On a Discourse Marker Combination in Spoken American English:
'Oh Well' as a Case Study

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1. Introduction

Discourse markers' crucial and interesting roles in discourse have drawn a lot of linguists' attention. (Levinson, 1983; Schiffrin, 1987; Fraser, 1990; Fuller, 2003; Müller, 2005; and more) For more than 30 years, linguists have been trying to define their meanings, features, and functions, but it is not yet simple to answer the fundamental question: what are discourse markers?

As disagreements on terms of similar phenomenon exist in every academia, discourse markers are no exception. Some linguists call the items that function similarly to discourse markers (Schiffrin, 1987) *discourse connectives* (Blakemore, 1992), *pragmatic markers* (Brinton, 1996), *discourse particles* (Aijmer, 2002), etc. We choose to call them discourse markers because the term describes best the phenomenon of our interest.

Even though there is a variety of terms that refer to the similar phenomenon, researchers mostly agree that discourse markers such as *oh, well, and, but, I mean, you know* and *anyway* are sequentially dependent but semantically (almost) empty, and they are highly related to the

speakers' pragmatic competence.

The vast majority of research on discourse markers is conducted on the individual items. A few researchers mentioned discourse marker sequencing (Schourup, 1999; Aijmer, 2002; Conrad and Biber, 2004), yet the phenomenon has received far little attention in the literature (Fraser, 2013). Therefore, the study aims to expand the knowledge of untapped niche in discourse marker research and to explore the following research question: what are the distinctive functions of the combined discourse marker '*oh well*'?

2. Previous studies

2.1. Discourse Marker '*oh*' and '*well*'

'*Oh*' and '*well*' are two of the four most common turn-initial items in spoken English (Norrick, 2009). As '*oh*' (Schiffrin, 1987; Heritage, 1998; Bolden, 2006; Trester, 2009; Heritage, 2012; Heritage, 2017) and '*well*' (Schiffrin, 1987; Watts, 1989; Jucker, 1993; Innes, 2010; Kim, 2013; Heritage, 2015; An, 2018) have been in the extensive consideration, most of their functions in native speaker English seem to be thoroughly examined.

It is well established that the particle '*oh*' is used to acknowledge new or unexpected information (Heritage, 1984; Schiffrin, 1987), to indicate problems in questions (Heritage, 1998), and to function as a minimal third turn expansion in adjacency pairs (Heritage, 1984; Schegloff, 1995a).

The functions of 'well' are more numerous than those of 'oh.' '*Well*' is used to preface a disprefered response (Levinson, 1983; Jucker 1993), to frame a discourse (Schourup, 2001; Heritage, 2015), to achieve consistency in discourse (Schiffrin, 1987), to introduce a direct/indirect quotation (Svartvik (1980), to repair one's own or other's utterance (Schegloff,

2007), to maintain or take turn in conversation (Lakoff, 1973; Svartvik, 1980; Jucker, 1993; Aijmer, 2013), and so on.

In his recent study, Heritage (2017) compares turn-initial particles *'oh'* and *'well.'* He examines their unique functions in three basic sequential positions (first, second, and third) and considered the contrasts between the two particles. One of the contrasts is that discourse marker *'oh'* functions an epistemic status indexing marker while *'well'* functions as an action-projecting marker. Another contrast is on their looking orientations: *'oh'* has a backward sequence looking, yet *'well'* has a forward sequence looking. The last contrast is that "*oh'* stands alone, and *'well'* do not.

Discourse markers *'oh'* and *'well'* can be placed in the same positions, but they work quite differently in many ways. What happens when the two markers combine?

2.2. Discourse Markers Combination

In recent years, researchers have just started to find their interest in the sequencing or combinations of discourse markers. To the best of our knowledge, there are only four research papers that examine discourse marker combinations.

Fraser (2013) examines the possible intra-class combinations of contrastive discourse markers, and Fraser (2015) develops the previous study into the cross-class combinations of contrastive discourse markers and implicative discourse markers.

Within a quantitative approach, Koops and Lohmann (2015) investigates the internal ordering preferences of two-part discourse marker sequences such as oh well, you know I mean, etc. Using the Fisher corpus, a collection of 10-minute 16,000 telephone conversations in American English, they calculated the optimal discourse marker sequencing hierarchy (oh > well > and > or > but > you know > so > because > now >

then > I mean). They also found that non-canonical ordering (Schiffrin, 1987) is not a necessary or predictable feature of discourse markers, but non-canonical ordered discourse marker sequences have more abstract functions.

