to a context in general (see

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[13] "Global discourse markers establish connections between interrupted, disrupted, related, or even unrelated topics, between various kinds of digressions and their respective contexts, between inserted comments or additionally added information and their contextual environment, and between already mentioned items and items that the speaker still wants to insert and thus signals to the hearer as 'expected to occur'." (Lenk 1997)

Mosegaard Hansen 1997: 1260, cited in Schourup 1999: 231). In situations like the following, what the conclusion, expressed by the utterance, is derived from is not another verbally expressed proposition, not another linguistic context, yet, the non-verbal, non-linguistic observation of the situation made by the speaker:

> *[Seeing someone return home with parcels]*
> *So you've spent all your money.*
>
> (Blakemore 1987: 86, cited in Schourup 1999: 230)

2.3.2 Non-truth-conditionality

Müller asserts that discourse markers have "little or no semantic meaning in themselves" (2005: 27). This argument is in most cases true given the status of many discourse markers and the sources they are recruited from. Many discourse markers are, indeed, non-content word class members such as conjunctions, particles or interjections. Nevertheless, even in those cases when a discourse marker is recruited from a class with content meaning, such as adverbs, lexical verbs, or from a category of discourse markers evolved from lexicalised phrases, the particular discourse marker is partially deprived of the original lexical meaning, contributing little or nothing to the truth conditions of a proposition, and serving solely for pragmatic purposes.

Consider, for example, the word *incidentally* used as an adverb modifying the verb phrase as in (x), thus contributing to the truth conditions of the proposition, and as a discourse marker contributing nothing to the interpretation of the verb phrase in (y):

> (x). *The moon landing was only incidentally about science.*
> (y). *The [orchestra], incidentally, will perform outdoors for its final concert.*
>
> (from *Longman dictionary of contemporary English*, 2003: 730)

Thus, rather than to say that discourse markers have no meaning, it can be said that discourse markers do not contribute to the truth conditions of an utterance in which they occur (see Schourup 1999: 232).

2.3.3 **Optionality**

Schourup proposes that optionality, the third attribute crucial for deciding the discourse marker status, should be considered in two senses (1999: 231). The first one follows Schiffrin's and Fraser's claim that discourse markers are removable from the sentence leaving the syntactic structure intact while preserving its grammaticality (Schiffrin 1987: 328; Fraser 1998: 22)[14] as in the following examples:

> *Well, let me see.* (grammatically correct)
> *Let me see*.   (grammatically correct)

Schourup further states that optionality is perceived in that discourse markers "do not enlarge the possibilities for semantic relationship between the elements they associate" (Schourup 1999: 231). In other words, should a discourse marker be omitted from a sentence, the relationship a particular discourse marker "signals [between two utterances, or, the foregoing and the ongoing discourse segments] is still available to the hearer, though no longer explicitly cued" (Schourup 1999: 231), thus leaving their semantic interpretation intact, as in:

> *Others are going to Stoke. However, I'm going to Paris.*
> *Others are going to Stoke. I'm going to Paris.*

> (Schourup 1999: 231)

This, however, does not suggest that discourse markers are redundant.[15] They are in any case recognised as "guiding the hearer toward a particular interpretation and simultaneously ruling out unintended interpretations" (Schourup 1999: 231-232; cf. Brinton 1996: 34), therefore adding to their competence to decode a message behind the discourse.

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[14] Optionality is closely related with what Schourup calls 'weak clause association' and lists it as one of his seven characteristics of discourse markers (1999: 232-233). Schourup quotes Briton who is of the opinion that discourse markers appear "either outside the syntactic structure or loosely attached to it" (Brinton 1996: 34, cited in Schourup 1999: 233). In the present work, the 'weak clause association' is understood as a hyponym of the attribute of optionality, and thus not included in the above list of features.

2.3.4 Orality

Majority of researchers is of the opinion that discourse markers occur primarily in speech rather than in written form; though their status as items occurring in written texts cannot be denied (see Schourup 1999: 234). However, Schourup points out that this association of discourse markers with the speech medium can be attributed to the fact that the predominant tendency of many researchers is to analyse discourse markers based on speech data (1999: 234).

2.3.5 Position within a discourse unit

Discourse markers are more often than not found to occur discourse-initially (see Schiffrin 1987: 31-32, 328). This can be, as Schourup remarks, accounted for the fact that the function of discourse markers is to eliminate the possible unintended interpretations, an utterance would allow, unless the desired interpretation is explicitly indicated by a discourse marker.[16] Therefore, "it will make communicative sense to restrict contexts early before interpretation can run astray." (Schourup 1999: 233; see also Aijmer 2001: 55)

Nevertheless, position of a discourse marker is not invariably restricted to the initial position. [17] In fact, other studies have demonstrated that discourse markers appear utterance-finally or are even parenthetically inserted between propositions in medial positions. Moreover, Lenk (1998) reports that discourse markers form separate tone units, what further complicates the situation, making it more difficult to state whether a particular discourse marker relates to the prior or the ongoing discourse. Thus, position must not be taken as a criterion for discourse marker status. Taking this into consideration, it will be simply concluded with Müller that discourse markers "may occur at the beginning, middle, or end of a discourse unit or form a discourse unit of their own" (2005: 27).

2.3.6 Multi-categoriality

Discourse markers do not comprise a distinctive word class category, they rather "belong to the same functional class" (Brinton 1990: 47; cf. Schiffrin 1987: 40-41). The "category" is considerably heterogeneous including **conjunctions** (*and, but, or*), **particles** (*well, yes*), **interjections** (*oh*), **verbs** (perception verbs such as *see, look, listen*; the verb *say*), or

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[16] For a more detailed explication see section 2.4.3 'Constraints on interpretation' later in this work.

[17] Nevertheless, Schourup points out that "most items considered DMs are at least possible in initial position, and may occur there predominantly" (1999: 233).

adverbs (*now, actually*). Apart from these, various **lexicalised clauses** (*y'know, I mean, I guess, as far as I know*) and **meta-talk** (*this is the point, what I mean*) qualify as members of the category (see Schiffrin 1987: 327).

Similarly, from the morphological point of view, discourse markers can include short one- to three-syllable items (e.g. *well, now, anyway*), as well as longer lexicalised clauses (e.g. *what I mean*), "which are used with pragmatic meaning that differs from the propositional meaning these same items can have in another conversational context" (Lenk 1997).

Generally, it is agreed that discourse markers have evolved from linguistic items that, unlike discourse markers, have propositional meaning through the process of delexicalization and pragmaticalization, e.g. *I guess, y'know, well*, etc. If used as discourse markers, these items are partially deprived of their literal meaning, they most often undergo phonological reduction, and tend to appear as single items in an intonation unit (see Lenk 1998). Nevertheless, although deprived of their original propositional meaning, discourse markers are in many cases influenced by the semantic content and distributional characteristics of their ancestors (see Schiffrin 1987: 127). Similar view is hold by Lenk who claims that since the meaning of discourse markers stems from lexical meaning it is rational to expect a relationship between these two, i.e. the original lexical item and the item used as discourse marker (see Lenk 1998: 48, cited in Schourup 1999: 252).

2.4   Functions of discourse markers

It was indicated above that one of the distinguishing functions of discourse markers is that of marking relations between formally or logically adjacent discourse segments. Discourse markers have been, nevertheless, documented to serve a somewhat broader range of functions, which will be depicted in the upcoming section.

Having been considered merely as 'fillers' (Brown 1977: 109; Brown-Yule 1983: 106, cited in Lenk 1997) "patching up" discourse slots, discourse markers have gradually become to be recognized to fulfil important pragmatic functions. Let us thus survey those that seem most significant, namely, the contribution of discourse markers to the overall coherence of the discourse, the function of discourse markers to organise discourse segments as contextual coordinates of talk and their function to rule out the unintended interpretations of an utterance.

2.4.1 Contribution to coherence, organisation of discourse segments

As sketched above, the main function of discourse markers is to tie the discourse segments together contributing thus to the overall coherence of the discourse. According to Schiffrin, the "analysis of discourse markers is part of the more general analysis of discourse coherence, [that is,] how speakers and hearers jointly integrate forms, meanings, and actions to make overall sense out of what is said" (Schiffrin 1987: 49).

Schiffrin further claims that discourse markers provide **contextual coordinates** that aid the hearer in his/her interpretation of an utterance (1987: 326). The contexts to which discourse markers can anchor utterances are those of participants and text (see Schiffrin 1987: 323); particularly locating the utterances "on two proximal/distal axes within their particular discourse contexts" (Ibid. 326). Discourse markers that index utterances to participant contexts are referred to by Schiffrin as 'participant coordinates' and they fall into two categories. They can be either proximal and indicate that "an utterance is focused on either speaker", or, they can be distal, thus indicating that the utterance is focused on the hearer, or both proximal and distal (Schiffrin 1987: 323). Discourse markers that index utterances to text, i.e. 'textual coordinates', can focus either on the prior text (proximal) or the upcoming text (distal), or both (Ibid. 323).

Similarly, Aijmer states that considering the domain discourse markers operate in, they can be divided into markers that signal relations between discourse segments within the text (they will be referred to in the present work as 'text-oriented discourse markers' or simply 'textual markers'; e.g. *and, however*) and markers that fulfil principally interpersonal functions (henceforth referred to as 'interaction-oriented discourse markers' or 'interactional markers', e.g., *well, y'know*), (see Aijmer 2002: Chapters 1.10, 1.11).

2.4.2 Discourse markers as constraints on interpretation

Blakemore (1992), considering discourse markers within the framework of relevance theory, sees discourse markers as imposing constraints on the possibilities how utterances can be interpreted. In other words, in her opinion discourse markers assist the addressee in how to interpret an implicated meaning of an utterance the way the speaker that uttered it really meant it.

To illustrate Blakemore's notion consider this example from Schourup (1999: 244):

(x). *Tom can open Bill's safe.*
(y). *He knows the combination.*

According to Schourup, two interpretations are possible if one maintains that (x) is a part of the context in which (y) is to be interpreted. The first interpretation can be schematised as 'conclusion-then-premise', that is to say, the proposition in (y) is the evidence for (x). The second interpretation might be tagged as 'premise-then-conclusion', in which (y) would be an implicated conclusion of the proposition under (x).

Nevertheless, if one prefaces the second proposition with '*so*', the interpretation becomes unambiguous in the sense that the discourse marker '*so*' disqualifies the second possible interpretation of 'conclusion-then-premise'.

(x^1). *Tom can open Bill's safe.* [premise]
(y^1). *So he knows the combination.* [implicated conclusion]

On the other hand, the first interpretation can be indicated by means of, for instance, the discourse marker '*after all*' preceding the second proposition as in the following example:

(x^2). *Tom can open Bill's safe.* [conclusion]
(y^2). *After all, he knows the combination.* [evidence/premise]

2.4.3   Mediators of mental processes

Interesting, yet, somehow neglected is the argument of Lawrence Schourup (1982) who believes that one of discourse markers' functions lies in displaying various "mental processes speakers are engaged in during and parallel to utterance production" (Lenk 1997). Schourup holds that during a conversation there are activated three distinctive worlds of 'conversational activity', namely, (1) "the private world of current disclosable thought"; (2) "the shared world in which speakers collaborate"; and (3) "the other world, containing the disclosable but otherwise invisible thinking of some co-participant(s)." (Schourup 1982: 103, cited in Lenk 1997) He suggests that discourse markers are engaged in "disclosure of covert thinking" (Schourup 1982: 103, cited in Lenk 1997) that parallels the conversational interaction and helps speakers to manage the above mentioned conversational worlds (see Lenk 1997).

The so far surveyed functions can be appended with a more detailed list presented by Brinton (1990: 47). According to her, discourse markers are found to:

(a) "to initiate discourse";

(b) "to mark a boundary in discourse, that is, to indicate a shift or partial shift in topic";

(c) "to preface a response or a reaction";

(d) "to serve as a filler or delaying tactic";

(e) "to aid the speaker in holding the floor";

(f) "to effect an interaction or sharing between speaker and hearer";

(g) to bracket the discourse either cataphorically or anaphorically";

(h) "to mark either foregrounded or backgrounded information"

(Brinton 1990:47-48)

The above listed functions will be elucidated in detail later in this work when the discourse markers here analysed will be considered individually.

2.5   Definition

Before proceeding any further, it is important to make it explicit what definition the present study would resort to.

Schiffrin is relatively vague in formulating her definition of discourse markers. However, this vagueness can be attributed to a wide range of roles a single discourse marker can enter and a wide range of sources discourse markers can be recruited from (see also Pons 2005: 6).

Schiffrin defines discourse markers as follows: "I define [discourse] markers at a more theoretical level as members of a functional class of **verbal (and non verbal) devices** which provide contextual coordinates for ongoing talk" (Schiffrin 1987: 41, stress added JB). Her definition appears evidently flexible, as it comprises textual as well as interpersonal items (like *hear, y'know*), and even items of non-verbal character – excluded by Fraser (1990)[18] – it will be the one exploited in the present study, yet, with a number of reservations.[19, 20]

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[18] Fraser restricts the sources for recruiting the items referable as discourse markers: "A DM is **a lexical expression** which signals the relationship of either [c]ontrast [...], [i]mplication [...]; or [e]laboration [...] between the interpretation

Building upon Schiffrin's operational definition of discourse markers as "sequentially dependent elements which bracket units of talk" (1987: 31) and Schourup's list of attributes, it can be concluded that **discourse markers belong to a heterogeneous class of expressions of variable scope that are syntactically optional, do not affect the truth conditions of an utterance and their distinguishing function is to mark the relations between adjacent or non-adjacent discourse segments**.

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of S2 [the discourse segment DMs are a part of] and the interpretation of S1 [the prior discourse segment]" (Fraser 2005, stress added JB). His class of markers comprises only of items, restricting those non-lexical or non-verbal.

[19] As it would be elucidated later, Japanese discourse markers represent an even broader category accepting not only lexicalised items but non-lexical as well as non-verbal items (e.g. ingressive air), and that is the reason why a more flexible definition is required for the analysis.

[20] As demonstrated above, Schiffrin's position that a discourse marker „has to be commonly used in initial position of an utterance" (1987: 328) does not apply universally.

3 Discourse markers in Japanese

Japanese discourse markers represent a considerably large stock of items including connectives (*sorede* 'therefore', *demo* 'but'), adverbs (*mā* 'well'), interjections (*na* 'hey', 'right'), or demonstrative pronouns (*ano* 'well'). In addition Japanese supply of discourse markers comprises the so called sentence-final particles (*ne, yo*) and *aizuchi*, or backchannel utterances (e.g. *hai* 'yes', 'now'). All of the above mentioned seem to comply with the more or less universal criteria, based originally on the studies of English discourse markers. That is to say, all the categories of Japanese discourse markers are **syntactically optional**, they **do not affect the truth conditions of an utterance** and their distinguishing function is to **signal relations between adjacent or non-adjacent discourse segments** on **textual** and/or **interpersonal levels**.

3.1 Survey of the major works in the field

Most studies on Japanese discourse markers appear to be descendants either of Schiffrin's approach (Onodera 2004; Fujita 2001; Nagura 1997; Kawamori et al. 1998) or they work within the framework of relevance theory (Matsui 2002). Few studies, on the other hand, exploit Japanese sources (Nakajima 2009; Yang 2007; also partially Onodera 2004). It thus may be useful to present here a brief survey of major works on Japanese discourse markers, pointing out their similarities and significant differences stemming from their theoretical frameworks.

3.1.1 Onodera: Synchronic and diachronic approach to Japanese discourse markers

Onodera's *Japanese Discourse Markers: Synchronic and Diachronic Analysis* (2004) is probably the most complex work on Japanese discourse markers. Onodera's analysis inter-combines four perspectives: historical-pragmatic, discourse-analytic, typological, and semantic/syntactic. The main contribution of the work is a systematic description of the evolution of Japanese discourse markers (from approximately the 14th century on), as well as a complex analysis of functions of the selected discourse markers used in contemporary Japanese, namely, the connectives *demo, dakedo*; and the interjections *na*, and *ne*.

Onodera first presents her synchronic analysis. Basing her research on naturally occurring speech data, she identifies the main functions of four markers: *demo, dakedo, na,*

and *ne*. Then she turns to the discussion of the development of the two groups of discourse markers across different historical periods from the 14th century up to present, basing her analysis on data from literature which is presumed to reflect the colloquial Japanese as it was used at a particular historical period.

As Onodera demonstrates throughout the book, the four items, now also used as discourse markers, underwent cardinal changes, to which she refers to as **pragmaticalization**. In her study, pragmaticalization is defined as a process of "meaning functional change, involving shifts from the semantic to the pragmatic domain" (Onodera 2004: 12). In other words, the elements under scrutiny underwent changes that involved shift in meaning or function to "a more speaker-based, discourse-based meaning" (Suzuki 2007: 298). The processes will be illustrated below.

