

# **The pragmatic markers *anyway*, *okay* and *shame*: A comparative study of two African varieties of English**

by  
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## **Declaration Page**

By submitting this thesis electronically, I declare that the entirety of the work contained therein is my own, original work and that all sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references. I also declare that this thesis, in its entirety or in part, has not been submitted at any university for obtaining any qualification.

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## Abstract

The goal of this study was to determine and compare the functions of the pragmatic markers (PMs) *okay*, *anyway* and *shame* as they occur in two spoken components of the International Corpus of English (ICE), namely ICE-SA (South African English) and ICE-EA (East African English). Using the commercially available Concordance program WordSmith Tools 4.0, all instances of *okay*, *anyway* and *shame* were identified in each corpus and all non-PM instances were then excluded. The remaining instances of *okay*, *anyway* and *shame* were subsequently hand coded to determine the primary functions that these elements exhibit. The classification of the various functions was done according to Fraser's (1996, 1999, 2006) framework for identification of PMs. Despite the different size and state of completion of the two corpora, it was found that the functions of the two PMs *okay* and *anyway* were similar in South African English and East African English. The findings of the corpus investigation included identifying the functions of *okay* as both a *conversational management marker* and a *basic marker*, as well as its role in turn taking. *Anyway* was found to function as an *interjection*, a *mitigation marker*, a *conversational management marker* and a *discourse marker*. *Shame* was found to be a uniquely South African English PM, and to function both as an *interjection* and as a *solidarity marker*.

## Opsomming

Die doel van hierdie studie was om vas te stel watter funksies verrig word deur die pragmatiese merkers (PM's) *okay*, *anyway* en *shame*, soos wat hulle gebruik word in twee gesproke komponente van die Internasionale Korpus van Engels (IKE), naamlik IKE-SA (Suid-Afrikaanse Engels) en IKE-OA (Oos-Afrika Engels). Met behulp van die kommersieel-beskikbare *Concordance*-program *Wordsmith Tools 4.0*, is alle gevalle van *okay*, *anyway* en *shame* binne die onderskeie korpusse geïdentifiseer, waarna alle nie-PM gevalle uitgesluit is. Die oorblywende gevalle van *okay*, *anyway* en *shame* is daarna met die hand gekodeer ten einde die primêre funksies van hierdie elemente vas te stel. Die funksies is geklassifiseer volgens Fraser (1996, 1999, 2006) se raamwerk vir die identifikasie van PM's. Ten spyte van verskille in die grootte en vlak van voltooidheid van die twee korpora, is vasgestel dat die PM's *okay* en *anyway* soortgelyke funksies verrig in beide Suid-Afrikaanse Engels en Oos-Afrika Engels. Uit die korpus-analise het dit verder geblyk dat *okay* nie net 'n rol speel in beurtneemings nie, maar ook funksioneer as 'n *gespreksbestuur-merker* en *basiese merker*. *Anyway* blyk op sy beurt te funksioneer as 'n *tussenwerpsel*, *versagting-merker*, *gespreksbestuur-merker* en *diskoersmerker*. Laastens is gevind dat *shame* as PM uniek is aan Suid-Afrikaanse Engels en dat dit funksioneer as beide 'n *tussenwerpsel* en *solidariteitsmerker*.

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## Chapter 1: Introduction and Background

### 1.1 Introduction

Africa offers many opportunities to study both New Englishes and World Englishes. First language varieties of South African English seem to have been largely under-researched, with some exceptions, such as Mesthrie (1992, 2002), Lass (2002), Jeffrey (2003), Jeffrey and Van Rooy (2004), De Klerk et al. (2006), Da Silva (2007) and Bekker (2009). One possible reason for the relative lack of studies on South African English is that this variety of English is not considered to be a New English; however, as pointed out by Crystal (2008:143), South Africa's many other languages have had a profound effect on the variety of the English language that is spoken in the country today:

I had studied the evolution of South African English over the years. There is nothing quite like it in the English-speaking world. The vocabulary is the really striking thing. It is hugely distinctive and diverse, thanks to the number of languages which feed it. There are eleven official languages in South Africa. Each one borrows wildly from the others. And English borrows most of them all.

The current study addresses, in a limited way, the question of what has made South African English so unique. After deciding to work with the International Corpus of English (ICE) for South Africa, I elected to compare South African English<sup>1</sup> with East African English, as the two seem to have a similar sociolinguistic history.