Dobrovoljc (2017) uses a different term for discourse maker combination: multi-word discourse markers (MWDM). Using the reference corpus of spoken Slovene and eight statistical measures, she identifies 173 structurally fixed discourse-marking multi-word expressions. As for the MWDM extraction method, she finds frequency-based extraction with t-score association measure is most suitable for multi-word discourse marker identification in large corpora.

Nevertheless, most of these studies have focused on the investigation on physical combinations of discourse markers and do not adequately consider their functions and the contexts in which the combined discourse markers occur.

3. Data

To investigate the functions of combined discourse markers, we employ conversation analytic methods, and the unit of analysis is a speech turn in sequences. In order to investigate the research question that is stated above, 11.5 hours of recorded phone calls in American English, which are established in TalkBank (CABank – CallFriend & CallHome), and 25 hours of recorded conversations from the Santa Barbara Corpus of Spoken American English (SBCSAE), which are also established in TalkBank database, are analyzed. TalkBank (http://www.talkbank.org) provides a variety of recorded language data and their transcriptions. As the existing transcriptions of recorded data are simple and not unified, the author complemented the original transcriptions according to Jeffersonian Transcript Notation (in Atkinson and Heritage 1984). See

the Appendix for transcription conventions.

4. Analysis

In this section, we demonstrate the functions of the targeted combined discourse marker, '*oh well.*' In the selected database, the majority number of '*oh well*' functions as a mere combination of '*oh*' and '*well,*' but we also find cases where '*oh well*' delivers its unique functions. Throughout the section, we demonstrate each function with proper extracts.

4.1. '*Oh well*' *as an amalgamation of* '*oh*' *and* '*well*'

Here we have five extracts of '*oh well.*' In each extract, '*oh well*' is used as a face threat mitigation marker (extract (1)), a discourse initiating marker (extract (2)), a quotative marker (extract (3)), and a topic shift marker (extract (4) and (5)) respectively. In the following extract, three speakers are talking about S1's injured mouth:

```
Extract (1) – SBCSAE/file #31¹⁾

01 S1:    I see your mouth is finally healing up after two
02        weeks hunh?
03        (1.0)
04 S2:    No it's just been a week.
05        (1.5)
06 S3:    tsk Who was [it that hit you?]
07 S1:                [m-m you] had it when we went to (.)
08        Whidbey.
09 S2:    Bill.
10 S3:    [°°oh°°]
11 S2:    [I had just] got it though that d-
```

1) The conversation was held at a restaurant. The background music and noises from the kitchen throughout the recording are omitted in the transcription.

```
12  S1:    That was two weeks ago.
13  S2: →  (sniff) (.) Oh well↓ (0.3) Not [quite] =
14  S1:                                     [No:¿]
15  S2:    = this is only Wednesday.
16  S1:    one and a ha:lf.
17  S2:    Tuesday (.) [°°one and] a half°°
18  S1                 [°°Yeah°°]
19         (0.3)
20  S1:    You're right. (.) You're right. (.) I'm wrong I'm
21         wrong.
22         (2.0)
23  S2:    Well I was wrong too cause I said one (.) about one
24         and half.
```

At line 01, S1 recognizes S2's healed up mouth, guessing S2 has had the injury for about two weeks. Line 01-02 is the first pair part of the sequence. After a short pause, however, S2 disproves S1's guess. From line 07, several post expansions at issue follow. As S2 disproves S1's guess throughout line 07-08, S1 tries to prove that her guess was right by providing S2 a time-related account. S2 tries to explain when she got injured at line 11, but her turn is interrupted by S1's turn at line 12. S2 still thinks S1's day count is problematic, and she feels necessary to correct it. Because S2 directly disagrees with S1 in the base adjacency pair's second pair part (line 04) already, S2 tries to show S1 her disagreement more carefully at line 13. To mitigate the face-threatening act, which is disagreement, S2 utters a downgraded "not quite" with a prefaced '*oh well.*' Here, '*oh well*' relaxes the tension caused by consecutive disagreeing as a face-threatening mitigation marker '*well*' does. S2's rationale for the disagreement is followed at line 15, S1 and S2 recount the days from line 16, and finally, they reach a peaceful agreement: nobody was right.