Onodera identifies two source groups from which the present day discourse markers emerged. The first source is the category of ***demo* type connectives** (adversative conjunctions), which developed from clause-final connective devices (for instance, V 'gerund' + conjunction *mo* 'but'; or, V + conjunction *kedo* 'but'), all including a variant remnant of the copula '*da*' at the beginning: *demo, dakedo, dakara, datte, dewa, de, daga,* or *nanoni* (see Onodera 2004: 5). In these cases, the respective conjunction (*mo, kedo, kara, ga,* etc.) first occurred clause-finally. Then, it shifted its position, taking along its host, i.e. copula or the final part of a verb (the gerund marker '*te*' or the past marker '*ta*'), to appear clause initially (as *demo*, *dakedo, daga,* etc.).

Onodera observes that except for this shift from unit-final position to unit-initial position, the *demo* type elements also underwent a shift in function, that is to say, originally used as clause-final subordinative conjunctions only, they have gradually become to be used as discourse markers indicating the relations between text units, as well as encoding different pragmatic meanings, now clause-initially. Their development represents a change to more text-oriented or speaker-oriented function.

Onodera further shifts her attention to the **'markers of involvement'** *na* and *ne*, which have been found to operate at various positions within the clause. In addition, this class follows a developmental pattern somewhat different from the *demo* type markers. Onodera's findings suggest that the items *na* and *ne* originally occurred unit-finally or unit-internally, and only later emerged as discourse markers employed unit-initially. Nevertheless, the author claims that the process of pragmaticalization of particles *na, noo, ne* is different from the *demo* type markers, which followed the pattern 'propositional function' > 'textual function' > 'expressive function' (see Traugott's functional-semantic

model, 1982: 15). The *na* elements already had expressive or interpersonal function at the time they started to function as discourse markers and developed the textual function later.

In relation to the positional move detected in both cases, Onodera points out that it is in fact vital for an expression to come **utterance-initially** in order to accumulate expressive meaning and fulfil the role of a discourse marker. She explains that it is the unit-initial position that "frames the rest of the utterance within the speaker's stance, evaluation and orientation towards the interactional context" (Suzuki 2007: 300, cf. Onodera 2004: 120). Nevertheless, Onodera's point seems not to be shared by other researchers. The motivations and reasons for the discrepancy will be elucidated later.

3.1.2 Other significant studies on Japanese discourse markers

While Onodera considers it crucial for discourse markers to appear unit-initially, different studies, despite the fact that they adhere to Schiffrin's criteria as Onodera does, include also sentence-final particles and backchannel expressions that occur at various places within an utterance (Fujita 2001; Kawamori et al. 1998). All the studies, however, agree on the same presumption that discourse markers are "sequentially dependent elements which bracket units of talk" (Schiffrin 1987: 31). Nonetheless, unlike Onodera, they interpret bracketing as coming at the beginning **or** at the end of the unit, **or** being parenthetically included within a unit. What is more important, even though they are less strict in delimiting the category of discourse markers, most of the studies manage to advocate their stance, showing that items used in medial or final positions display the same functions as the discourse markers appearing unit-initially as delimited by Onodera. [21]

Nagura (1997) scrutinizes discourse markers referring to them as **hesitations** (*īyodomi*). She points out that her interest is what has traditionally been called hesitations, excluding, however, and seemingly without relevant reasoning, sentence-final particles and *aizuchi*. She predominantly concentrates on adult use of discourse markers, departing from the assumption that the use of discourse markers varies in accordance with variables as gender, age or social role of the speaker. She first identifies the most often used discourse markers: *ano, mā, sono* and *yappari*. Nagura's research evidenced that discourse markers,

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[21] The discrepancy may stem from the fact that Onodera apparently considers discourse markers on the textual level (i.e. discourse markers signalling relationships between discourse segments within a narrative, for instance, referring predominantly to the speaker's talk), while the other mentioned researchers take into consideration also markers functioning on the interpersonal level (i.e. they also include markers playing role in structuring discourse of a number of speakers relating to each other's speech, for example, within a conversation).

as used by her participants, who were all close friends, took up a considerable amount of time (there occurred more than 635 tokens identifiable as discourse markers in ten-minute-long conversations between ten participant couples). The analysis indicates that while there was a considerable variation due to gender: discourse markers were used more frequently by male participants (1.3 times more); there were no salient differences with respect to age group. In addition, Nagura analyzed presumed variations in the use of discourse markers across contexts. Basically, she detected that the frequency of discourse markers used in formal contexts (formal meeting, lecture) significantly exceeded the use of the phenomena in casual conversations between friends and family members. Finally, Nagura made an attempt to clarify the motivation to use discourse markers by the Japanese. She concludes that in the culture where expressing oneself directly is not preferred and where establishing positive interpersonal relations is considered important, the speakers of such a culture tend not to sound too assertive, employing pragmatic phenomena like discourse markers or final particles (see Nagura 1997: 216-217).

Fujita (2001) presents a qualitative analysis of the discourse markers *ano* and *sono*. Her focus is not just on the textual functions of the selected markers, but rather on the mental and socio-pragmatic aspects of using these discourse markers, suggesting, similarly as Nagura (1997), that they are used to establish a positive interpersonal relationship between speakers.

Kawamori et al. (1998) based their study on an analysis of spoken task-oriented dialogue corpus. Their major contribution is a systematic taxonomy of discourse markers, description of prosodic features of discourse markers and elucidation of functions of discourse markers with respect to different positions in an utterance (see section 3.2 below for further clarification).

Nakajima (2009) presents a systematic treatment of what she calls **fillers**. She, unlike the previously mentioned researchers who depart from the operational definitions and work within various frameworks of Western linguistics (Schiffrin, Fraser, Blakemore), refers to relevant studies solely of Japanese provenience (Isehaya 1953; Endo 1953; Shiozawa 1979; Okazaki 1987; Maynard 1997; Yamane 1997, 2002). She not only refers to works of Japanese origin which deal with discourse markers, and thus brings a new insight into the problem, moreover, she attempts to elucidate different textual and interpersonal functions of discourse markers in relation with the position they appear within an utterance, also suggesting what mental processes may have triggered the utterance of a given discourse marker (see section 3.3 for a discussion of her findings).

3.2 Sources and categories of Japanese discourse markers

As mentioned above the category of Japanese discourse markers encompasses a significantly broad stock of items. Considering different word classes, Japanese discourse markers, which have been also referred to as *mu'imigo* 'semantically empty words', *kuchigomori* or *īyodomi* 'hesitations', or simply fillers, are recruited from among interjections (*a* 'oh', *na* 'hey', *hora* 'look'); particles (*ne* 'isn't it'); conjunctions (*dakara* 'so', *tsumari* 'in other words'); adverbs (*mā* 'well', *nanka* 'like'); or, demonstrative pronouns (*ano* 'well') (see Nakajima 2009: 4).

Kawamori et al. (1998) identify two principal categories of discourse markers on the formal-functional basis, namely, **phrasal markers** (e.g. *sore-kara-desu-ne* 'and then' and *sō-shimasu-to* 'the case being so') "with inherent meaning directly related to the discourse" (94), and **non-phrasal markers**. The latter is further subdivided into **anaphoric fillers** (e.g. *a* 'oh', *e* 'eh'); **cataphoric fillers** (e.g. *ano* 'well', *ēto* 'let me see'); **responsives** (*aizuchi*, e.g. *hai, un* 'yeah', 'uh huh'); **sentence-final particles** (*yo, ne, zo*); and c**onjunctives** (*sorede* 'therefore', *dakedo* 'but') and other **adverbial expressions** like *ja* (then), *de* (then), *ato* (in addition) (see Kawamori et al. 1998: 95).

Fillers are syntactically optional items, which do not contribute to the propositional meaning of an utterance (Nakajima 2009: 2). They are usually non-lexical, short, one or two morpheme words, filling out pauses, usually representing **cognitive linkage** between parts of discourse, that is to say, indicating different mental processes going on in the speaker's mind (hesitation, searching for words, astonishment, surprise, recognition, etc.). Fillers are further subdivided into **anaphoric fillers** and **cataphoric fillers**. Anaphoric fillers refer back to a context or an utterance which elicited their uttering (*a, e, ma*) and cataphoric fillers, which are said to anticipate continuation of speech (*ano, ē, ēto*) (see Kawamori et al. 1998: 97).

Responsives, or *aizuchi*, are backchannel utterances, which signal the involvement of the hearer in what the speaker is saying and prompting the next utterance. According to Maynard (1993) *aizuchi* have these six functions: they signal (1) continuation, (2) understanding, (3) agreement, (4) emotional response, (5) support of the speaker's opinion, (6) addition, correction, or request for clarification (160). They are inherently anaphoric, because "they always presuppose something to which they are used to reply" (Kawamori et al. 1998: 97). Illustrative of this category are markers like *hai, un, n, ē* or *sōnandesuka*. They are not considered discourse markers when employed as an expression

of definite acknowledgement (= 'I agree'), without fulfilling any discourse marking function (see Ichikawa et al. 1998: 3). The difference between the discourse marking usage and the confirmation marking usage should emerge from the following conversations:

(1) *hai* as definite positive response

yūhan wa mō tabemashitaka?
'Have you had dinner?'

hai, tabemashita.
'Yes, I have.'

(2) *hai* as discourse marker

hai, hontō arigatō gozaimashita.
'Well, thank you very much!'

(uttered by a host of a radio programme after the guest's final comment)

In the first case, *hai* is used as a definite positive answer to a yes/no question. On the other hand, in example (2), no question or any other stimulus triggering the utterance of *hai* as a marker of positive response or an acknowledgment preceded the actual utterance of *hai*. Yet, it was meant merely to introduce the utterance, with which the speaker wanted to conclude the whole programme.

Although Onodera disqualifies **sentence-final particles** from the discourse marker membership, since they do not come utterance-initially, other researchers argue that sentence-final particles fully qualify as discourse markers. First of all, they do bracket units of talk closing up utterances, they are syntactically optional, they do not contribute to the truth conditions of the utterance, and they have connective function in a sense that they either refer back to what has been said or are meant to be used to elicit response; e.g. particles *yo* or *ne*, which prompt the addressee's involvement in conversation (see, for example, Morita 2005: 8). Saigo (2011) believes that "the particles derive sequential functions from their pragmatic properties: through the use of particles, the speaker explicitly indicates his attention as to how the utterance should be responded to in what is sequentially adjacent" (20).[22]

The last category, encompassing a number of word classes, i.e. **adverbs** (*yappari* 'as expected', 'after all', *mā* 'well') **and conjunctives** (*demo* 'but', *soshitara* 'then'), is significant for its **interpersonal** as well as **textual functions**. While adverbs are mostly involved in indicating the speaker's stance, conjunctions generally display various relations between discourse segments.

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[22] Schourup is of a different opinion:"Items of marginal clause membership appearing exclusively in final position, such as Japanese sentence-final emphasis particles (*yo, ze, zo*), which clearly lack connectivity, are not generally included among DMs" (Schourup 1999: 233). Nevertheless, Schourup fails to clearly elucidate the reason for such exclusion, and his argument that final particles lack connectivity is easily refutable by Saigo's claim, cited above, and Saigo's successive examples.

3.3 Position of Japanese discourse markers

Unlike in English, where discourse markers tend to occur utterance initially, Japanese discourse markers are employed at different positions within the utterance (see Fujita 2001: 149; Kawamori et al. 1998; but see Onodera 2004 for a contradicting opinion). Kawamori et al. (1998) observe that different types of discourse markers come at different positions in the utterance. They found out that discourse markers *a, e* or *mā* (usually short items uttered without vowel lengthening with an abrupt stop either at higher or lower pitch), referred to as **anaphoric fillers**, usually occur **unit-initially** referring back to the previous situation (1998: 97). They believe that the anaphoric fillers are "generally uttered when there is an antecedent situation […] that triggers [their] utterance: a situation that is surprising, outstanding, or simply salient for some reason" (Ibid.). Another class of discourse markers, referred to as **cataphoric fillers**, encompassing such items as *ēto* or *ano* (one- or two-morpheme items, pronounced with a lengthened vowel at higher pitch), are reported to be used **unit-internally**. These markers are said to prepare the addressee "for imminent continuance of speech by signalling, for example, hesitation" (Ibid.). The third group of markers, identified as **responsives** (*aizuchi*), e.g. *hai, ē, un* (with fall-rise intonation), are said to come **unit-finally** (see Kawamori et al. 1998: 97, 98).

Nakajima (2009) also suggests that the function of discourse markers varies depending on the position where they are used. Her findings are very similar to those of the above mentioned study; however, she goes into more detail, explaining what psychological processes may have triggered the use of a particular group. Her analysis exhibits that a discourse marker used in **utterance-initial position** signals "a turn, an opening, a follow-up and a paraphrase of the utterance" or a repair, possibly referring back to previous context. Furthermore, Nakajima claims that some utterance-initial discourse markers represent the speaker's modality (surprise, finding, etc.). The discourse markers most frequently appearing in initial position are, for example, *a/ā, e, ēto, de/dē, nn*, or *kono*.

Consider the functions of *de* and *ā* in the following example:

[Two friends discuss how their relatives met.]

A: *<u>de</u>, chūgakkō mō, issho datta n desu yo … dē*
    '<u>And</u>, they were together in middle school too.'

    issho no kurasu dē, de mata issho no kōkō itte,
    'they were in the same class, and then went to the same high school'

onīchan ga ne
'Our big brothers did.'

B: *ā, a, onīchan ga ne*
       '<u>Oh, I see</u>, your big brothers.'

<div align="right">(Jones & Ono 2001: 9)</div>

'*De*' in the first utterance not only signals the beginning of a new utterance, in addition, it logically connects the utterance with the previous narrative. '*A*' or '*ā*' in the utterance of speaker B, on the other hand, supports Nakajima's observation, that utterance-initial discourse markers encode speaker's modality, in this case, '*a*' signals that the speaker acknowledges and understands the information he has just been disclosed.

Discourse markers at **utterance-medial position** were found to express a linkage between the two surrounding strips of discourse as well as an "attempt of the speaker to direct the addressee's attention to him or her" (Nakajima 2009: 1). From among the most often used utterance-medial discourse markers, *ano/anō, mō, mā, nanka* were detected in Nakajima's study. In the following example, *mā* is used utterance medially to gain the speaker time to think about what to say next while the speaker does not lose the floor, directing attention to the utterance and signalling intention to continue:

anō, ichiyō desu ne, <u>mā</u>, sorede:: kaisha no hō wa kyō kara shussha shite hatarakidashite orimasu.

'Well, it concerns everyone without exception, doesn't it, <u>well</u>, therefore, from now on everyone should start working immediately after they come to work.'

<div align="right">(Nakajima 2009: 5)</div>

Finally, the **utterance-final position** not only indicates the end of an utterance, i.e. it brackets the utterance, it can also imply an ellipsis or hesitation about saying something embarrassing, which is usually signalled by markers like *hai, ē, un* (see Nakajima 2009: 1, 20), as in the example below, in which the speaker makes an ellipsis to soften the negative judgement:

desukara, shanaitaisei nitsuite wa mattaku goshinpai itadaku koto mo gozaimasen shi, <u>hai</u>.

'Therefore, [he] isn't even concerned about the company structure…, <u>hai</u>.'

<div align="right">(Nakajima 2009: 6)</div>

3.4   Clustering of discourse markers

Discourse markers are observed to cluster, e.g. *demo-nanka-sa*. Not only do the speakers gain time to perform the following conversational move, by clustering of discourse markers the speakers also "reinforce the phatic function of the markers" (Aijmer, 2009: 185). The clustering might seem random at first sight; however, in many cases there emerge obvious patterns for arranging of certain types of discourse markers (see Nagura 1997: 205). As Nagura observes, the items like adverbs (*yappari, ato*), demonstrative pronouns (*ano, sono*), interjections (*ē*) are likely to group with final particles (*yo, ne, sa*) and copula (*da/desu*), e.g. *yappari ne, ano sa, mā desu ne, ē to desu yo* (Nagura 1997: 205).

Interjections are found to combine with other linguistic items applying the particle '*to*' (e.g. *ūn to ne*). Yet, some interjections are said to "resist being followed by any linguistic item" (Nagura 1997: 205). Nagura claims that interjections *nē* 'look' and *nā* 'you see', or exclamations *ara* or *eh* are not usually followed by copula or final particles because of their "strictly spontaneous nature" (Ibid.).