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<sup>1</sup> As spoken by predominantly White first language speakers.

After selecting the two Englishes for comparison, the decision was made to focus on pragmatic markers. Such markers add little, if anything, to the semantic content of an utterance, but rather provide information on the speaker and on the speaker's attitude, among other aspects of the linguistic situation. Due to the nature of pragmatic markers, they likely serve to reflect a speaker's cultural and linguistic background, thus making them ideal for comparing first language varieties.

## **1.2 Research questions**

The study was guided by the following research questions:

- A. What is the nature and distribution of the pragmatic markers, *okay*, *anyway* and *shame* in the two African varieties of English, namely South African English and East African English?
- B. How does the occurrence and use of said pragmatic markers differ in these two varieties of English?

## **1.3 Two African varieties of English**

The focus of the current study was on two African varieties of English, namely South African English and East African English. South Africa and East Africa share a similar sociolinguistic history. Both areas were ruled by the British for many years, but neither was involved in the first wave of British colonisation: in the case of East Africa, its natural resources were considered to be less valuable than those of West Africa, while, in the case of South Africa, the Cape Colony was already governed by the Dutch (see below). Both areas had language hierarchies that have persisted until today and that still influence the status of English in each area concerned.

### **1.3.1 South African English**

The English language holds a very interesting place in the South African linguistic landscape. A brief overview of the sociolinguistic history of South Africa is necessary to understand the status of English in modern South Africa. South Africa was first colonised by the Dutch, who governed the Cape from 1652 to 1795. The British took over from the Dutch, and governed the Cape Colony, the colony of Natal, and, subsequently, the Boer republics of the Orange Free State and the Transvaal, until 1910, when South Africa became a union.

The early years of British rule in South Africa centred on the Cape as a stopover for ships travelling to and from the East. Most of the English speakers living in the Cape at the time were military and government officials. In the late 1810s, Britain decided to expand their hold on South Africa and to start settling some other areas of the country. The main goal at the time was to create a buffer between the Xhosa-occupied Eastern Cape and the British-settled Western Cape. For this purpose, the British government started providing assisted passage and land grants in the Eastern Cape, around the Fish River (Mesthrie, 2002:108). In 1820, a group of about British 5 000 settlers arrived in the Eastern Cape. Although the English speakers were, at the time, outnumbered by the Dutch speakers, Lord Charles Somerset declared English to be the official language of the Cape Colony in 1822 (Mesthrie, 2002:108). Even in the Boer Republics, which were established in the Free State and Transvaal, English was considered to be the language of the well-educated (Mesthrie, 2002:109). In the 1840s and 1850s, a second large wave of settlers arrived in the Natal region. The third and most diverse wave of settlers, however, arrived from around 1875–1904, when gold was discovered and first came to be mined in the Witwatersrand. Although the settlers from the different waves

mentioned all have brought with them different dialects and varieties of English, it would seem that 'standard' South African English was mostly influenced by the first English-speaking settlers in the Western Cape (Mesthrie, 2002:109).

The establishment of the Union of South Africa in 1910 saw English and Dutch established as official languages, with Dutch being supplemented by Afrikaans as an official language in 1925, and then replaced completely in 1961. From 1948 until 1994, the country was governed by the predominantly Afrikaans-speaking members of the National Party, under the apartheid regime, although English remained an official language. In 1961, the Republic of South Africa was formed, which exited the British Commonwealth.

In South Africa, more than 25 different languages are spoken by the major groups of people. The languages consist of African (e.g. isiZulu, isiXhosa, Sesotho, and Tshivenda), European (e.g. English, Portuguese, German, and Italian), and Asian languages (e.g. Chinese languages such as Cantonese and Hakka, and Indian languages such as Hindi, Tamil, Gujarati and Telugu) (Kamwangamalu, 2006:158). Despite this variety of languages, the apartheid government decided to introduce Afrikaans as medium of instruction, and in 1974 it passed the Afrikaans Medium Decree as part of the notorious Bantu Education Act (which was originally passed in 1953). The implementation of said Act led to the bloody Soweto uprising on 16 June 1976, in which many students were killed. Although the uprising occurred in response to the imposition of the Afrikaans medium of instruction, it had broad-sweeping ramifications for English in South Africa. Afrikaans was, for years, seen as the language of the oppressors, but in order for non-Afrikaans-speaking people to succeed, they needed to speak an official language, and so English gained popularity as a second language.