In the extract (2), another three speakers are having a conversation

about aging. The previous conversation is omitted due to the limited space. In this extract, S3 utters 'oh well' and opens a new sequence with newly recognized information:

Extract (2) – SBCSAE/file #02

```
01 S1:   That'll be weird °when you're fifty° (1.0)
02       (a few people chuckling)
03 S1:   Wonder what you'll look like.
04 S2:   Nobody's fifty don't worry about it.
05 S1:   Oh okay (.) Ha: ha ha (.) La: la la la (.) °hhh
06       (5.0)
07 S3: → Oh we:ll, (.) Ten o'clock (exhale) Look like it's
08       bedtime (.) for some fol:ks here.
09 S2:   Y:ep.
10 S1:   Ye:ah actually [it's] pretty much bed time for me
11       soon.
```

The post-expansion from line 03 comes to an end with S1's sequence closing third "oh okay" at line 05. After the previous sequence is over, (5.0) seconds of a long pause takes place. Beginning his turn with "oh we:ll" at line 07, S3 starts the first pair part of a new sequence.

In the extract (3), S1 is telling a story about a part-time job offer to S2 and S3. At line 11, she uses 'oh well' as a quotative marker:

Extract (3) – SBCSAE/file #50

```
01 S1:   Yeah and he needed a hostess, =
02 S2:   okay,
03 S1:   = cause I don't wanna waitress?
04 S3:   [mm hm,]
05 S1:   [Cause I'm] (.) I get too nervous like kinda
06       things?
07 S3:   [Uh huh?
```

```
08  S2:    [°Hm°]
09  S1:    And (.) a friend of mine is working there
10         already we saw her we walked in and she was
11    →    there? (0.2) And I said oh well you must make
12         good dingo. And she was like (.) yeah. If you can
13         keep up with it you can make really good money.
```

In the omitted previous conversation, S1 described how she got the of-fer from the manager at a restaurant. At line 09, S1 starts to tell S2 and S2 about the talk she had with her friend, who currently works for the restaurant. At line 11, S1 uses 'oh well' as a direct quotation marker 'well.' We are not sure what 'dingo' means here, but we guess that it could be the name of a signature dish at the restaurant, local slang for money, or something else.

It is well-researched that a multi-functional discourse maker 'well' is used as a topic shift marker. A topic shift marker is different from a topic initiating maker in that a topic shift marker finishes the previous on-going sequence on a topic and starts a new topic. In the following ex-tract, two speakers are talking about F2's new girlfriend and college life:

Extract (4) - CallFriend/eng-n/file #6157

```
01  F1:    °hhh now, is she and this, (.) I DON'T (.) I am not
02         gonna say it doesn't matter or matters I am not
03         gonna be (you know) ↓fuck it up or just
04         that  °°excuse me [(0.2) sorry°°]
05  F2:    [°hhh °hh]
06  F1:    Is she Christian Jew? or just the Jew, °who
07         celebrates the Christmas°
08  F2:    I am no::t certain.
09  F1:    okay↓
10  F2:    We both know (.) about each other's (.) faith (.)
11         to (.) a great extent but I am not quite certain
```

```
12          about that.
13  F1:     oka:y
14          (3.0)
15  F1:     I am so (.) you know I am not (3.0) I'm not a firing
16          (Brimstone) kind of Christian you know that¿
17  F2:     mm hmm.
18  F1:     I just (.) I worry about her (.) (chuckle)
19          (1.0)
20  F1: →   Oh well (.) how's everything?
21  F2:     Everything is fi:ne (.) °hh
22  F1:     I mean classes →
23  F2:     oh oh classes um:: (1.0) =
24  F1:     (exhale)
25  F2:     = uh:: I have two papers due on Friday for the same
26          class, (1.0) um:
```

F1 starts to inquire F2 about his new girlfriend's religion at line 06-07. F2 is giving insufficient information to F1, saying he is not certain about his girlfriend's religion. There are possible sequence closures at line 09 and 13, but F1 initiates her turn at line 15. After a (3.0) seconds of pause takes place, F1 tries to justify herself because she realizes that her inquiry was inappropriate and disprefered by F2. Since F2 shows a tepid reaction to her explanation at line 17 and 19, F1 begins a new sequence by shifting a topic at line 20. Using 'oh well' at the beginning of the turn, she wraps up the previous problematic topic and asks F2 about his college life.