The patterns the speakers appear to follow in clustering discourse markers can be schematized as follows:

Clustering patterns of	discourse markers				
demonstrative pronoun	+	final particle			> *ano sa*
demonstrative pronoun	+	copula	+	final particle	> *are da na*
adverb	+	final particle			> *yappari ne*
adverb	+	copula	+	final particle	> *mā desu ne*
interjection (+ 'to')	+	final particle			> *ūn to ne*
interjection (+ 'to')	+	copula	+	final particle	> *ē to desu yo*

3.5   Functions of Japanese discourse markers

With reference to previous studies and her own observation of naturally occurring data, Nakajima (2009) lists the following representative functions of Japanese discourse markers: (1) signalling borders within discourse; indicating beginning of an utterance or its end; (2) signalling beginning of utterances, continuation of one's speech, or repairs; (3) filling pauses, and providing smoothness and coherence of discourse; (4) eliciting the partner's attention, interest; (5) expressing the cognitive processes in the speaker's mind; (6) indicating the hearer's concern; (7) implying hesitation or marking ellipsis (see Nakajima 2009: 10-11)

Functions of individual discourse markers are numerous, varying across contexts, and, as seen above, their functions even differ in accordance with their position within an utterance. To illustrate how vast the number of functions of a particular discourse marker in different context can be, take, for example, the discourse marker *ano*, which has been reported to have almost twenty functions in total (see Cook 1993; Koide 1983; Maynard 1989; Sadanobu & Takubo 1995; all cited in Fujita 2001: 162).

In conclusion, numerous as they seem, the functions of discourse markers appear to fall into three larger spheres. First, they fulfil the **discourse-oriented functions**, indicating relationships between discourse segments, demarcating discourse units and signalling boundaries, indicating beginning or end of utterances, a new topic, etc. Second, they can also fulfil **speaker-oriented functions**, involving the speakers in conversation, or prompting response. Finally, there are **socially-oriented functions**, establishing politeness, softening utterances and avoiding face-threatening acts.

3.6 Socio-pragmatic aspects of using discourse markers in Japanese

Apart from their textual functions (displaying discourse segments' relations) and interactional functions (showing involvement, claiming floor, etc.), discourse markers, especially those Japanese, are found to soften utterances and contribute to politeness of discourse (see Fujita 2001: 148, 149).

Brown and Levinson (1978, cited by Nagura 1997: 212) point out that hesitation phenomena, or discourse markers, lessen the face risk in a context when the speaker is about to convey undesirable message, i.e. disagreement, negation, refutation; or simply when a message could be perceived as too straightforward or imposing. Consequently, it is only natural that discourse markers are used there where a face-threatening act is about to be made, or has just been performed:

> [I]n claiming the turn or changing the topic, prefacing the utterance with a marker will considerably soften the sense of abruptness or imposition as this provides the recipient with a monitor space. And as a result saves the "face" of the addressee.
>
> (Nagura 1997: 212)

Thus, discourse markers could be said to contribute to politeness in avoiding imposition on the addressee. Nonetheless, Japanese discourse markers are more often than not employed in friendly casual conversation throughout positive contexts, or in contexts

where impeding the interlocutor's freedom of action is presumably not expected (Nagura 1997: 216). This suggests that there must be other factors eliciting the use of discourse markers at play.

An answer to this question can be provided by Maynard (1989) who reports that discourse markers are also employed in friendly context to establish or maintain a positive interpersonal relation between the speakers. She claims that discourse markers "help to create a casual, friendly discourse with a pleasant emotion to one's partner" (31; cited in Nagura 1997: 212). She illustrates her point on the case of the interactional marker *ne*, which is thought of as "a mediatory device to connect the speaking subject with the other, as it often solicits the other's confirmation and emotional support" (Maynard 1993: 11).

Another possible reason might be accounted for the observation that the Japanese prefer indirectness (see also Wierzbicka 2003: 93-94):

> [B]eing direct or straightforward is not favored in Japanese communication. The speaker is more likely to try not to sound assertive. Therefore, discourse markers and final particles are conventionally used as hedges or lubricants to modify the force of a speech act.
>
> (Nagura 1997: 217)

Thus, it can be tentatively assumed that these factors, that is to say, the tendency to avoid straightforwardness and imposition, and the natural urge to create or maintain positive interpersonal relations between speakers account for the fact that Japanese speakers use discourse markers with significant frequency, and it even can be said that discourse markers are used more often in Japanese than in English or Slovak.

4   Discourse Markers in Slovak

In what follows, survey of the principal works on discourse markers in the Slovak language will be presented along with an attempt to classify the target items referring to the observation of these works, and to describe basic characteristics of Slovak discourse markers and significant functions discourse markers fulfil in co-constructing discourse.

Unlike in English and Japanese, discourse markers in the Slovak language did not receive much attention. Discourse markers, or rather the categories usually included in the group, i.e. particles, interjections, conjunctions or adverbs, have been analysed separately either within morphology or stylistics. Nevertheless, it seems that what Slovak linguists call particles, or at least its subcategory, functionally overlaps with what has been referred to as discourse markers by linguists worldwide.

The pivotal study concerned with particles (in Slovak 'častice') is Jozef Mistrík's study K otázke častíc v slovenčine (1959), in which Mistrík defines particles as auxiliary expressions that reflect a speaker's personal attitude towards a proposition or to a part of it. What is more relevant, the author points out their function of having the potential to anchor an utterance they occur within into a particular situation or a context, that is, their connectivity (see Horecký 1997: 65).

In addition, within his contribution to the *Morphology of the Slovak language* (1966) Mistrík argues that, considering function, there are two categories of particles, (1) those with **connectivity** as the pervasive function (e.g. particles *a* 'and', *čiže* 'thus', *i* 'and', *no* 'however', *nuž* 'well', *veď* 'after all'), and (2) those particles that mark the **attitude** of a speaker towards the utterance or a part of it (e.g. particles *celkom* 'quite', *iba* 'only', *isto* 'certainly', *najmä* 'in particular'). Yet, in between these two categories, there is a group of particles that encompasses both particles with the connective function and with the attitude expressive function at the same time (e.g. *napokon* 'lastly', *napríklad* 'for example', *tak* 'so', *teda* 'then', 'thus', *vlastne* 'actually'). The first group and the transitory group could be very likely referred to as discourse markers, because of their connective function, their non-truth-conditionality, and their optionality.

Horecký (1997) in a more recent, yet very brief, study points out the function of particles as being useful in the **process of constructing discourse**. Particles, as he proposes, establish the basis of heterogeneous category of so called **discourse markers**

('diskurzory').[23] Illustrative of having the connective and discourse constructing function are the specific subcategories of particles known as **introductory particles**, particularly their subcategory **connective particles** (*nuž* 'well', 'now', *veru* 'yeah', *viete* 'you know', etc., typical for conversation; and **narrative particles** such as *potom* 'then', *ale* 'but', *ale potom* 'but then', etc., frequent in narrative sequences).[24]

Taking a closer look at the subcategory, it appears that its members have rather a lot in common with the category of discourse markers as defined for example by Schiffrin (1987). Apart from connectivity, let us consider some other relevant features of Slovak additive introductory particles which seem to share their characteristics with the representative English and Japanese discourse markers, namely, the optionality, the non-truth-conditionality (or the lack of semantic meaning), frequent position within an utterance, their affiliation with spoken discourse, and their multi-categoriality.

Mistrík claims that the introductory connective particles are almost **semantically empty**, which is the consequence of them having been derived mainly from conjunctions, which lack lexical meaning. This results in the fact, that they are very often used interchangeably as synonyms throughout different contexts as sheer initiators of the utterance. Consider for example the following set of utterances:

Tak aspoň ja prídem.	'So, at least I will come.'
Ostatne aspoň ja prídem.	'After all, at least I will come.'
A aspoň ja prídem.	'And, at least I will come.'
No aspoň ja prídem.	'But, at least I will come.'

(based on Mistrík 1983: 67; translation JB)

Though there is some truth in the argument that the connective particles can be employed interchangeably as in the afore-presented set of utterances, their usage might be limited to a context or a situation within which they occur. Then, from the pragmatical point of view, these connective particles would not probably be considered synonyms (see Mistrík 1983: 142).

As considers their prevailing **position** within an utterance, the introductory particles seem to occur utterance-initially. Such being the case, the particles belong under one intonation contour together with the utterance they initiate (Mistrík 1966: 754).

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[23] Nevertheless, Horecký fails to mention the other parts of speech that would fit into the category of discourse marking elements.

[24] Mistrík divides the particles into introductory particles and intensifying particles, the former modifying whole utterances, the latter particular constituents. In addition, the introductory particles comprise two subcategories: connective particles and incentive particles (Mistrík 1966: 749).

Nevertheless, in some instances, the introductory particles can occur in the middle of an utterance, isolated by pauses. Then they comprise a separate intonation unit (Mistrík 1966: 755).[25]

Similarly as in English and Japanese, Slovak discourse markers are reported to be a typical **feature of spoken discourse** (Mistrík 1983; Findra 2004; see also the conversation presented at the end of this chapter). However, unlike in English and particularly in Japanese, their use is traditionally seen as undesired in the speech, discourse markers having been claimed to interrupt the continuity of an utterance or a speech (see, for example, Findra 2004: 204), and thus not even considered worth the researchers' attention.

The items labelled as particles are often recruited from different word classes, most often from the class of conjunctions (e.g. *a* 'and', *aby* 'in order to', *ak* 'if', *ale* 'but', *či* 'or'). What they share with particles is their clear connective function. Nevertheless, once a conjunction is used as a particle, it is no longer its mere connective function, but an expressive function that it begins to fulfil. That is to say, the conjunction used as a particle connects an expression or a whole utterance to another utterance or a context, and at the same time it expresses the attitude of a speaker, or in other words, it subjectively modifies a particular phrase or an utterance (see Mistrík 1966: 801).

A (PART) *kedy si ho videl?*	'And when did you see him?'
Sadol si a (CONJ) *začal jest.*	'He sat down and began to eat.'

As to other word classes, particles are most frequently recruited from among interjections (*nuž* 'well', *však* 'however'), adverbs (unlike particles, which can operate also outside the sentence and modify it as a whole, the adverbs function within a sentence; e.g. *iste* 'certainly', *konečne* 'finally', *menovite* 'namely', *nesporne* 'undeniably', etc.*)*, nouns and grammaticalized prepositional phrases *(žiaľ* 'unfortunately', *doslova* 'literally', *vskutku* 'indeed'*)*, pronouns *(ono* 'you know', lit. 'it'*)*, and verbs *(hádam* 'I reckon', *povedzme* 'let's say').

To sum up, the review displayed that being used for connective and expressive purposes, being optional and not influencing the propositional content of the utterances they are attached to, the heterogeneous category of introductory particles meets

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[25] Mistrik proposes that this feature is clearly related to their semantic emptiness, since as he argues the most general and the most semantically "emptied" items seem to occur furthest from the semantic nucleus of an utterance (see Mistrík 1966: 748).

the requirements for the discourse marker membership, and represents a set of linguistic items comparable with English of Japanese discourse marker stocks.

Let us now consider the actual use of Slovak discourse markers as they appear in spontaneous casual conversation between two male speakers discussing a popular singer in a radio programme:

B:	*Tento efekt funguje tak, že*	
	sa nastaví::	
	čo najbližšie	
	t- t- tóny, presné tóny,	
	ktoré by tam mali odznieť, vieš.	*5*
	a ty musíš spievať niečo veľmi zle,	
	aby to do toho [dotiahlo].	
A:	*[aha, aha]*	
B:	*Takže, ne- chcel by som strašne veľmi počuť,*	
	že čo asi spieval ten George Michael.	*10*
...		
B:	*No, ale, fakt, že čo asi tak spieva,*	
	to by ma zaujímalo.	
...		
B:	*No, tak, on vie spievať.*	
A:	*To vie.*	
	No, však, o to bizarnejší počin.	*15*
	Ale buďme radi,	
	že nespievajú coververziu Club Tropic	
	[tropika]	
B:	*[v tejto verzii]*	
A:	*V takomto duchu.*	*20*
	To by som neprežil.	

(transcribed according to Baláž & Hubinák show,

Rádio_FM web archive 2011)

The conversational fragment displays some of the most frequently used Slovak discourse markers: *a* (and), *no* (however), *ale* (but), *však* (though), *tak* (so), *takže* (so) and *vieš* (you know). Coming utterance-initially, or parenthetically embedded in an utterance, they appear very often, marking roughly every third tone unit (one tone unit accounts for one line in the transcription) in the conversation. All of the uses are syntactically optional in a sense that should they be removed from the utterance, the propositional meaning of the utterance as well as its grammaticality would be left intact. Nevertheless, they seem to fulfil various pragmatic roles like marking causal (*takže*), additive (*a*) or adversative (*ale, no*) relations between utterances, indicating shift in the course of the conversation from

a digression to a previously discussed topic (*no*/line 11), or signalling information to which the hearer is invited to relate later in the course of conversation (*vieš*).

This may leave us with an impression that Slovak, too, exploits the use of discourse markers very often and it may challenge the notion that the Japanese use discourse markers are used more frequently than in other languages. Yet, one should not be hasty in drawing conclusions from such a short sample in comparing the use of discourse markers in Slovak and in Japanese, although the frequency of discourse markers employed in the sample is considerably high and a relatively wide range of discourse markers has been employed in it. In addition, any cursory observation of conversational Slovak language would support the argument that discourse markers are indispensible part of spoken discourse used with very high frequency, across a range of contexts and serving various pragmatic purposes. There have been, nevertheless, no attempts to compare the frequency of the discourse marker use, or the sizes of discourse marker repertoires between Slovak and Japanese. Nor there have been attempts to specify the extent of the overlap of the responsive sets of discourse markers in terms of their functions in the two languages. Nonetheless, as it was demonstrated in Chapter 3, the set of Japanese discourse markers is apparently broader than the Slovak one and is said to be utilized with extraordinary frequency. The fact is, however, that regardless of the presumed discrepancy and the form-functional differences between Japanese and Slovak, the latter language also seems to have a wide range of discourse markers at disposal, which can be utilized for comparable functions as the Japanese markers. This, in fact, suggests that there might be a good chance for the Slovak learners of Japanese to transfer the pragmatic knowledge of using discourse markers from their mother language into their knowledge of using the similar phenomena in the language they want to master, that is Japanese.

5   Discourse markers and second language acquisition

Discourse markers appear to fulfil an important role within the production and comprehension of discourse in native speakers' communication, whether rendered in spoken or written form. They mark the boundaries of discourse, assist in information packaging, bind an utterance with a particular context, gain time for the speakers while planning what to say next, help the interlocutor in not losing the floor, or simply, fill undesired pauses. Thus they add to the overall coherence and smoothness of discourse as it is produced. Furthermore, discourse markers facilitate the hearer's comprehension and interpretation of discourse. In case of spoken discourse, they make it easier for a listener to identify the boundaries in the speech continuum and to understand the relations between different parts of discourse, as well as they encode various interpersonal messages.

It has been reported that native speakers acquire the competence of using pragmatic expressions, including discourse markers, at an early age (around the age of two, see Östman 1981: 45, cited in Lenk 1997) after they master a necessary text organizational competence (see Lenk 1997). For example, Japanese native speakers are observed to acquire particles "at the transition point between one- and two-word utterances" at around the age of 1.6 and 2 years (see Clancy 1985: 485, cited in Morita 2005). It thus appears that various pragmatic aspects of language come to be mastered early and easily (see Gupta 1992; Östman 1981; cited in Lenk 1997).

As to learners of a foreign language, though they usually become aware of discourse markers in early stages of their learning, it is presumably more difficult and not so natural and easy for them to acquire the use of discourse markers and to utilize them appropriately according to expectations of native speakers (see Lenk 1997).[26]

Irrespective of at what stage the learners become fully aware of the necessity of using discourse markers, they should attempt to utilize them in order to sound fluent and natural, or native-like. Mastering discourse markers is part of the process of acquiring pragmatic competence, which is one of two components whose mastering is the prerequisite to gaining the overall language competence (see Kasper 1997).[27] While it

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[26] Lenk (1997) believes, though supporting her argument by observation only, that "discourse markers are picked up easily and used frequently [by foreign language learners], although at first a fair amount of uses will be only approximately correct". Nevertheless, it is rather undeniable that the process of acquisition of discourse markers by foreign language learners cannot be compared with the early and natural acquisition of pragmatic expressions by native speakers of a language.

[27] Apart from pragmatic competence, further subdivided into **illocutionary competence** (i.e. "knowledge of communicative action and how to carry it out") and **sociolinguistic competence** (i.e. "ability to use language

is not considered ungrammatical to avoid using discourse markers, it has been argued that not using them may not only elicit misunderstanding on the part of the addressee, it can, moreover, cause that the speaker will be perceived as "dogmatic, impolite, boring, [and/or] awkward to talk to" (Svartvik 1980: 171, cited in Müller 2005: 13). Thus, to avoid possible misunderstanding, and similar negative judgements, non-native speakers are highly advised to employ discourse markers in their talk.

5.1   Functions of discourse markers used by native speakers and by learners of a foreign language

Apart from their basic textual and interpersonal functions, discourse markers produced by native speakers are used in correlation with face-saving, politeness or establishing/maintaining indirectness, as well as for gaining time to plan what to say next.[28] Östman points out that the learners of a foreign language are, however, in a different psychological situation when participating in a foreign language conversation. They probably feel more pressed than native speakers would have in the same situation, considering their more or less limited communicative competence. Östman, therefore, suggests that foreign language learners use pragmatic phenomena like discourse markers for different purposes than native speakers (see Östman 1982: 161, cited in Aijmer 2004: 188). Non-native speakers are reported to use discourse markers as **uncertainty devices**, displaying hesitation, their searching for right words, or as means of **gaining more time** to think of a successive conversational move, rather than for politeness or face-saving purposes (Aijmer 2004: 183, 188). This tendency is interconnected with clustering of discourse markers. While both groups – native speakers as well as learners – exploit clustering virtually for gaining time, learners are said to use the strategy solely for these purposes, unlike native speakers, who, on top of the time gaining function, are observed to cumulate discourse markers to "reinforce the phatic function of the markers" (Aijmer 2004: 185).

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appropriately according to context"), the learner of a foreign language should also acquire the so called **organizational competence**, that is to say, "the knowledge of linguistic units and the rules of joining them together at the levels of sentence ('grammatical competence') and discourse ('textual competence') (see Kasper 1997).

[28] Functions of discourse markers use as employed by native speakers are described in chapters 2 and 3.

5.2   Causes of possible problems with acquiring discourse marker use

Wierzbicka states that "[t]here are few aspects of any language which reflect the culture of a given speech community better than its particles" (2003: 341). Not only does she argues that particles (including particles with discourse marking function) are culture-specific, she furthermore explains that discourse markers are idiosyncratic in a sense that it is not simple to find their exact lexical equivalents with the corresponding effects in other languages (see Wierzbicka 2003: 341). Given this presumed lack of form-function equivalence or overlap between discourse markers in different languages, there are but few opportunities for language learners to transfer pragmalinguistic knowledge from their mother language into the foreign language, since the meanings and functions of discourse markers in their language would not necessarily correlate with meanings and functions in the second language. Furthermore, Wierzbicka observes that the meaning of particles is very complex, since by using particles people express "complex pragmatic meanings at minimal cost" (Wierzbicka 2003: 341). Particles, usually one or two syllable words, are literally charged with complex pragmatic meanings. They encode "action[s] of the mind", which can be possibly expressed by means of sentences describing the cognitive processes, but as Wierzbicka points out, with a great difficulty (2003: 341-342).

Considering the lack of form-function overlap between languages on the one hand and the presumed inaccuracy of the descriptions of the complex meanings behind the discourse markers on the other, language learners appear to be in an unenviable situation.

In comparison with English or Slovak, both of which exploit a rich variety of discourse markers in everyday speech, Japanese, whose stock of discourse markers also encompasses sentence-final particles and backchannel expressions, appears to employ a considerably richer variety of these items and uses them with incomparably higher frequency. This accounts for the fact that Japanese discourse markers are particularly difficult for its learners to acquire (see Yoshimi 1999b).

5.3 Previous research on discourse markers within the second language acquisition framework and its findings

Several studies conducted within the framework of second language acquisition found out that discourse markers help listeners establish **a coherent interpretation** of discourse (see Redecker 1993; Flowerdew & Tauroza 1995). Redecker (1993), for example, discovered that the comprehension of the subjects exposed to a television programme with all discourse markers digitally removed was significantly delayed (see Aijmer 2001: 16/17). Flowerdew & Tauroza (1995), who measured the effects of the presence/absence of discourse markers on second language lecture comprehension, proved their hypothesis correct, when they demonstrated that their subjects understood the lecture better with discourse markers present (435).

Other studies focussing on **second language speech production** indicate that discourse markers are **underutilized** by non-native speakers when compared with native speakers' use (see Bazzanella 1990; Aijmer 2001; Hellerman & Verdun 2007; Weinert 1998, cited in Hellerman & Verdun 2007; Yoshimi 1999a; but see Yang 2007 for a contradicting observation[29]). In addition, some researchers also suggest that learners usually utilize **a smaller repertoire** of discourse markers (see Weinert 1998, cited in Hellerman & Verdun 2007: 161), not speaking about the questionable accuracy of their use of discourse markers.

The above mentioned studies also suggest that the frequency and accuracy of the use of discourse markers increases in proportion to the non-native speakers' proficiency level (see, for example, Hellerman & Verdun 2007: 165-167). Other factors that appear to trigger the use of discourse markers by non-native speakers are the exposure of students to authentic language setting or the degree of interaction with native speakers. What clearly emerges from a number of the studies is their observation that the subjects under scrutiny probably acquired the use of discourse markers outside the classroom (see Hellerman & Verdun 2007: 175). Hellerman & Verdun observe that the students in their study who had a considerably higher degree of exposure to a foreign language talk, had opportunities to interact with native speakers outside the classroom, or were presumably

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[29] Yang (2007) attempted to compare native speakers of Japanese and Chinese students of Japanese with respect to frequency of use of discourse markers in Japanese conversation. The results of her pilot study show that, even though some markers (*de, sorede, datte*, and *dakara*) were used by native speakers roughly twice as much as by the Chinese learners of Japanese, the marker *demo* was used by both groups with the same frequency, and moreover, some markers, namely, *iya, ja, etto* and *ma* were found to be used more frequently by the learners than by native speakers. Nevertheless, her sample of subjects analyzed in the study can be considered rather small to deduce credible judgements from (see Yang 2007: 3).

exposed to the media's use of discourse markers, used discourse markers more frequently and accurately than the students who had not claimed to be exposed to discourse markers use outside the classroom setting (see Hellerman & Verdun 2007: 176).

To sum up, it might be concluded that unless the learner is exposed enough to the authentic foreign language stimuli by means of extracurricular activities or native speaker contact, he or she is expected to have difficulty mastering the discourse marker use in a foreign language. This hypothesis will be tested in the forthcoming analysis on the case of Slovak learners of the Japanese language.

6 Methodology applied in the analysis

6.1 Method of data collection

The main concern of the present study is the frequency and use of Japanese discourse markers in spoken discourse as performed by Slovak learners as non-native speakers of the Japanese language in comparison with native speakers' use of Japanese. The objective of this research is to detect whether Slovak learners of the Japanese language use these phenomena in their foreign language production in Japanese and whether their usage of Japanese discourse markers complies with the expectations of native speakers of the Japanese language. In order to detect how frequently and how adequately discourse markers are used by Slovak learners of Japanese in comparison with Japanese native speakers, the following research data collection methods were employed: (1) a written discourse completion test administered to native speakers of Japanese and (2) the same discourse completion test distributed to Slovak learners of Japanese.

6.1.1 Questionnaire

In order to collect data for the analysis of differences in the use of discourse markers between Japanese native speakers and Slovak learners of Japanese, a discourse completion test in a form of a written questionnaire was employed by the present study.[30]

The questionnaire consisted of two parts. In part 1, i.e. **discourse completion test** consisting of 14 written role-plays, the participants were asked to respond to a particular conversational stimulus – asking for help, offering help, invitation, suggestion, request, offer, pleasant information, unpleasant information, and compliment. In each task the subjects were asked to verbalise the way they would most likely respond in a particular situation. Each of the situations was structured as a conversation between two speakers, the roles of whom were clearly indicated, as well as the situation and the context of a conversation (e.g. You (B) are talking to a schoolmate (A) in a dormitory hall.). The roles of both parties were selected so as to confront the participants with speakers who represented their "superiors", "inferiors", and status equal interlocutors; and with a variety of speakers closer or more distant in terms of social distance (friend, brother, colleague, teacher, senior manager, stranger).

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[30] See Appendix 1. Two sources were used in creating the tasks for the questionnaires: modular units for learning speech acts in Japanese available online from The University of Minnesota's page on Japanese speech acts and model conversations in Otsubo's *Situational functional Japanese* (Volumes 1-3; 1994).

In some situations (situations 1, 2, 5-11), the participants were asked to respond in accordance with instructions given and perform different kinds of speech acts while responding to one stimulus, i.e. affirmative, negative and hesitant response. For example, when they were asked for help, they should first respond as if they (1) could comply with the request, then (2) as if they were hesitant or did not know exactly what to do in the situation, and finally, (3) as if they could not/did not want to comply with the request, respectively. In other cases (situations 3, 4, 12-14), it was up to them to respond without having been instructed beforehand. This was to ensure the participants were confronted with a wide range of stimuli and to provide a variety of contexts within which discourse markers could occur.

Part 2 was designed with the intention to arouse **a narrative** sequence. Here the respondents were assigned to note down a story as if they were telling it to a friend or a colleague based on this simple outline:

(1) *You were watching TV home alone in the evening*.
(2) *Suddenly you heard a noise in the room next door*.
(3) *This terrified you*.
(4) *You decided to go and find out if there was anybody in the room*.
(5) *You took a knife from the kitchen to protect yourself*.
(6) *You opened the door to find out it was only a cat...*

With the outline of the story, the respondents had to record the way they would give an account of the story to a friend of theirs elaborating on the prompts provided.

The subject-matter of the story might seem oversimplified. Nevertheless, it was intended to confront the participant with such a situation and elicit such emotion that he or she could identify with easily. Moreover, the questionnaire was also meant to be given for completion to non-native speakers of Japanese, i.e. learners of Japanese on different proficiency levels as a part of analysis of second language acquisition of Japanese discourse markers by Slovak learners of Japanese. Therefore it was essential to ensure the prompts were easy to understand and uncomplicated to elaborate on.

6.1.2 Participants

The questionnaires were first distributed among native speakers of Japanese. Responses from 30 native speakers of Japanese were obtained. With regard to native speakers, their gender, and age was taken into consideration. As refers to the age of the respondents, there were almost all age categories represented ranging from the youngest subjects aged 19 to the eldest participants who were 70 years old. Speaking of gender, there were 19 female and 11 male respondents.

In addition, the questionnaires were simultaneously distributed among subjects whose mother language was Slovak and who were – at the time of the distribution of the questionnaire – studying Japanese at universities in the Slovak or the Czech Republic, namely, Comenius University in Bratislava, Palacký University in Olomouc and Charles University in Prague. There were eventually 27 questionnaires fully completed and collected. The respondents were all in their twenties. However, what was crucial here was not the age but variables such as the length of formal learning experience and the length of residence in Japan, or the length of study programme in Japan, and in addition their educational background (i.e. degree of exposure to informal sources for studying Japanese and contact with Japanese native speakers). 18 of the subjects were female, 9 male. As to their educational background, the respondents claimed to have studied Japanese from two to eight years at the time of the completion of the questionnaire. Furthermore, 21 of the subjects claimed they had not had any experience studying Japanese in Japan at all, while the rest had spent a half a year to two years studying Japanese abroad.

6.1.3 Preliminary qualitative research of the accuracy of the usage of discourse markers by Slovak learners of Japanese

Subsequently, the actual usage of discourse markers as found in the questionnaires completed by the Slovak learners of Japanese was assessed with regards to a context the respective markers had been employed in. Here the author was kindly assisted by three Japanese native speakers aged 21 (female), 37 (female), and 70 (male). The native speakers were asked to assess the responses of the Slovak speakers and mark any oddities or spots that seemed unnatural to them. Each occurrence of a discourse marker was then evaluated either as natural/accurate or not natural/inaccurate/non-native-like.

6.2   Limitations of the data collection method applied in the present study

The author is fully aware that the method here presented is not ideal, neither 'up to date', considering that the main focus of the study is natural spoken discourse. In addition, the data obtained by means of the discourse completion test could very easily produce artificial examples, since it can be expected that the outcomes gathered through written questionnaires could lack the attributes that distinguish the actual spoken discourse from the written variety, and thus may bias the results.[31]

Nevertheless, to prevent this bias and avoid using potentially artificial examples, at least partially, the data obtained by means of the written questionnaire were compared with the data acquired through a version of the same questionnaire, however, rendered orally. This time the situations from the questionnaire were acted out by the participants and recorded. The four participants, two men aged 21 and 40, and two women at the age of 30 and 51, were all native speakers of Japanese. They were confronted with the same situations that the written questionnaire exploited, imposed on them by another Japanese native speaker (the male aged 21, and the woman aged 51, whose relations with other participants were familial or those of a friend).

The data obtained by means of the orally completed questionnaire did not show significant differences in terms of the frequency and variety of discourse markers used. Moreover, as will be elucidated later, it seems that using discourse markers in Japanese by Japanese speakers is such a natural and inherent feature of the spoken language that it is clearly present even if the oral discourse is filtered through a written medium.

Nevertheless, discourse completion tests are helpful in quickly gathering considerably larger and more varied data than an observation and recording of natural speech would. The present study tests the conditions that facilitate the occurrence of discourse markers in a range of different contexts, with speakers performing different roles, with a different degree of imposition involved in a particular communicative act, which would take considerable tenacity, time, and financial resources to observe the spontaneous spoken discourse in natural environments of native speakers. Furthermore, even if such data were obtained, they would not be easily comparable with the data gathered from non-native speakers, since the opportunities to observe Slovak learners speaking Japanese in an informal context are relatively scarce.

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[31] Dahl sums up that "written role plays bias the response toward less negotiation, less hedging, less repetition, less elaboration, less variety and ultimately less talk" (Kasper & Dahl 1991: 243, cited in Kasper 1997)

Discourse completion tests are, moreover, effective in "studying the stereotypical, perceived requirements for a […] socially appropriate response" (Beebe & Cummings 1985: 13, cited by Kasper 1997), which is applicable in the present work, too. The data collected from the native speakers can be considered models to which the responses of the Slovak non-native speakers were compared. In addition, discourse completion tests are useful in "gaining insight into social and psychological factors that are likely to affect speech and performance" (Beebe & Cummings 1985: 13, cited in Kasper 1997). Apart from the different context, role and status of the interlocutor, or the degree of imposition, factors as age, gender were considered in analysing Japanese speakers' responses and educational background in analysing responses of Slovak learners of Japanese.[32]

To conclude, aware of the drawbacks, the author believes the data acquired by means of a discourse completion questionnaire will provide a valuable, yet to a certain extent limited, source for the analysis, which could serve as a preliminary work for a project of a larger scale – with more subjects involved in natural speech conditions.

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[32] The attempted complexity of the questionnaire proved counter-effective in a sense that a 25-item questionnaire takes fairly long to complete even for a native speaker, not mentioning that some of the participants were just second year students whose communicative competence was incomparably lower than that of a fifth year student who has spent a year or two in Japan, or a native speaker.

"Wolf suggested that a 'full questionnaire should require certainly less than 30 minutes to complete, and preferably, less than 15 or 20' (1988: 481)" (Kasper & Dahl 1991: 226).

7   Assumptions for the analysis

7.1   Objective of the analysis, research questions

Previous chapters have demonstrated that discourse markers in both the Slovak and the Japanese language fulfil important roles and are exploited very often. Furthermore, it was also pointed out that Japanese, due to its sociolinguistic tendencies to maintain friendly harmonious relationships and to avoid directness, utilizes discourse markers with frequency incomparable with Slovak or English. Moreover, it was indicated that Japanese discourse markers encode complex meanings and their functions vary not only due to situational context, but also according to the position of discourse marker within a discourse unit. Given this situation, it can be expected that the Slovak learners of Japanese would have problems mastering discourse markers in Japanese discourse. The ultimate aim of the research was thus to detect differences in the use of Japanese discourse markers as used by native speakers of Japanese (henceforth 'native speakers') and non-native speakers of Japanese, in this case, Slovak learners of the Japanese language (henceforth referred to as 'learners') with respect to frequency and distribution of discourse markers across different social, situational and textual contexts.

First, the analysis attempted to shed light on the problem of the distribution of discourse markers as used by native speakers with reference to various socio-demographic factors (gender, age) as well as to a number of situational aspects (social status of the interlocutors, intimacy, formality, or speech context). Findings from this part of the analysis were supposed to bring an insight on how Japanese native speakers use the phenomena. Having obtained these model patterns of discourse markers use and distribution as provided by native speakers of the Japanese language, the objective of the analysis then shifted to the comparison of the native speaker use of the targeted items with the use of discourse markers as employed by the learners.

The analysis was aimed to address these four research questions:

(1) How do the frequencies of discourse markers use by the two target groups differ?

(2) What discourse markers are used most frequently by the two target groups?

(3) How do the socio-demographic and situational factors influence the discourse marker use and frequency of occurrence in both groups?

(4) What were the variations in the discourse markers use within the learner group, considering the formal educational background of learners and their extracurricular activities related to the Japanese language acquisition and use?

The answers to these four questions will be presented in what follows, first focussing on the factors relevant in scrutinizing the data obtained from both groups, respectively, then turning to the investigation of the native speakers' data, and subsequently comparing them with the learners' responses.