Meanwhile, a topic shift marker 'oh well' also can do its job by resuming a pending topic. In the following extract, two speakers are talking about F2's trip to Italy:

Extract (5) - CallFriend/eng-n/file #4984

```
01  F1:    [how] (.) how are you doing you didn't (0.5) end up
```

```
02          going to Italy?
03          (0.4)
04  F2:     we:ll I did go to Italy:
05  F1:     ↑you DI::D↑
06  F2:     yea:h I couldn't [send you] =
07  F1:                     [Wo:nderful]
08  F2:     = I couldn't send you a postcard because I was su:ch
09          an idiot. (.) °hhh I pulled the: (0.9) I've got one
10          of those Filofa:xes, (0.3) °hhh and so I didn't want
11          to carry the whole thing and I just thought well I'll
12          just take the a:ddress pa:ge:s,
13  F1:     [ah hah]
14  F2:     [°hhh] and I took like °hhh @A: throu:gh (0.8) @T::
15          or [so:methi:ng]
16  F1:        [(laughing]]
17  F2:     you kno:w, °hhh
18  F1: →   (noise) o:h well don't [worry about Tha:t]=
19  F2:                            [so I didn't have your]
20  F1:     = Tell me how Was [it]
21  F2:                       [°I didn ›t] have your address° (.)
22  F2:     °hhh it was grea:t. (.) it was really wonderful¿
23  F1:     [Yea:h?]
24  F2:     [and] (.) I'm glad that I got a cha:nce to go: I
            mea:n,
25          (0.3) Go::d (chuckle)
```

In this extract, F1 begins the first pair part of the first sequence asking whether F2 made her trip to Italy or not; so, the topic in the first sequence is F2's trip to Italy. As a second pair part of the sequence, F2 utters the insufficiency marker '*well*,' because F2 considers her following answer is not sufficient or direct enough to the question. From line 06 through 17, the ongoing topic changes into the reason why F2 could not reach F1 and tell her about the trip earlier. F1 rejoins F2's explanation, but she tries to bring back the pending topic at line 18. F1 interrupts

F2's account with the turn prefaced by '*oh well*' (line 18) and directly asks F2 to restart talking about her trip in general (line 20).

4.2. 'Oh well' *as a turn exiting marker*

From our analysis, we have found that '*oh well*' mostly functions like '*oh*' plus '*well*,' but in some cases, it functions differently from just '*oh*' and '*well*.' In the collected data, speakers occasionally use *oh well* when they want to yield or give up on their turn. In other words, speakers employ *oh well* to signal recipients "I am done for now.":

```
Extract (6) - CallFriend/eng-n/file #6899

01 F1:    °um° what else (xxx) should think of one other thing
02        that (laughing) would give me dysentery cause you
03        know that would (laughing) °hhh each person could
04        take o:ne↓ I can't think of a third thing at the
05        moment.
06        (1.5)
07 F1: →  (n) Oh well↓
08        (5.0)
09 F1:    <So what have you been up to, anything lately?
10        (0.6)
11 F2:    °hhhhhh no just wo:rk
12 F1:    goo:d
13 F2:    (chuckle)
14 F1:    what time are you getting HO:ME,
15 F2:    °hhh oh I've been able to lea:ve at (0.3) pretty
16        decent ti:me.
17 F1:    well That's goo:d,
18        (0.4)
19 F2:    °hhh °so: °
20        (0.8)
21 F1:    tha:t's goo:d (0.8) °yea:h°
```

In the given extract, F1 is continuing her turn from line 01. She is looking for a "third thing" that would give her dysentery, but she cannot think of one at the moment (line 04-05). F1 takes a little more time to think of it (line 06), but she finally gives up on her turn saying a stand-alone "*oh well*" with a falling intonation at line 07. In that '*oh well*' is not followed by a summary of the on-going sequence, its function is different from that of the conclusive marker *well*. The following (5.0) seconds of a pause at line 08 is long enough to be interpreted that F1 has no intention to hold the next turn. Even though F2 has enough space to take a turn, F2 does not start a new sequence; therefore, F1 initiates a new first-pair-part with a so-prefaced wh-question at line 09.