7.2 Factors expected to affect the use and distribution of discourse markers by native speakers

Although the data obtained from native speakers of Japanese were primarily collected with the intention to serve as models of the Japanese discourse markers use, with which the data obtained from the learners were supposed to be compared in terms of frequency and distribution of individual markers, it is considered vital to get an insight into how the distribution of discourse markers as used by native speakers vary with respect to various socio-demographic and situational aspects so as to be able to predict the context, in which discourse markers were likely to occur or were expected to occur in the learners' responses. Let us therefore discuss the factors that could be expected to influence the use of discourse markers by native speakers.

Bazzanella claims that "[d]iscourse markers are seldom sociolinguistically neutral" (1990: 645, cited in Aijmer 2001: 53), they are said to be context sensitive and to vary with respect to a number of sociolinguistic factors such as age, gender, regional preferences, social status of the interlocutors, degree of intimacy, type of interaction, etc. (see also Müller 2005: chapter 1.17 for an extensive discussion about factors influencing native speakers' as well as non-native speakers' use of discourse markers in English).

With reference to the two above mentioned works, the following variables were considered relevant for the present study: (1) **gender**, (2) **age**, (3) **speaker role**, (4) **degree of intimacy**, (5) **formality**, and, (6) **speech context**.

As to gender, Japanese is reported to have distinguished modes of male and female speech. These modes are said to differ in their specific use of particular linguistic features as sentence-final particles, ways of address and self-reference, honorific language, or suprasegmental phenomena like intonation and pitch (see Okamoto 1997: 796). The focus of the present study was particularly on the gender-specific sentence-final particles (*wa, kashira* as female particles; *ze* or *zo* as being representative of male particles) and possible gendered uses of discourse markers in general.

With reference to age, no statistically significant findings have been documented by previous studies except for the extended use of discourse markers by older speakers presumably accountable for retaining politeness in Nagura's research (see Nagura 1997).

Speaker's role is understood here in terms of symmetry or asymmetry with respect to social status of the speakers. A symmetrical relation is believed to be a relation between two speakers on a relatively same power level (classmates, colleagues, or, friends); an asymmetrical relation is understood as a relation between speakers being superior or inferior to one another (i.e. teacher vs. student, employer vs. employee, etc.).

Another variable expected to play a part in variation of discourse marker use was intimacy or social distance of the speakers. In the present analysis, the interlocutors were considered strangers if they did not know each other, or non-strangers if they knew each other, i.e. acquaintances, friends, family members, colleagues.

Yet another factor said to trigger variation was the degree of formality of the situation. One situation could be expected to require relatively formal language behaviour (talking to one's superior, possibly to a stranger), another less formal or casual behaviour (talking to a friend or relative). As Müller claims, referring to Jucker & Ziv (1998) and Andersen (1998), discourse markers have been particularly associated with informal language contexts (2005: 45), and are thus expected in such settings more frequently.

The last factor to influence the use of discourse markers was the speech context. In the present study, two distinctive modes of speech were compared, namely, **conversation** and **narrative**. The latter differs from conversation in that it is characterized by a certain structure governed by the principle of temporal organization, that is to say, the events presented are delivered in a linear order (see Labov 2011; Norrick 2001: 851). In addition, narrative is not necessarily constructed by the exchange of turns of the interlocutors, that is, narrative is not as interactive. Therefore, due to these significant differences between the two modes of speech, also the discourse markers appearing within them are expected to differ – certain types of markers that appear in conversation might not appear in narratives, and vice versa; or they might develop distinctive functions (see Norrick 2001: 851).

7.3 Factors expected to influence the use of discourse markers by non-native speakers of Japanese

The above mentioned factors are, nevertheless, not entirely applicable to the analysis of the non-native speakers' data. In analysing the data obtained from the learners of Japanese, the demographic features, i.e. gender and age, were not expected to play any significant role. First, the participants were all in their twenties, or late teenage years; which would not be comparable with the Japanese subjects' relatively wide age span (the youngest Japanese subjects were 19 years old, the oldest 70 years old). The age factor was thus considered irrelevant for the present analysis. Secondly, the question of gender was predicted not to play such a decisive role in the distribution of discourse markers when used by the non-native speakers. That is because the non-native speakers may be considered to have learned the "proper" vocabulary affiliated with the so called 'female Japanese' or 'male Japanese', therefore, the character of their speech production would not reflect their actual gender differences, but rather it would depend on their acquisition of the conventionalized gender specific forms.

Having excluded the potentially irrelevant factors, the following factors were taken into consideration for the purposes of the analysis of the non-native speakers' language production: (1) **the length of study** (formal educational context),

(2) **acquisition of the Japanese language outside the formal classroom,**

(3) **use of the Japanese language in formal and informal contexts, native speaker contact,**

(4) **length of the learners' stay in Japan.**

Considering the length of study of the participants, it was hypothesised that students with higher level of Japanese language proficiency would use more pragmatic devices in their speech production than the less advanced students, since the former were expected to have higher awareness of the pragmatic aspects of the language.

Furthermore, the questionnaire asked the learners to indicate whether they learned or simply got in contact with Japanese outside the formal classroom setting. Contact with teachers at school was considered to be a formal educational setting, contact with Japanese friends and colleagues an informal setting. The learners were further asked to state by means of what media they were most often exposed to the foreign language (e.g. drama series, TV/radio programmes, movies, *anime*, *manga*, books, magazines and news, etc.). Since discourse in most types of the above listed media can be often affiliated

with informal oral communication, which presupposes the presence of discourse markers, it was supposed that learners with a greater exposure to Japanese through different media would not only be more aware of the use of discourse markers, but would incorporate them naturally in their foreign language speech performance.

Another factor that was expected to influence the rate of discourse markers use in learners talk was their real chance to communicate in the Japanese language with native speakers. Learners were asked to state whether they came in contact with the Japanese (friends, colleagues, teachers, etc.) on a regular basis, and whether they communicated with Japanese speakers in writing (emails or letters), in real-time interaction or by means of online social networking. Again, the learners with higher exposure rates were assumed to be more capable of using discourse markers more frequently and more accurately than the less advanced learners.

Yet another factor, the length of stay in Japan, was expected to elicit significant differences in the use of discourse markers between those participants who did not spend any time in Japan and those participants who did, since the acquisition and practical use of discourse markers in the actual Japanese language setting was considered most helpful for the learners of the target language. Consequently, it was assumed that learners who spent a significant period of time in Japan (from 6 moths up to 2 years) would probably come very close to what can be referred to as native speaker use of discourse markers.

8   Findings and discussion

8.1   Native speakers' use of discourse markers

For the purposes of comparing the rate of discourse markers use between native speakers of Japanese and learners of Japanese, frequency of discourse markers was calculated for both categories. In this section, the data obtained from native speakers will be examined in detail.

Data from **30 Japanese native speakers** were obtained, which amounts to roughly **780 conversational turns** (490 turns realised by female speakers, 290 turns by male speakers). Frequency of discourse markers use was calculated as follows: first, a total number of discourse markers was counted and the number was then divided by the total number of all conversational turns. The results show that native speakers used **732 discourse markers** in total, which means that approximately 9 out of every 10 turns contained at least one discourse marker.

Next, the occurrences of the most frequently used markers were marked down and compared. Their rate of occurrence is shown in Table 1 below:

Table 1	**Discourse markers by rate of occurrence (NS)**				
yo	158	21.6%	*wa**	41	5.6%
ne	136	18.6%	*e*	38	5.1%
a	94	12.8%	*demo*	34	4.6%

* sentence-final particle use

The table shows the number of occurrences and the incident rate for each token with respect to the total number of discourse markers used by native speakers. As evident from the table, the interactive particles *yo* and *ne* comprised together as much as 40 per cent of all discourse markers used by the participants, and they both appeared in almost one fifth of all turns, respectively.[33] Next frequent was the ubiquitous filler *a* in its variant forms (*a, ā, ā::, a-*) used in about one out of ten turns. It was followed by the sentence-final particle *wa*, which is said to be the feminine form of the particle *yo*, next in frequency was the filler *e* (*ē, ē::, e, e-*) and lastly, the connective *demo*. The motivation for using these markers will be addressed later on.

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[33] The proportion of the interactional discourse marker *yo* is even greater when the sentence-final particle *wa* – as a feminine form of the marker *yo* and the forth most often used marker in native speakers' responses – is taken into account. Then the joint frequency of *yo* and *wa*, presumably with the same function, amounts to 27.2 per cent, and consequently the frequency of use of the most frequent interactional particles takes up as much as 45.6 per cent.

8.1.1 Frequency and distribution of discourse markers across different contexts

In order to get the full picture of how Japanese markers are used across different contexts, let us now turn the attention to considering the variables listed in section 7.1, namely, gender, and age, as well as situational contexts, represented by social role of speakers, social distance, formality and speech context.

8.1.1.1 Distribution of discourse markers and gender

Generally, there were no significant differences between female and male participants' rate of discourse marker use detected. In their 494 turns, the female participants used 454 discourse markers, which indicates that women used discourse markers in nearly **93 per cent** of their turns. On the other hand, the male subjects used 278 discourse markers throughout 286 conversational turns, which accounts for more than **102 per cent**. This in turn suggests that the male participants used at least one discourse marker in every turn they performed. The difference, however, is not statistically significant. In addition, when individual conversational situations are considered, the frequencies are often comparable.

Nevertheless, there were 4 situations that elicited significant differences in frequency. In task 2A, in which participants were confronted with their classmate and were supposed to acknowledge they could not provide the answer to a question imposed on them, the frequency of use for female participants was 105 per cent (with a striking incidence rate of the sentence-final particle *ne*), while discourse markers in all the male responses accounted for only about 64 per cent. In situation 7A, in which participants, confronted with their senior (manager, boss, etc.), had to comply with his or her request to cover for a sick colleague, only 32 per cent of all female turns hosted a discourse marker, while as much as 91 per cent of all the male turns contained them. In two other situations, 6B and 7B, confronted with their superior, subjects were asked to decline an invitation and refuse to substitute for a sick colleague. The frequency for the female group was 5 per cent in 6B and 11 per cent in 7B. The frequency for the male group was, on the other hand, 45 per cent (6B) and 73 per cent (7B).

In the first situation (2A) the frequency of female use was considerably higher. Nevertheless, this discrepancy seems to be rather arbitrary, since in other comparable situations (informal context, equal status, disaffiliative action, i.e. refusing, declining, saying no), e.g. 5B, 8B, 10B, the frequencies were perfectly balanced. Speaking about the rest of the mentioned situations, the frequency of male use of discourse markers

for an individual question markedly exceeded the female counterpart. Although, all of the situations were in formal context, they did not represent the same contextual background for the response, and moreover, the findings for other formal settings did not display any similar difference in frequency by gender.

To sum up, it can be concluded that apparently gender is not a relevant factor that would trigger noteworthy difference considering the rate of occurrence of discourse markers. However, there seem to be a number of markers that may be said to be preferred either by one or the other group, and thus told to be more 'feminine' or 'masculine'. In the collected data, there were the following markers that appeared to be used predominantly by one or the other group:

Table 2	**Distribution of selected discourse markers by gender (NS)**				
DM	female group			male group	
wa*	35	7.1%	>	6	2.1%
sa*	5	1%	<	11	4%
demo	30	6.1%	>	4	1.4%
sā	4		>	0	
mā	4		>	0	

* sentence-final particle use

Table 2 clearly shows that some discourse markers were preferred by certain gender. While *wa, sā, mā* and *demo* were used solely or predominantly by women (*wa* was attached to 7 per cent of all female turns, and only to 2 per cent of turns performed by men; very similar is the case of *demo*, whose frequency in the female group was four times higher than in the male group; *sā* and *mā* were not used by men at all), the sentence-final particle *sa* was employed by men prevailingly. The sentence-final emphatic particle *wa* is generally said to be used by women, the emphatic sentence-final particle *sa,* on the other hand, by men. Yet, the rest of the discourse markers (*demo, sā, mā*) have not been reported to be systematically preferred by one or the other group. The sample is, nevertheless, small to draw relevant judgements about exclusively 'feminine' or 'masculine' linguistic forms.

8.1.1.2   Discourse marker distribution and age

Native speakers were divided into three major groups as to their age. The youngest group consisted of 11 subjects aged 19 to 29 with the average age 22 years. The second group encompassed 11 subjects aged 30 to 45; the average age of the group was 38 years. Finally, there were 8 participants in the third group aged 50 and over, with the average age of 58 years.

As seen in Table 3 below, all the groups used discourse markers very often. It appears that the oldest group used discourse markers in almost 97 per cent of all their responses, which is indeed considerably high compared to two other groups. The eldest group was followed by the youngest group, who used the targeted items in 83 per cent of all their turns. And the group aged 30-45 used markers in almost 73 per cent of their replies, which is still significantly high, even if compared with the oldest group.

Table 3	**Frequency of discourse marker use by age group (NS)**
age group	frequency of discourse marker use
19-29	83.1%
30-45	72.5%
50+	96.6%

Contrary to these findings, the eldest speakers from the 50+ group (i.e. 4 speakers aged 60, 63, 65, 70) seem to have used very few discourse markers in certain settings. In eight different situations (1A, 1B, 1C, 6A, 6B, 7B, 11A, 11B), these four speakers used no discourse markers at all. All of the above mentioned situations were either formal settings or they involved confrontation with strangers. Therefore, it seems that the older generations attempted to avoid discourse markers in relatively more formal settings, in which relations between interlocutors were asymmetrical and the speakers were relative strangers.

8.1.1.3 Discourse marker use with respect to social role of speakers, formality and intimacy of the situation

When social role of the speakers was taken into account, there was a correlation between the frequency of discourse markers and the power status of the interlocutors detected. To be more specific, the interlocutors used more markers when their status was relatively equal (situations 2, 5, 8, 9, 10, 12-14). In these situations the average frequency of use was 102 per cent. If the roles of the interlocutors were more asymmetrical, that is, the subjects as inferiors had to respond to various stimuli from their superiors (teachers, managers, etc.), the frequency of discourse markers rapidly decreased. The average frequency in tasks 3, 6, 7, and 11, which involved interlocutors with asymmetrical power status, was only 39 per cent. This implies that discourse markers were usually avoided when the status of the interlocutors was unequal.

Similarly, what seems to lower the frequency of discourse markers is the nature of situation as to formality. The frequency of discourse markers used in formal situations (i.e. tasks 6, 7) was only 33 per cent, while the median frequency for the casual setting was 71.9 per cent. The difference among the frequencies in the two settings is best illustrated on the category of the eldest interlocutors (aged 60 to 70), who in majority of formal settings used no discourse marker at all. In addition, it was predominantly in casual setting where the highest frequencies occurred (situation 2 – 120%; 8 – 123%; 9 – 102%).

Finally, with respect to the intimacy of the situation, there were no significant differences detected.

In sum, it can be concluded that the factors of formality and social role influenced the speakers' choices towards the avoidance of discourse marker use in formal situations and with speakers with higher social status, however, the variable of intimacy, or social distance triggered no such apparent differences.

8.1.1.4 Discourse marker use and speech context

In the present analysis, two speech contexts were analysed, namely, **conversational discourse** and **narrative discourse**. Conversational tasks in the questionnaire spanned over different contexts (formal/casual) and were aimed to arouse a number of speech acts (i.e. complying with requests, accepting/declining invitations, accepting/turning down favours, responding to compliments, etc.), while the respondents were confronted with intimates or strangers, with other interlocutors of equal social status or with inferiors

or superiors. On the other hand, the narrative discourse was to be imagined as situated in an informal context while the respondents were asked to imagine they were talking to a friend or acquaintance.

As described in section 7.2, these two modes of oral discourse are distinguished by a number of features. First, conversation is constructed on the basis of exchanging turns performed by two or more participants; the narrative does not necessarily presuppose the active participation of other speakers, it can be moreover rendered all within one conversational turn, and it has a certain structure governed by temporal organisation of sequentially dependent ideas. Thus, it can be expected that in conversation, there would be **interpersonal** discourse markers used more frequently, while in narratives, discourse markers with **text-organisational** function would be dominant.

The following section attempts to present most frequent discourse markers in the respective genre, especially focussing on items common for both genres as well as genre-specific discourse markers.

8.1.1.4.1　Distribution and frequency of discourse markers in conversation

Table 4 shows 10 most frequently used discourse markers with their rates of occurrence per total number of discourse markers used in all conversations.

Table 4	**Occurrence of discourse markers in conversations (NS)**		
yo	20.5%	*demo*	4.5%
ne	16.3%	*nn*	3.3%
a	14%	*na**	3.3%
*wa**	6.4%	*ja*	2.8%
e	5.7%	*ēto*	2%

*sentence-final particle

Here, three markers – *yo, ne* and *a* – take up approximately 50 per cent of all markers appearing in conversations.[34] Though the frequency of other markers (*wa, e*, or *demo*) is also considerably high, the former three seem to appear almost ubiquitously leaving other discourse markers rather far behind.

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[34] Again, if *wa*, which can be considered of as a feminine form of the particle *yo*, is added to the frequency of *yo*, the proportion of *yo*, and hence the overall frequency of the most often used markers increases to more than 56 per cent.