A speaker may recycle a turn exiting marker '*oh well*.' In the following extract, F1 and F2 are talking about a man who was overhearing their talk and about a business later on:

Extract (7) - CallFriend/eng-n/file #5926

```
01 F1:   da:mn I'd hate for him to have heard anything.
         (0.3)
02       this is not goo:d (0.5) ˚hhh [he: ]
03 F2:                              [oh was he] eaves(drop)
04       dropping on Purpose do you think?
05       (0.3)
06 F1:   We:ll, he was standing very quietly and I walk as I
07       wa:lked towa:rds (.) the living room (.) you know
08       you can hear my feet wa:lking (.) he ˚hh was walk-
         ing.
09       out the do:or.  ˚hhh and he didn't stop to say good
10       bye or anything, and he was the la:st one out of the
11       hou:se ˚hhh
12 F2:   (sigh)
13 F1:   ˚hhh so: (1.0) maybe not (0.4) maybe not (.) give
14       him the benefit of the dou:bt (0.4)
```

```
15  F2:      °yea:h°
16  F2:      °hhh
17           (0.3)
18  F1:      Bu:t
19           (0.9)
20  F1:  →   oh well
21           (2.4)
22  F1:      °hhh =
23  F2:      (exhale)
24  F1:  →   = Oh well↓ (sigh)
25           (1.5)
26  F1:      °hhh u::m
27           (0.8)
28  F1:      anywa:y (.) the fact is (.) I do hate this call me
29           business. I just hate it (0.2) °hhh an:d (sigh) I'm
30           thinking either I should get my own pla:ce, or I
             have
31           to come to terms with this,
```

For the first half of the extract, F1 and F2 are talking about a guy who was eavesdropping on their talk. F1 was very upset about it (line 01-02) at first, but she decides to believe that he was innocent (line 13-14). The first sequence could have been closed at line 17 if F1 did not try to return to the topic with a contrastive discourse marker 'but' at line 18. Not as expected, however, F1 does not resume the previous topic; instead, she tries to drop it finally. For turn exiting, F1 uses a stand-alone 'oh well' at line 20, and (2.4) seconds of silence follows. F1 expects F2 to take over a turn during the silence, but F2 only exhales (line 23). F1 repeats a stand-alone 'oh well' (line 24) expecting F2's turn-taking once again (line 25), but it never happens. After all, F1 searches for a new possible topic (line 26) and manages to open a new discourse (line 28) with a topic shift marker 'anyway.'

There is another case where a stand-alone 'oh well' occurs, and 'oh

well' speaker exits their turn successfully. In the following extract, four speakers are talking about penguin's sneezing:

```
Extract (8) – SBCSAE/file #39


01 S1:    That's what they're doing when they sneeze is
          they're:
02        getting rid of (.) =
03 S2:    Sa[lt]
04 S1:    = [the] salt.
05 S3:    Oh:::
06 S2:    That they have accumulated (.) They have a sa:lt
07        gla::nd (.) in the bea:k. (1.0) And that is what
08        separates [the sa:lt ou:t.] (1.0)
09 S4:              [°Did you know that before,°]
10 S2:    And to get [rid of] that sa:lt [they (xx)]=
11 S1:               [°mm-mm°].
12 S4:                                  [°Me neither.°]
13 S2:
14 S2:    =they snee:ze.
15 S1:    tsk ye:ah [actually I remember doing the] penguin =
16 S3:           [Oh:: I never even thought of that.]
17 S1:    = thing a year ago (.) but I don't remember that (.)
18        adap[ta]tion. (.)
19 S4:        [No.]
20 S1: →  °hhh Oh well↓
21 S2:    tsk (.) Um:: (1.5) we're gonna have to go up and do
22        Q and A in three minutes.
```

S1 tries to take a turn with a discourse marker 'actually,' (line 15) but she realizes that she cannot hold the turn because she cannot recall a specific story to tell (line 17-18). As S1 fails to remember the adaptation, she utters a stand-alone '*oh well*' as a marker of turn-exiting. '*Oh well*' in this context may also signal "I have nothing more to say, or I do

not know what to say" to the recipients. Unlike in the other extracts we examined earlier, S2 takes a turn as soon as S1 wraps up her turn (line 21). The different pattern between the current extract and the first two extracts may arise from the fact that there are more participants involved in the discussion, which makes the chance of turn-taking higher in the extract (8).

4.3. 'Oh well' as a sarcastic speech indexing marker

The last function of 'oh well' we examine in the current study is to index a figurative speech. In this section, we demonstrate two examples of sarcasm that were followed by 'oh well.' Extract (9) is taken from a conversation between two friends, and they are talking about F2's trip to Spain:

```
Extract (9) CallFriend/eng-n/file #6239

01  F1:     Did you meet any Spanish bo:ys?
02          (0.3)
03  F2:   no:: <I met well I met some ga:y one:s (.)
04          [(chuckle)]=
05  F1: →  [oh, well]=
06  F2:   =[I mea:n] (chuckle)
07  F1:    =[°that ›s° usefu:l,] (chuckle)
08  F2:   (giggle) °hhh
09  F1:   °hhh
10  F2:   hh I had (        ) boys (   ) now (.) °you know, °
11          (0.5)°interested in me°  hhh hhh hhh hhh (.)=
12  F1:    [(exhale)]
13  F2:   =[hhh hhh]
14  F1:   they might as well have been [Spanish] gir:ls:
15  F2:                                [°hhh hhh°]
16          (0.6)
17  F1:   °no, I'm just kidding°
```

```
18  F2:     °yea:h,°
```

F2 went on a trip to Spain, so F1 requests her information about boys that she possibly met during the trip (line 01). F2 indeed met some boys, but the boys were not the boys F1 meant (line 03). In the third position of the first sequence, F1 says 'oh well that's useful.' However, F2 did not have a chance to go out with any straight boys, and meeting gay boys is not 'useful' for her because they do not date girls. The purpose of using 'oh well' in this context is to add some uncertainty into the following utterance so that the utterance cannot be taken literally by the recipients.

In the following extract, 'oh well' is used for three times in an unfortunate situation. F1 and F2 are talking about a Fullbright application deadline which F1 recently missed:

Extract (10) - CallFriend/eng-n/file #4984

```
01  F1:    I missed the dead li:ne for the (.) I'm such an (.)
02         I:diot I thought the deadline was- (0.8) uh, August
03         fifteenth↑ cause I wanted to apply for a Fullbright
04         for ne:xt year.
05  F1:    [°hhh]
06  F2:    [oh] Yea:h
07         (0.3)
08  F1:    I missed the Deadli:ne
09  F2:    °o:h dea:r↓°
10  F1:    I (0.2) I picked it up like Au:gust fir:st thinking
11         (.) okay I got fiftee:n da:ys, °hhh
12  F2:    yeah
13  F1:    [in my] hea:d (.) I had just looked at s:o many
14         application:s, (.) °hhh
15  F2:    °mm hm, °
16  F1:    and I picked it up and said okay so now I'm gonna
17         fill it ou:t °hhh and
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```
18         it's li:ke, (0.7) the deadline was like (0.6) you
19         know, July twenty ni:nth.
20  F2:    [o:h (chckle)]
21  F1:    [°hhh I picked it up] the Day after (0.6)
22  F1:    you [know, it was supposed to] =
23  F2:        [it was already] =
24  F1:    = °hhh [be: the:re ]
25  F2:          = [closed hhh hhh] hhh hhh [hhh hhh hhh]
26  F1:                                    [°hhh <there's just]
27         no wa::y (chuckle) [I thought,]
28  F2: →                    [oh well↓]
29  F1: → °hhh I was like (.) o:h we:ll↓ okay
30  F2:    There's always next year (chuckle)
31  F1:    Easy↓ (high pitch)
32  F2:    [°hhh]
33  F1: → [°hhh] Oh we:ll↓ (high pitch)
34  F2:    hhh hhh hhh
35  F1:    Yea:h↓ (high pitch)
```