The high occurrence rate of the sentence-final particles *yo*, *ne* or *wa*,[35] also referred to as interactional particles, in conversation is not surprising (see Maynard 1993). Indeed, Japanese sentence-final particles (*yo*, *ne, wa, sa, zo, no, kedo*) are indispensable part of Japanese conversation, or vice versa, they function as direct indexes of interactional communication. They assist in establishing appropriate interactional settings and function as turn-taking management devices (see Tanaka 2000a). Although, as Morita (2005) points out, it is difficult to define the meanings and functions of sentence-final particles claiming that they are highly context-dependent, and it is, moreover, beyond the scope of the present work to identify the situated meanings of individual discourse markers, yet, it is useful to elucidate what is the fundamental function of these particles and to indicate why they are so frequently interspersed throughout Japanese conversation.

Maynard states that Japanese has a strong tendency to express various non-referential meanings or as she calls it one's own "attitudinal stance" (Maynard 1993: 4). This tendency is so strong that Maynard even suggests that "rather than information-sharing, it is subtextual emotion-sharing that forms the heart of [Japanese] communication" (1993: 4). This is best understood when one looks at the interactional particles which are generally observed to be used to convey the speaker's stance, interpersonal concern and display understanding (see Morita 2005: 4).

In what follows, it will be attempted to demonstrate the interactional nature of the most frequently used discourse markers in conversation on individual instances from the collected data, and demonstrate how they contribute to the so called "emotion sharing".

Let first the two most represented particles *yo* and *ne* be addressed. Social functions of *ne* have been summarized by Tanaka (2000a) as follows: *ne* displays agreement with prior talk, solicits response, invites 'affiliative' or 'supportive' action from co-participants in the next turn, and displays appropriateness of topic transition (see Tanaka 2000a: 1141). In other words, by attaching *ne* to a proposition, the speaker indicates that the addressee is welcome to comment, confirm or modify the proposition in the following turn (see Saigo 2011: 15). *Yo*, on the other hand, points to the speaker himself or the proposition uttered by him or her. It indicates certainty, emphasis, or request/command. Saigo cites Kato (2001), who claims that "adding *yo* to the proposition indicates the speaker's belief that the credibility of the proposition is beyond dispute and that he is

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[35] The particles *ne* and *yo* are rather difficult to translate into other languages. *Ne* indicates emphasis, agreement, or request for confirmation and it could be possibly roughly translated as 'isn't it?' or 'you know'; *yo* indicates certainty, emphasis, contempt, request.

willing to take responsibility for it" (2011: 15). The following instances from the data should clarify the argument:

> Speaker A wants to borrow speaker B's notes again (situation 8A)
> B [M19]:   *konkai de saigo da <u>yo</u>.*
>   'This was the last time! [<u>I mean it!</u>]'

The respondent uses the particle *yo* to emphasize his stance without an attempt to solicit response.

> The same situation (8A)
> B [M31]:   *hayame ni kaeshite <u>ne</u>.*
>   'But you'll return it as soon as possible, <u>yes?</u>/<u>won't you</u>?'

Unlike in the previous instance, here the speaker makes an attempt to appeal to the partner, leaving space for him or her to respond and potentially ascertain the speaker that he or she will make sure to return the notes as soon as possible.

Concerning the third most often used marker *a*, including its variants, i.e., *ā, a, a-,* its frequency in the data parallel the findings from Nakajima's (2009) corpus. In her data, which comprised of 6000 utterances, she found 193 tokens of the discourse marker *a*, which, compared to the overall number of discourse markers in her corpus (1630), represented almost 12 per cent of all markers. It is obvious that it occurs very frequently and according to Nakajima it fulfils a number of important functions in the discourse. In relation to the conversational discourse particularly, the function of marking a new turn or a new topic may be of relevance here. Moreover, associated with the interactive nature of conversation may be the functions of expressing speakers' surprise, finding, consent or acknowledgement, relief, or hesitation (see Nakajima 2009: 14).[36]

Functions of *a* are illustrated in the following example from the native speakers data:

> Speaker B has been approached by an older student who found a lost article that probably belongs to speaker B (situation 3)
> B [F46]:   *<u>a-</u>, watashi no desu. arigatō gozaimasu…!*
>   '<u>Oh</u>, that's mine! Thank you!'

In this case, *a* not only marks the beginning of the turn, but it also expresses the speaker's surprise on being given back a lost article.

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[36] The same functions apply for the marker *e*, which accounted for 5.7 per cent of all the discourse markers in the conversational setting in this analysis.

The forth most often appearing discourse marker *wa* (sentence-final particle use) is said to be predominantly a 'feminine' form, a softer version of the emphatic particle *yo*. In the data, women used the marker in 9 per cent of their turns, while the male respondents employed it only in 2 per cent of all their turns. *Wa*, again is an interaction-oriented marker and is used to emphasize speakers' stance as in the example:

> Speaker B has been asked by his/her younger brother for money (situation 9B)
> B [F40]:   *gomen, watashi mo kinketsu na no yo. kasenai <u>wa</u>.*
>   'Sorry, but I've also run out of money. I can't <u>possibly</u> lend you now. '

Having attached *wa* to the utterance, emphasis was added to the negative statement and it signalled there is no need for further discussion.

The markers that follow in frequency – *na, demo, nn/un, jā, ēto, e* – also display various speaker-oriented functions, as will be illustrated on these examples of the data. *Na* solicits confirmation and indicates emotional colouring or emphasis.

> Speaker B has been invited by a friend and declines his invitation (5B)
> B [M31]:   *arigatō. demo sono hi wa yotei ga aru <u>na</u>.*
>   'Thanks. But I've got plans already, <u>y'know</u>.'

Demo displays contradiction.

> Speaker B complies with a rather annoying request from a classmate (8A)
> B [F51]:   *shōganai wa ne. <u>demo</u>, kore ga saigo yo.*
>   'There you go. <u>But</u> this was the last time, you understand?'

Nn/un encodes that the addressee has heard what has been said, but he or she does not necessarily agree with the content of prior discourse, or he hesitates.

> Speaker B has been invited by a teacher to a party and declines his invitation (6B)
> B [M70]:   *<u>ūn</u>, zannen da kedo senyaku ga atte ikenai yo.*
>   'Well, I'm afraid I can't make it, I have another appointment.'

Jā marks a new direction in the course of the conversation or an upcoming conclusion.

> Speaker B has been offered a second serving by a superior (10A)
> B[M19]:   *arigatō, <u>jā</u> kōra o onegai.*
>   'Thank you. <u>Well then</u>, I will have some coke.'

Ēto displays hesitation or reluctance.

> Speaker B has been asked to give directions, but he is not certain (1B)
> B[F28]:   *<u>e::tto</u>, chanto wa wakaranai desu kedo, tabun…*
>   '<u>Let me see</u>, I don't know exactly, but maybe…'

To sum up, it emerges as evident that in conversation interactional particles (*yo, ne, wa, na*) and fillers (*a, e, ēto*), are most likely to be employed due to their interpersonal or interaction-oriented functions, which add emotionality to the utterances and thus narrow the gap between the interlocutors.

8.1.1.4.2   Distribution and frequency of discourse markers in narrative

Let us now turn to the investigation of discourse markers in the other type of discourse, namely, the narrative sequences of the participants. This section will begin with an illustration of various kinds of discourse markers the respondents used in their narratives. Here is an account of the story as presented by a male speaker aged 25:

> [M25] *kinō <u>sā</u>, yoru, heya de terebi miteta n da <u>yo</u>. <u>soshitara</u>, tonari no heya kara hen na oto ga shite <u>sā</u>. suggē bikkuri shite. ore hitori na no ni, dareka iru to omotte, maji de kowaku natte. dorobō ka to omotte. <u>sonde</u>, ichiyō naifu motte mi ni ittan da <u>yo</u>. <u>de</u>, doa aketara… neko datta <u>no</u>. dokkara haitte kitan da <u>yo</u> to omotte <u>sā</u>. mado aiterun da mon, sentaku shita ato shimewasureteta wake <u>yo</u>.*

> Translation: 'Yesterday, <u>you know</u>, in the evening, I was watching TV in my room <u>yo</u>. <u>And then</u>, I heard this strange sound, <u>you know</u>. I got terribly scared. I was alone and I thought there might be somebody in the room. It was reeealy scary. What if it's a burglar, I thought. <u>So</u>, just in case I grabbed a knife and went to see <u>yo</u>. <u>So</u>, I opened to door… and there was a cat <u>no</u>! I was wondering how could it have possibly got here <u>sā</u>?! Maybe, the window was left open. I might have just forgotten to close it after the washing, <u>you know</u>.'

Yet from such a short account it is evident that different kinds of discourse markers with presumably different functions were used here. There were textual-oriented markers (*sonde, de, soshitara*), but also interactive markers (*yo, sa*) employed in the sample. Let us now consider possible reasons for occurrence of both categories within the seemingly non-interactional genre.

As described earlier, in narrative, discourse markers with text-organisational functions rather than interactional markers are expected due to its nature. Nevertheless, while this is partly reflected in the data, and the markers with text-organisational or connective functions, e.g. *dakedo* (but, however), *soshitara* (and then), *sorede/sonde/de* (and then, therefore, so), *nde* (given that), *demo* (but, however), etc., take up as much as 41 per cent of all of the markers appearing in narratives; it was detected that the interactional markers such as *yo, ne* or *sa* accounted for almost 53 per cent of all the markers used

in narratives. This ratio seemingly does not support the presumption that the interactional particles would be less represented in this type of discourse.

Frequencies of the use of discourse markers as they appeared in the narratives of the respondents are shown in Table 5.

Table 5	**Occurrence of most often used discourse markers in narrative (NS)**		
interactional markers		text-organisational markers	
ne	23%	*soshitara*	11.9%
yo	19.4%	*dakedo*	9.7%
sa*	10.%	*sorede/de*	9.5%
		demo	3.7%

* sentence-final particle use

The figure clearly shows that not only are the interactional particles *ne* and *yo* the most frequently used discourse markers in narratives, moreover, if the rates for all the interactional particles are added up, the number exceeds the total occurrences of text-organisational markers, which, in fact, were presumed to be dominant in this context.

Nonetheless, given that the narrative was supposed to be performed in presence of an imagined friend or an acquaintance, the findings seem less surprising, since the presence of an addressee brings the narrative closer to the realm of interactional context. As pointed out earlier, Japanese conversation is said to be focussed rather on exchanging of emotions and attitudes, which is done by means of various devices such as discourse markers with interaction-based functions, therefore, it is rather natural to predict the occurrence of discourse markers when one speaker addresses another, even though he or she may deliver an account without a single interruption from the addressee.

Although *ne* and *yo* appeared in both contexts without salient variation in their frequencies or without evident shift in their functions, other markers seemed to be more context sensitive. The following table attempts to show how particularly the speech context influences the choice of discourse markers. Apart from three discourse markers, *yo, ne* and *demo*, which were used equally frequently in both contexts (*yo* − 20.5%≅19.4%; *ne* − 16.3%≅23%; *demo* − 4.5%≅3.7%) frequency of use of other markers displayed significant differences (see Figure 1).

Figure1 Rate of DM use by different speech context (NS)
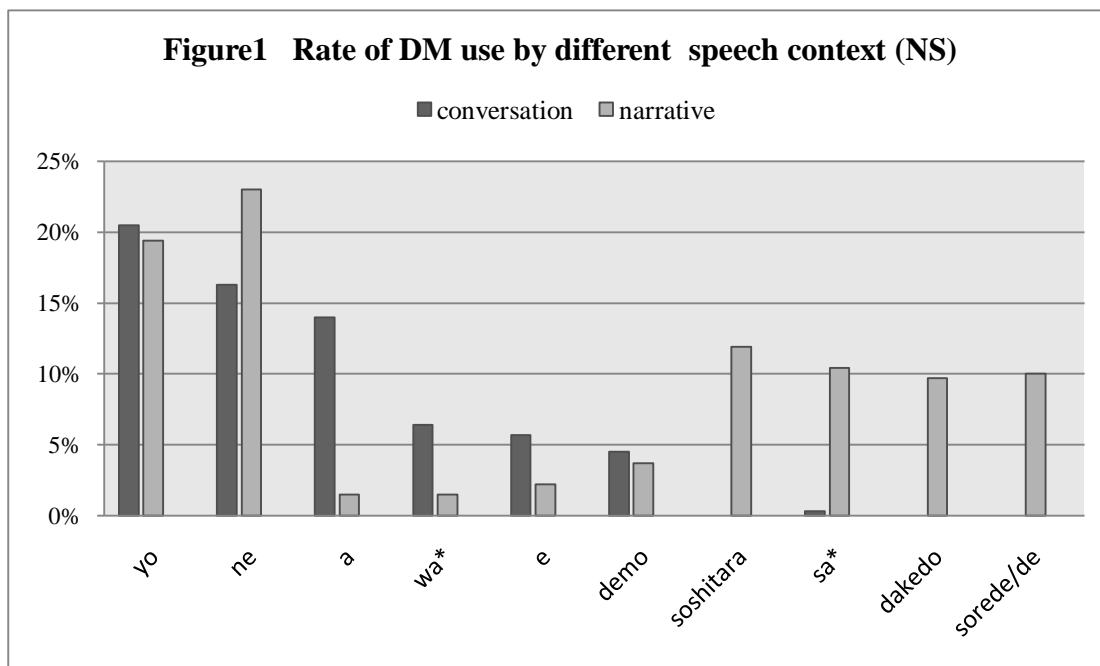
As the figure suggests, there seem to be markers whose use was exclusively affiliated with the narrative context. These were the text-oriented markers *soshitara, dakedo, sorede/de*. In fact, none of these occurred in the participants conversation entries. This is probably due to the fact that narrative represents a distinct genre, distinct from conversation in its strong tendency to be sequentially organized, which is, indeed, also enhanced by means of the above mentioned markers with textual functions. On the other hand, there were some markers which occurred in conversational setting predominantly. These were *a, e*, and *wa*, whose affiliation with the interactional context has been already elucidated.

8.1.2   Summary of findings for the native speaker data

The above results display that except for the socio-demographic variables of age and gender, the situational and textual variables considerably influence the choice and frequency of use of discourse markers. It, however, must be emphasized that it is the interplay of all these factors that trigger variation in discourse marker use. Furthermore, if we look at the frequencies of discourse markers by individual subjects, it may occur that there may be yet another factor at play. Some participants used less discourse markers, or simply preferred to use a certain type of discourse markers. It may thus seem that the use of discourse markers is also dependent on the actual nature of a speaker's linguistic behaviour, that is, his or her attitudes and inclinations with respect to verbosity or

straightforwardness (see also Okamoto 1997: 814-815). This was best reflected in the narrative section of the questionnaire, where some of respondents chose to be very brief, others apparently spent considerable time on recording their stories, elaborating on the given plot, adding details, dramatizing or creating suspense. Similarly, their accounts displayed the inclinations of individual speakers in relation to discourse marker use. There were differences in the amount of discourse markers used (some speakers used none, some used as many as 20 within 12 sentences). In addition, some subjects clearly displayed preferences for using particular type of a discourse marker.

8.2   Non-native speakers' use of discourse markers

8.2.1   Frequency

Responses from 27 subjects who were native Slovak speakers and who were students of the Japanese language at the time of data collection were gathered for the analysis. Data were obtained from university students at two distinctive proficiency levels of Japanese, the second-year students and the fifth-year students. The corpus of non-native speaker data totalled **715 conversational turns** (390 turns were performed by the fifth-year students, 325 by the second-year students). The total number of discourse markers used by the non-native speakers was **406**, which amounts to **56.9 per cent** (i.e. the ratio between the total number of discourse markers and the total number of turns). Compared with the native-speakers who used at least one discourse marker in almost 90 per cent of all turns, the learner group appears to underutilize discourse markers. This supports observations of a number of studies conducted on the discourse markers use by non-native speakers who documented that the rate of using discourse markers by native speakers significantly exceeded the non-native speaker use (see, for instance, see Bazzanella 1990, cited in Aijmer 2001; Aijmer 2001; Hellerman & Verdun 2007).

8.2.2   Factors influencing the learners' use of discourse markers

8.2.2.1 Proficiency and length of formal education

The data obtained from the Slovak learners of Japanese fall into two categories given the length of their formal education concerning the language and the respectively presumed proficiency levels. One group consisted of students who claimed to have studied Japanese

for two years at the time of the questionnaire distribution. Their level of proficiency was expected to be between level 4 (N4) and level 3 (N3) of linguistic competence according to the Japanese-Language Proficiency Test (JLPT) criteria.[37] Learners at this level were assumed to be able to understand Japanese in everyday situations to a certain extent (elementary/pre-intermediate vocabulary, characters, grammar structures, etc.). The second group comprised of students in their fifth year. The fifth-year students' competence should equal or exceed level 2 competence (N2) of the Japanese-Language Proficiency Test. According to the Test criteria, these students were presumed to be advanced enough to understand Japanese in a variety of circumstances, not only limited to in everyday contexts, and were supposed to be capable of using a wide range of vocabulary and characters spanning different topics and settings (see the JLPT's site for further reference).

The presumed proficiency of the more advanced students is believed to be considerably higher than the competence of the less advanced learners. Therefore, significant differences in use of discourse markers between these two groups were expected with respect to the frequency of use, the range of discourse markers used and the accuracy of the use of discourse markers. The hypothesis was proven correct given the fact that it was detected that while the fifth-year students incorporated discourse markers in **89 per cent** of all their turns, the less proficient students did so only in **30 per cent** of all their turns. This sheds a new light on the problem, as one can see that the low frequency of use by less advanced learners strongly biases the results, that is the overall frequency of discourse markers used by the learners, which was reported to be approximately 57 per cent (see Table 6). Thus, it would be more appropriate to consider the results by each group separately for some contexts.

Table 6	**DM use: Native speakers vs. learners**			
	native speakers	learners of Japanese	fifth-year st.	second-year st.
turns	780	715	390	325
DMs	732	406	306	100
percentage	89%	56.9%	89%	30.8%

If the results for the learner group are compared with that for the native speakers, it emerges that the frequency of the more advanced learners' use of discourse markers equals

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[37] The Japanese-Language Proficiency Test is a standardized test which is supposed to evaluate and certify language proficiency of non-native speakers of Japanese. It is coordinated by the Japan Educational Exchanges and Services and the Japanese Foundation and administered two times a year to Japanese language learners throughout the world.

the frequency of the native speakers' use of the phenomena. Nevertheless, despite the fact that the fifth-year students used discourse markers with native-like frequency, it is to be investigated whether they used them in a native-like manner too (the issue is due to be addressed later, see section 8.2.2.4 on accuracy of the learners' discourse marker use).

As to the most frequent markers used by non-native speakers, there were three markers that took up almost 70 per cent of all discourse markers used in the responses of the learners, namely, *ne, yo* and *ā*. Their rates of occurrence per total number of the learners' discourse markers are displayed in Table 7.

Table 7	**Discourse markers by rate of occurrence (NNS/NS)**				
	NNS(%)	NS(%)		NNS(%)	NS(%)
ne	32.7%	18.6%	*ja*	3.6%	2.8%
yo	21.9%	21.6%	*e*	3.3%	5.1%
a	14.7%	12.8%	*ēto*	3%	2%

Other three markers which were used frequently were *ja, e*, and *ēto*. Their frequency was 4 to 7 times lower than the frequency of the first three markers. Consequently, such an unbalanced ratio (3 markers taking up 70%, the rest of all markers amounting to 30%) may suggest that the learners used a smaller range of discourse markers as compared to the native speakers' data (the joint frequency of *ne, yo* and *a* for the native speakers was about 50% and also other frequently used markers displayed with a somewhat higher incident rate).

In addition, the ranking of *ne, yo* and *a* as the most frequently used markers, almost exactly parallels the top frequencies detected among native speakers, only *ne* and *yo* switched places. The situation with the three other frequently used markers slightly differs from the situation among markers used by native speakers. While the marker *e* remains as one of the six dominantly used markers, the high ranking *wa* and *demo* are in the case of non-native speaker data substituted by *ja* and *ēto*, which were identified as the 9th and 10th most frequently used markers in the native speaker data.

Let us now turn the attention to the repertoires of discourse markers across the targeted groups. It has been suggested that the learners not only underutilize discourse markers, they usually used only a limited range of these items (see Weinert 1998, cited in Hellerman & Verdun 2007: 161). This hypothesis was proven to be true to a certain extent, since the native speakers were detected to have employed as many as 37 different

discourse markers in their responses, the learners used 28 markers, which is 1.3 times less. Yet, when the two groups of learners are considered separately, the differences are rather more evident. While the fifth-year students used 25 discourse markers (two thirds of the native speakers' discourse marker tokens), the second-year students used only 20 markers, which is slightly more than a half of the discourse markers number used by the native speakers. Thus, it seems that although the more advanced students used discourse markers with what can be referred to as native-speaker-like frequency, they used a more limited repertoire of discourse markers compared with the native speakers.[38]

8.2.2.2   Degree of exposure to the Japanese language outside class

The learners' frequency of use of discourse markers was further analysed on the basis of their exposure to the Japanese language stimuli outside the formal classroom setting. Here, the presumption was that the acquisition of discourse markers by non-native speakers is catalyzed by means of their exposure to various media where the contemporary colloquial Japanese is used, for instance, Japanese magazines, books or *manga*, Japanese TV programmes, anime or popular drama series, in which the learners are assumed to be confronted with discourse markers and their actual usage. Referring to the data, a certain correlation between the degree of students' exposure to the Japanese language and their frequency of discourse marker use was discovered. In considering the exposure rates of individual students, also their contact with the Japanese speakers was taken into consideration, since it could be suggested that while communicating with a Japanese person (orally or in writing) the students are exposed to the discourse marker use as well.

Generally, the learners who claimed to have no or almost no contact with the Japanese language outside classroom used less discourse markers than those learners who claimed to come in touch with Japanese regularly, watching TV programmes or reading in Japanese. There was only one case, where the subject claimed that she had almost no contact with the Japanese language through media and the only contact with Japanese native speakers was through e-mail. Although her exposure can be classified as rather low, her frequency of discourse marker use was among the highest rates, exceeding the average rate of 21.7 per person detected for the fifth-year students' group.

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[38] Nonetheless, if only narrative section is taken into account, the results are completely different. In their responses to the narrative task, the fifth-year students used 13 different discourse markers and the second-year students used 16 discourse markers. For the record, the native speakers used 21 different discourse markers in narratives. This suggests that it is the second-year students' repertoire that is broader than the fifth-year students'.

The average number of discourse markers per person from the low exposure rate group was about 11 discourse markers. The median rate for subjects with high exposure rate was about two times as high, i.e. 23 discourse markers per person in all of his/her responses.

8.2.2.3   Opportunities for practical use of discourse markers

Next question to be addressed is that of the learners' actual use of discourse markers within their possible interaction with native speakers of the Japanese language. The questionnaire asked the respondents to note down whether they interacted with native speakers of Japanese by means of three channels: written (emails, letters), written/spoken (online social networks), spoken (real-time oral interaction). If the participants claimed that they used Japanese on a regular basis in two of the three contexts (written communication, online social networking or personal contact), their opportunities to communicate in Japanese were judged as high. Those participants that claimed to have more opportunities to communicate in Japanese used discourse markers far more frequently than the respondents with relatively lower opportunities. Those, who had more opportunities for spoken or written interaction in Japanese, used on average 20.3 discourse markers per a questionnaire. Those, who claimed to have little or no opportunity to communicate with the Japanese, used on average 13.6 markers in their responses in the questionnaire/person.

8.2.2.4   The learners' experience with studying abroad

As considers the expected differences due to the subjects' exposure to the language in the actual language setting, i.e. in Japan, there were 7 students who claimed to have spent from six months to two years in Japan. These students demonstrated very good knowledge of discourse markers and as predicted they used discourse markers very often, that is to say, with a frequency that equalled the native speakers' rate. For those, who spent a period of time in Japan, the average number of discourse markers used per one questionnaire was **26.7**. For comparison, the number for the students that had no experience studying Japanese abroad was only **13.1**, which is two times less. Nevertheless, the latter number is possibly strongly influenced by the figures for the second-year students, of whom not a single participant had spent time studying the language in Japan, and whose frequency of discourse marker use was considerably lower compared to the occurrence of discourse markers in the fifth-year student group. If only the fifth-year students were considered, the gap between the two groups, 'experience abroad' group versus 'no experience abroad'

group, narrows, since now the number 26.7 markers per questionnaire for the students with experience abroad must be compared with 19.3 discourse markers on average occurring in one questionnaire for the fifth-year students who had not spend any time in Japan studying the language. This suggests that this factor is not as influential as it had been predicted.

In addition, there are a number of cases, in which the total number of discourse markers used by individual participants in all their responses to the situations modelled in the questionnaire was comparable with, or even slightly exceeded the number of total occurrences of discourse markers in the responses of the students with a study abroad experience. Furthermore, there was one speaker with experience abroad who used only 9 markers in all his responses, which roughly equals the rates of occurrence in the second-year students group. While it is true that these were only scattered instances, yet they were not rare, which signals that the differences in frequencies of discourse markers use triggered by the presence or absence of the learner's experience with study abroad are not clear cut and that there are more factors at play.

The findings for the three above discussed factors are summarised in the table below.

Table 8   **Amount of discourse markers used per person by different factors (NNS)**[39]

factor / degree, length	+	-
exposure to extracur. stimuli	23	11
DM use in real interaction	20.3	13.6
experience abroad/ no experience	26.7	13.1

8.2.2.5   The learners' use of discourse markers across contexts

In the following section, the different contexts will be considered in relation with the usage of discourse markers as they emerged from the non-native speakers' data. First, the frequencies of discourse markers will be investigated with respect to intimacy, social distance and formality of the setting. Then, the discourse marker use across the two speech contexts (conversation and narrative) will be under close scrutiny.

Most interesting is the fact that the frequencies for individual tasks were in most cases comparable with the results of the native speakers. Therefore, similarly as with

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[39] Frequency of discourse marker use in relation to the factor of the length of formal study is shown in Table 6.

the frequencies in the native speaker data, it appears that the frequency of discourse marker use decreases with the increasing degree of formality and asymmetry of the roles of interlocutors. On the contrary, the third factor, i.e. intimacy or social distance, does not seem to trigger systematic differences in the discourse marker use.

Considering formality of the setting, tasks 6 and 7 were designed to be the most formal. As expected, the learners employed the smallest number of discourse markers in their reactions to these two tasks. Discourse markers were detected in approximately 42 per cent of the conversational turns for these tasks, while they amounted to 71.9 per cent in case of all casual contexts.

As to the symmetry/asymmetry of the relation of the interlocutors, the learners used discourse markers in only 35 per cent of their responses on average in tasks, where they played the part of an inferior (6, 7, 11). However, responses to one of such tasks, task 3, solicited as much as 80 per cent of discourse markers across all the learners' responses to the respective question. The median ratio of discourse markers in situations with symmetrical relationship of the interlocutors was 102 per cent.

Comparing the results of native speakers per individual context with the non-native speaker data, it can be again suggested that the students' use of discourse markers paralleled the native speakers' use. What is more, this time it could be applied not only to the more advanced students (as in case of the overall frequency), but also to the less advanced students' use of discourse markers.

8.2.2.6   The learners' use of discourse markers in conversations and narrative

The analysis of the distribution of discourse markers across the two speech contexts evidenced the two speech contexts influenced the choice of discourse markers similarly as in case of the native speaker data. That is to say, while in both contexts the interactional particles *ne* and *yo* were dominantly represented, the choice of discourse markers for conversational purposes displayed stronger tendency to use more speaker-oriented markers in general. The discourse markers in narrative were recruited both from the speaker-oriented markers (*ne, yo, sa*), as well as from the category of the text-oriented markers (*sorede, dakedo, sorekara, soshite, shikashi*). The following table shows the frequencies of the markers with top occurrence rate for each speech context.

Table 9	**Occurrence of discourse markers in conversations and narrative (NNS)**				
	conversation	narrative		conversation	narrative
ne	32.7%	29%	*ano*	1.2%	4.5%
yo	21.9%	16.9%	*ja*	3.6%	2.2%
sa	---	5.6%	*sorede*	1%	3.4%
shikashi	---	5.6%	*e*	3.3%	---
soshite	---	4.5%	*ēto*	3%	---
sorekara	---	4.5%			

As the table indicates, similarly as native speakers, learners preferred some markers over others depending on the speech context. Some discourse markers, namely *yo* and *ne*, were equally distributed throughout both speech modes. On the contrary, some markers were not used in one of the contexts at all, or were used with lower frequency (e.g. *ano* was used 4 times more often in narrative than in conversation, *e* or *ēto* were not used in the narrative context at all). Thus, it appears that discourse markers *shikashi, soshite, sorekara* and *sorede*, expressing predominantly textual functions, were used almost exclusively in narratives; and discourse markers *e, ēto* and *ja* appeared to be used for interaction marking purposes in conversations.

8.2.3   Accuracy of the learners' discourse markers use

Contrary to the findings of previous studies on discourse markers use by non-native speakers, the data collected for this work suggest that the learners are highly competent in using discourse markers adequately (see, for example, Hellerman & Verdun 2007). All the occurrences of discourse markers in the learners' responses were classified either as adequate or inadequate by three native speakers of Japanese. The use of a discourse marker was considered inadequate only if all the native speakers thought so.[40] Both learner groups showed very good results, which are presented in the following table.

Table 10	**Accuracy of use of discourse markers (NNS)**		
	total number of DMs	accurately used DMs	%
second-year students	100	89	89
fifth-year students	306	298	97

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[40] Nonetheless, the number of cases in which they disagreed was negligible.

The results presented in the table show that there were only 11 inaccurately employed markers for the second-year students out of the total of 100 markers, which accounts for 89 per cent success rate for the group. The rate for the fifth-year students was 97 per cent of correctly used discourse markers (the results show that only 8 markers were not judged as appropriately used in a given situation). This indicates that contrary to the expectations, discourse markers were successfully used by both groups irrespective of their proficiency level.

8.2.4 Summary of findings for the learners of the Japanese language

The last section attempted to describe the presumed variation within the group of learners, taking into account criteria as the learners' length of formal study of the language, their exposure to the language outside classroom and their opportunities to practice discourse markers with native speakers, as well as their potential time spent abroad studying the language. It seems that the results evidenced by the data supported the hypotheses that the learners who were more advanced, had greater exposure to Japanese outside language classes, had more opportunities to speak the language and/or studied Japanese abroad for a considerable period of time were more liable to use discourse markers with a greater frequency and used broader repertoire of discourse markers. Nevertheless, it was also found out that there were cases, in which the differences between given groups of learners were not clear cut and simply resisted the categorisation, suggesting that sometimes formal educational background without any native speaker contact or without any contact with Japanese beyond the Japanese language classroom is sufficient for eliciting a high frequency of use and reasonable accuracy of discourse marker use comparable with the native speaker use.

In fact, the more advanced students were evidenced to use discourse markers with native-like frequency, although a less repertoire was employed by these learners, and very accurately (97% success rate). Most interesting was the finding that irrespective of the level of proficiency of the non-native participants, the non-native speaker data paralleled the results of the native speakers when various situational factors were considered. This suggests that the learners have a good command of where and what kind of discourse markers to use in different contexts.

9 Conclusion

The main focus of the present work was on the category of Japanese discourse markers and their use by Japanese native speakers and Slovak learners of the Japanese language in spoken discourse. Due to the presumed lack of form-functional overlap in the sets of discourse markers in the two above mentioned languages, i.e. Slovak as the native language of the learners, and Japanese as the language the learners aspire to master, the learners were assumed to underutilize and misuse the targeted items. The objective of the work was thus to reveal the differences in the use of discourse markers by Japanese native speakers in comparison with Slovak learners of the Japanese language, particularly focussing on the frequency of use of discourse markers, range of discourse markers employed by the respective groups and the accuracy with which the Slovak learners utilized Japanese discourse markers. In order to accomplish this, discourse as obtained by means of a discourse completion test administered to the two groups was analysed.

The analysis was first directed to the native speaker use of discourse markers, so as to get an idea in what contexts discourse markers could be expected to occur. Influence of several socio-demographic and situational factors on the discourse marker use was tested. It was evidenced that while the socio-demographic features of gender and age did not trigger significant statistical variation, the situational factors such as the role of interlocutors and formality of the situation considerably affected the frequency of discourse markers. In this connection, it could be said that native speakers tended to avoid discourse markers in proportion with the increasing formality of the situation and in cases, in which they were confronted with interlocutors with higher social status. In addition, the variable of speech context also appeared to influence the native speakers' choices. Although none of the speech modes, that is, conversation and narrative, did not *a priori* exclude the presence of a particular type of discourse markers, it was documented that certain types were preferred in relation to the given speech context. Interactional markers *yo* and *ne* appeared equally often in both speech contexts, however, fillers (*a, e, ēto*) were predominantly, if not exclusively, used in conversations, while text-organizational markers (*soshitara, dakedo*) emerged solely in narratives. On the basis of individual instances from the data, a survey of interactional and text-organizational functions of the most prominent discourse markers has also been given.