F1 wanted to apply for the Fullbright program, but she missed the deadline. The first 'oh well' at line 28 functions as a particle, signaling 'I don't know what to say for now' to the hearer. F2 waits until F1 finishes her turn at line 29 and takes a turn at line 30. The second 'oh well' is the one that indexes a sarcastic speaking. 'Oh well' makes the following utterance sarcastic when it is used under a not-okay situation shared by the speakers. Here, the deadline-missing situation is probably not pleasant because her life plans may have to be changed around it; however, what's done is done. Even though the situation is not okay, saying "oh well okay" (line 29) seems to have the same meaning as saying "that's fine" in a negative situation. Also, at line 30, F2 tries to comfort F1, but F1 tries to treat the mistake as if it was no big deal. Saying "oh well" in a high pitch becomes a humorous way to describe a somewhat negative and frustrating situation.

5. Conclusion

It is pleasant to have strawberries and bananas separately. Once the two fruits are blended, they become a new thing: a strawberry-banana smoothie! The smoothie is a mixture of strawberries and bananas, but at the same time, it has its own identity. Like the idea of blended smoothie, we believe combined discourse markers are significant themselves because they have their unique functions and meanings.

This study explores the functions of the combined discourse marker '*oh well*' within the conversation analysis framework. From our analysis, we find the cases where the typical functions of both '*oh*' and '*well*' survive after they combine. Furthermore, we find the interesting cases where the distinctive functions of '*oh well*' develop. In those unique cases, '*oh well*' is utilized as a turn exiting marker and a sarcastic speech indexing marker. Both of the functions have not been examined in the literature on the individual discourse markers '*oh*' and '*well*.'

Based on the findings above, we hope to encourage further research on discourse markers combination. Researching on the various combinations of discourse markers may enable us to have further understanding on discourse markers. Combinations of another opposing discourse markers like '*oh well*' such as '*yeah but*,' '*and but*,' and '*yeah well*' merit further investigation, as do the functions of discourse marker repetitions such as '*okay okay okay*,' '*well well well*,' and '*yeah yeah yeah*'. As Koops and Lohmann (2015) notes that non-canonical sequencing is not a predictable feature of discourse markers, comparative studies on canonical sequencing ('*well but*') versus non-canonical sequencing ('*but well*') of discourse markers may show us another interesting picture as well.

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Appendix: Transcription Conventions

Convention	Name	Use
:	Colon(s)	Extended or stretched sound, syllable, or word.
_	Underlining	Vocalic emphasis.
(.)	Micropause	Brief pause of less than (0.2).
(4.0)	Timed pause	Intervals occur within and between same or different speaker's utterance.
(( ))	Double parentheses	Scenic details.
( )	Single parentheses	Transcriptionist doubts.
.	Period	Falling vocal pitch.
?	Question marks	Rising vocal pitch.
,	Comma	Weak rising vocal pitch.
↑ ↓	Arrows	Marked rising and falling shifts in intonation.
° °	Degree signs	A passage of talk noticeably softer than surrounding talk.
=	Equal signs	Latching of contiguous utterances, with no interval or overlap.
[ ]	Brackets	Speech overlap.
[[	Double brackets	Simultaneous speech orientations to prior turn.
!	Exclamation points	Animated speech tone.
-	Hyphens	Halting, abrupt cut off sound or word.
⟩ ⟨	Less than & Greater than signs	Portions of an utterance delivered at a pace noticeably quicker than surrounding talk.
{	Curly brackets	Simultaneous verbal and physical activity

ABSTRACT

On a Discourse Marker Combination in Spoken American English:
'Oh Well' as a Case Study

<div align="right">Semi Park</div>

This paper investigates a combined discourse marker '*oh well*' in spoken American English. The vast majority of research on discourse markers has been conducted on individual items, yet their combinations have received little attention in the literature. In the hope of expanding the knowledge of untapped niche in discourse marker research, the current study aims to examine the functions of a combined discourse marker '*oh well*' as a case study. From the analysis, we have found that '*oh well*' mostly functions like an amalgamation of two individual discourse markers '*oh*' and '*well*,' (as a face threat mitigation marker, a discourse initiating marker, a quotative marker, and a topic shift marker), but it sometimes earns extra discourse functions (as a turn exiting marker and a sarcastic speech indexing marker).

Key Words   conversation analysis, discourse markers, turn management, discourse markers sequencing practices, discourse marker combination, turn exiting marker