The analysis then proceeded to the investigation of the non-native speaker data. Except for the situational factors and the variable of speech context, different criteria were

used to assess the non-native speaker data. It was the length of formal Japanese language education and the extent of the learners' exposition to the Japanese language stimuli outside the formal language classroom (the learners' experience with stay in Japan, their contact with Japanese native speakers, or their exposure to various kinds of media through which discourse marker use might be observed and acquired). It was hypothesized that the learners with longer educational experience and with higher exposure to the Japanese language would have better command of the discourse marker use. Statistically, the hypothesis was supported by the results, which evidenced that the more advanced students, who had generally come into contact with the Japanese language more often (the learners who were exposed to Japanese beyond their language classes, had more opportunities to interact with Japanese native speakers and/or had an experience studying/living in Japan), used discourse markers with native-like frequency and utilized richer repertoire of discourse markers than the less advanced students and students with limited contact with Japanese outside school.

Nevertheless, irrespective of the proficiency level, the learners used discourse markers very accurately (89-97% success rate) and what is even more noteworthy, the learners' choice of discourse markers and the employment or avoidance of discourse markers in different contexts paralleled the native speaker results across different contexts. Two significant outcomes could be deduced from these findings. First, regardless of the proficiency group and the overall lower frequency of discourse marker use by the learners of Japanese, the data displayed that the learners appeared not only to be sufficiently aware of the use of discourse markers, but also to be able to use the targeted items effectively at relatively early stages of their study. This was demonstrated by the second-year students whose distribution of discourse markers, though with significantly lower rates of occurrence, copied the distribution of discourse markers as used by native speakers, suggesting that even the less advanced learners were competent to use discourse markers accurately and in appropriate contexts complying with pragmatic expectations of native speakers.

Nevertheless, this however does not prove that the learners could use discourse markers as frequently and accurately in spontaneous speech production as well. The author of the thesis is aware of the shortcomings of the method of data collection employed in the present research. Given that the main focus of the study was on spoken variety of the Japanese language, the data obtained by means of a written questionnaire can be considered very limited, since phenomena most likely occurring in spoken language

would probably be subdued in case they should be written down. The participants were only supposed to imagine themselves in the situations covered by the questionnaire, which might influence their response in a number of ways and unlike in spontaneous speech, the participants had plenty of time to think about the responses, or could have even used a dictionary. This then was expected to result in that the responses could be mostly rendered in neatly formed sentences which could be thought of as too unnatural for the spoken speech medium, and could lack linguistic devices the speakers usually use expressing themselves orally, i.e. repetition, repairs, backchannel responses, discourse markers and lengthening (see Jones & Ono 2001). In case of discourse markers in planned discourse, they are not only expected to occur less frequently in such context, moreover, discourse markers could be said to appear isolated, not in clusters, which is very often heard in natural spoken communication.

It has to be, indeed, acknowledged that the collected data are not ideal for investigating spoken language phenomena. However, the questionnaire covered a considerably large range of contexts and situations, which were expected to elicit the utterance of different discourse markers in a number of their possible functions. Consequently, the here collected data set might be, due to this contextual diversity considered suitable for a comparative analysis in relation to frequency and distribution of discourse markers over various contexts. Furthermore, the suitability of the data collected via written questionnaire was tested in a preliminary investigation which had Japanese native speakers role-play the tasks and recorded the actual speech production of the participants. The analysis clearly demonstrated that except a higher proportion of discourse marker clusters evidenced for some participants, there were no significant differences in terms of frequency between the data elicited by the written discourse completion test and its orally performed version.

Moreover, a considerable amount of phenomena representative of spoken discourse had appeared in the responses to the written questionnaire. In fact, many aspects of natural spoken language occurred in the written responses, namely, lengthening of syllables, abrupt stops or ellipsis, repetition and repairs, as well as discourse marker clusters. What is more, some speakers even indicated non-verbal expressions like laugh in their responses. This in turn implies that the data obtained through such a limited medium, a written discourse marker completion test, were in fact to a certain extent similar to natural speech data, and even though that the aspects of spoken language could not possibly be reflected in these data entirely, the data collected for the analysis, on the other hand, are believed to

have provided a valuable insight into the problem of discourse marker use by Japanese native speakers as well as the learners use of the targeted phenomenon.

In conclusion, the analysis revealed that although the learners of the Japanese language tend to underuse discourse markers, they demonstrated very good knowledge of the pragmatic criteria of using discourse markers in discourse that could be said to imitate natural speech. Nevertheless, the real use of discourse markers by the learners of the Japanese language remains a question and might be explored as an interesting, yet, rather challenging topic for further research, involving a larger sample of participants in real life situations.

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Kľúčové slová / Key words:

    japončina, diskurzívne markery, japonské diskurzívne markery, japončina ako cudzí jazyk, osvojovanie si cudzieho jazyka, pragmatická kompetencia

    Japanese, discourse markers, Japanese discourse markers, Japanese as a foreign language, second language acquisition, pragmatic competence

Charakteristika práce / Brief description of the thesis:

    Práca si kladie za cieľ preskúmať, do akej miery sú študenti japončiny, ktorých materinským jazykom je slovenčina, schopní osvojiť si použitie japonských diskurzívnych markerov a bežne ich využívať vo svojom jazykovom prejave, a identifikovať rozdiely vo využití diskurzívnych markerov japonskými rodenými hovorcami a slovenskými študentmi japonského jazyka s prihliadnutím na frekvenciu výskytu diskurzívnych markerov a pestrosť ich využitia vyššie opísanými cieľovými skupinami vzhľadom na situačný kontext a v prípade študentov japončiny i na adekvátnosť použitia diskurzívnych markerov v ich jazykovom prejave v japončine.

    The aim of the present paper was to compare the use of Japanese discourse markers in native and non-native Japanese discourse across a number of situational contexts. More specifically, it was attempted to investigate to what extent the Japanese language learners, whose mother language was the Slovak language, were able to master the use of discourse markers in Japanese, focussing on frequency, the range of discourse markers utilized by the respective groups, and the accuracy of the discourse marker use as performed by Slovak learners in Japanese spoken discourse.

Resumé

Cieľom tejto práce bolo zistiť, do akej miery sú študenti japončiny, ktorých materinským jazykom je slovenčina, schopní osvojiť si použitie japonských diskurzívnych markerov, ktoré sú vo všeobecnosti častým kameňom úrazu mnohých študentov. Príčinou môže byť skutočnosť, že diskurzívne markery, väčšinou neplnovýznamové slová, v sebe koncentrujú komplexné pragmatické významy, ktoré sú mnohokrát navyše natoľko kultúrne špecifické, že sú len ťažko preložiteľné do iných jazykov. Ako japončina, tak i slovenčina majú k dispozícii odlišné diskurzívne markery, ktorých využitie v reálnej komunikácii odráža odlišné sociokultúrne a pragmatické preferencie daného jazyka. Okrem toho, japončina využíva značne širokú paletu týchto jednotiek a to s pozoruhodnou frekvenciou a funkčnou variabilitou, ktorá je spôsobená nielen situačným kontextom, ale i polohou daného markera v rámci výpovede. Predpokladá sa preto, že slovenskí študenti japonského jazyka môžu mať pri používaní týchto jednotiek v japonskej komunikácii problémy. Cieľom tejto práce bolo preto porovnať použitie japonských diskurzívnych markerov užívateľmi japončiny ako materinského jazyka s použitím japonských diskurzívnych markerov v jazykovom prejave slovenských študentov japonského jazyka.

Údaje pre výskum boli zozbierané prostredníctvom dotazníka, ktorý simuloval bežné konverzačné situácie naprieč spektrom rôznych kontextov, čo sa týka formálnosti situácie, spoločenskej blízkosti a role hovorcov, či komunikatívneho žánru (konverzácia, rozprávanie). Dáta, získané vyplnením dotazníka oboma cieľovými skupinami, priniesli zaujímavé výsledky. Ako sa predpokladalo, študenti japonského jazyka využívali diskurzívne markery v porovnaní s rodenými Japoncami menej často a takisto využívali obmedzenejší repertoár týchto jednotiek. Každopádne, adekvátnosť či presnosť využitia diskurzívnych markerov u študentov bola naopak prekvapivo vysoká (s úspešnosťou od 89% do 97%).

Ďalším krokom bolo zistiť, ktoré faktory ovplyvňujú použitie diskurzívnych markerov u jednotlivých kategórií študentov v rámci celej skupiny študentov japonského jazyka. Na základe výsledkov predošlých výskumov bolo stanovených niekoľko relevantných faktorov: dĺžka štúdia jazyka a jemu primeraná jazyková kompetencia študenta, miera kontaktu s japončinou mimo vyučovanie, miera kontaktu s rodenými Japoncami, implikujúca reálne možnosti študenta komunikovať v japončine a precvičovať si tak použitie diskurzívnych markerov, ako i dĺžka pobytu v autentickom jazykovom prostredí. Aj v tomto prípade výsledky výskumu potvrdili hypotézu, že študenti, ktorí

študovali dlhšie, boli na vyššej úrovni, absolvovali študijný pobyt v Japonsku alebo mali viac príležitostí prijímať či používať japončinu i mimo školy, využívajú širšiu paletu diskurzívnych markerov, s vyššou frekvenciou (tá sa v prípade pokročilejších študentov rovnala frekvencii využitia diskurzívnych markerov rodenými Japoncami) a príhodnejšie kontextu ako ich menej skúsení spolužiaci, ktorí nemali žiadnu skúsenosť s pobytom v Japonsku a boli vystavení jazykovým vplyvom v porovnateľne menšej miere. Zaujímavým zistením však bolo, že bez ohľadu na pokročilosť študentov a odlišnú frekvenciu ich využitia väčšina zo študentov demonštrovala veľmi dobrú znalosť pragmatických aspektov použitia jednotlivých diskurzívnych markerov, ako možno vydedukovať zo zistenia, že výber typu diskurzívneho markera vzhľadom na daný situačný kontext takmer presne kopíroval výsledky rodených Japoncov, a to u menej pokročilých, ako aj u značne pokročilých študentov.

Záverom je však nutné podotknúť, že i keď výsledky analýzy implikujú, že študenti japončiny sú schopní obsiahnuť znalosti o použití diskurzívnych markerov v relatívne skorej fáze svojho štúdia a prakticky ich i aplikovať, ako to bolo demonštrované v prípade ich jazykového prejavu zachytenom v odpovediach ku konverzačným úlohám v dotazníku, neznamená to ešte, že títo študenti sú rovnako schopní používať diskurzívne markery i v bežnej komunikácii v japonskom jazyku, ktorého aspekty mohli byť v odpovediach v dotazníku v písomnej forme reflektované len v obmedzenej miere.

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Appendices

List of appendices

Appendix 1   Questionnaire

口語の日本語に関するアンケート

性別：女・男
年齢：
母語：

　※ 以下の 1〜14 では、それぞれの場面が出てきます。実際に会話をしている場面を想定し、できるだけ自然に答えて、空欄に書いてください。
沈黙や省略を表したい場合には「・・・」を使ってください。

1. あなた(B)と初対面の人が通りで話している。

    A:　あのう、すみません。一番近い駅はどこでしょうか。
    B:　(a) B さんは全然わかりません。
    _____
    (b) B さんははっきりとはわかりません。
    _____
    (c) すぐその角を曲がったところだ。
    _____

2. あなた(B)と同級生が寮で話している。

    A:　あの、ごめんね。
    B:　何？
    A:　掲示板にこれがはってあったんだけど。英語で何ていうの？
    B:　(a) B さんは全然わかりません。
    _____
    (b) B さんははっきりとはわかりません。ちょっと時間が必要です。
    _____
    (c) B さんは答えを知ってます。
    _____

3. あなた(後輩, B)と先輩が図書館で話している。後輩のわすれものをみつけたとき

    A:　あの、教室にこれがあったんですけど。
    B:　_____

4. あなた(B)と初対面の人が空港で話している。

    A:　あのう、すみません。パスポートが落ちました。
    B:　_____

5. あなた(B) が友達と話している。

    A:　ね、来週の土曜日、うちで鍋やるんだけど来ない？みんなも来るよ。
    B:　(a) 招待に応じて下さい。
    _____
    (b) 招待を断って下さい。
    _____

6. あなた(<u>学生</u>, B) が<u>先生</u>と話している。

　　A：あ、あの、先週授業中にお話した、ゼミの例のパーティーの件なんですけど…
　　B：はい。
　　A：えーと、来れます？
　　B：(a) 招待に応じて下さい。
　　＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿
　　(b) 招待を断って下さい。
　　＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿

7. あなた(<u>従業員</u>, B) が<u>上司</u>と話している。

　　A： 木村さん、ちょっとお願いがあるんですけれど。
　　B： あ、何ですか。
　　A： えーと、田中さんが突然、インフルエンザで倒れてしまったんですよ。だから明日、入れるでしょうか。
　　B： (a) 依頼に応じて下さい。
　　＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿
　　(b) 依頼を断って下さい。
　　＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿

8. あなた(B) が<u>友達</u>と話している。

　　A： あの、この前ちょっと授業休んじゃったんだけど、国際関係論の、あの の授業。あれ、ちょっとノート貸してくれない？
　　B： また？
　　A： うん。
　　B： (a) 依頼に応じて下さい。
　　＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿
　　(b) 依頼を断って下さい。
　　＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿

9. あなた(B) が<u>弟</u>と話している。

　　A： あ、けんじ、ちょっと頼みがあるんだけどさ。
　　B： えー、何、何？
　　A： あの、3000 円貸してくれない？
　　B： (a) 依頼に応じて下さい。
　　＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿
　　(b) 依頼を断って下さい。
　　＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿

10. あなた(B) が<u>友達</u>と話している。

　　A： あ、みかちゃん、グラス空いてるね。もう少しなんか頼もうか、飲み物？
　　B： (a) 好意を受けて下さい。
　　＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿
　　(b) 好意を断って下さい。
　　＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿

11. あなた(B) が<u>ホストのお母さん</u>(A)と話している。

　　A： ごはんのおかわり、いかが？
　　B： (a) 好意を受けって下さい。
　　＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿
　　(b) 好意を断って下さい。
　　＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿

12. あなた(B) が<u>友達</u>と話している。

    A： 彼女と６月に結婚する事になったんだ。
    B： _____

13. あなた(B) が<u>友達</u>と話している。

    A: 私は試験に落ちた。
    B: _____

14. あなた(B) が<u>友達</u>と話している。

    A： あら、そのＴシャツよく似合ってるじゃない。
    B: _____

以下の 1〜6 では、話の筋書きが書いてあります。あなたが友達と話している場面を想定してください。その筋書きに基づいて話を友達に言っているように空欄に書いてください。

(1) 私は一人で夜テレビを見ていた。
(2) いきなりとなりの部屋で奇妙な物音が聞こえた。
(3) ひどく驚いた。
(4) その部屋にだれや何がいるか見に行くと決めた。
(5) 身を守るためにナイフをキッチンから取った。
(6) 部屋のドアを開けると、猫を見つけた・・・

ご協力ありがとうございました。

Appendix 2   Description of the tasks contained in the questionnaire

Part 1: <u>CONVERSATION</u>

1. You meet a stranger on the street, who asks you for directions to the nearest train station. Answer according to instructions.
        A   You cannot help because you do not know.
        B   You do not know exactly.
        C   You give the stranger directions.

2. You meet a student from your school in the halls of residence and are asked for help with translation of a notice on the board. Answer according to instructions.
        A   You cannot help because you do not know.
        B   You do not know exactly and need more time.
        C   You know the answer.

3. You meet a senior student in the library, who seems to have found a lost article that might be yours. React.

4. You have been approached by a stranger at the airport who seems to have found your passport. React.

5. You have been invited over by a friend. Reply according to instructions.
        A   Accept the invitation.
        B   Decline the invitation.

6. You have been invited to a seminar party by your teacher. Reply according to instructions.
        A   Accept the invitation.
        B   Decline the invitation.

7. You have been asked by a manager to cover for your sick colleague. Reply according to instructions.
        A   Comply with the request.
        B   You cannot/do not want to comply with the request.

8. You have been asked by a friend to lend him/her notes again. Reply according to instructions.
        A   Comply with the request.
        B   You cannot/do not want to comply with the request.

9. You have been asked for a higher amount of money by your younger brother. Reply according to instructions.
        A   Comply with the request.
        B   You cannot/do not want to comply with the request.

10. A friend offers to refill your glass. Reply according to instructions.
        A   Accept.
        B   Decline.

11. You have been offered second helping by a superior. Reply according to instructions.
        A   Accept.
        B   Decline.

12. A friend informs you about her upcoming wedding. React.

13. A friend tells you that he/she has failed in an exam. React.

14. You have been complimented by a friend. React.

Part 2: <u>NARRATIVE</u>

Imagine you are telling a story about what happened to you yesterday to a friend. Note it down in the space provided. The basic plot of the story is provided below:
      (1) You were watching TV home alone in the evening.
      (2) Suddenly you heard a noise in the room next door.
      (3) This terrified you.
      (4) You decided to go and find out if there was anybody in the room.
      (5) You took a knife from the kitchen to protect yourself.
      (6) You opened the door to find out it was only a cat...