English has a fair distribution throughout South Africa, as both first and second language, although it is more prominent in the metropolitan and urban areas. English in South Africa is not monolithic; it has a wide range of varieties. Clear distinctions can be made between White South African English (SAE), Coloured SAE, Indian SAE, and Black SAE, with the latter being a predominantly second language variety of English. Many people speak an African mother tongue at home, but go through their school careers in English; because of this, “South Africa’s second-language varieties of English are heavily marked at every level of linguistic structure by the primary language of their speakers” (Kamwangamalu, 2006:162). The above is of particular interest to the current study because, although all the data were collected for the study from people who received their schooling in English, and who were considered to be first language speakers of English, their English might be marked by specific features if it was not their original mother tongue.

Since the government change in 1994, there are 11 official languages in South Africa which, according to the Constitution, have to be treated equally. However, English holds a much higher status than does any other language in South Africa. This can be attributed to various reasons, such as to the fact that in order to achieve an internationally recognised higher education one must be able to speak, read and understand English. Another reason in the ever-growing aspect of globalisation; to be able to speak English in South Africa means that you are modern and well-educated. The fact that, in 2001, 95 percent of the speeches in Parliament were given in English (Kamwangamalu 2006:163) is indicative of the above, keeping in mind that the institution is made up of mostly black members, who can probably understand two, or possibly more, of the indigenous official languages. To drive home the status of English in South Africa, as well as in South African politics, Phaswana (cited in

Kamwangamalu, 2006) claims with regard to the language choice in Parliament that “those who speak in English are said to be well-informed and better educated, while [those] who speak any African language [are] perceived as uneducated and uncivilized” (Kamwangamalu, 2006:163).

### **1.3.2 East African English**

The label “East African English” (EAE) refers to the variety of English that is spoken in Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania, which, as is the case in South Africa, is a product of British colonialism. While these three countries exhibit differences in their colonial heritage, Schmied (2004:918) states that they share a “common ‘anglophone’ background”, with the English that is spoken in the three countries concerned forming a “coherent descriptive entity”.

Unlike South Africa, which lacked a common (non-European) language of communication before Western colonisation, all three East African countries used Kiswahili as a lingua franca prior to the arrival of the European settlers and the missionaries. The use of Kiswahili dates back to the development of Muslim African trading cities along the East African coast from around 1000 AD. In the latter half of the nineteenth century, English missionaries started moving inland from the coast and used English, as well as Kiswahili, to communicate with the inhabitants of the region. British colonial rule, despite its initial reliance on Kiswahili as a means of communication, furthermore contributed to the establishment of English as a language of administration and, later, of education (Michieka, 2005).

The sociolinguistic history of East Africa, therefore, means that there are three tiers of language use: the tribal languages, which are used for local communication and basic education; the local lingua franca, which is mostly Kiswahili, but also, for example,

Luganda, and which is used for interterritorial, or ethnically mixed, communication; and English, which is used largely in the elitist areas of administration, law and higher education, and for international communication (Schmied, 2006:191). Although much has changed in East Africa, English is still used in the administration of the countries and has a high status as an indicator of level of education.

### **1.3.3 Summary**

The spread of English through the world “has been viewed as two diasporas” (Kachru & Nelson, 1996:72). The first diaspora consisted of the spread of English-speaking immigrants, who settled in such countries as Australia and New Zealand, whereas the second concerned the colonisation of Africa and Asia. The latter diaspora involved a few English-speaking administrators, who brought their home language to a foreign country that was under their control. In said countries, English is seen as the language of the government and the administration. Kachru and Nelson (1996) note that, in many of the countries affected, the prevailing attitude towards English, and the role that English plays, persisted even after they gained independence from Britain. This is true of East Africa, and it is especially true of Kenya.

South Africa seems to be a combination of the two diasporas. On the one hand, many English-speaking immigrants came to South Africa in search of opportunity, initially settling in the Eastern Cape and Natal, whereas, on the other hand, the British established colonial rule in the Cape, where they governed the original Dutch settlers, as well as the indigenous population.

English has had a wide-ranging influence on Africa, but it has also been adapted and changed, due to having come into contact with the other languages that are spoken on the continent. I have chosen to compare the two African varieties of English identified



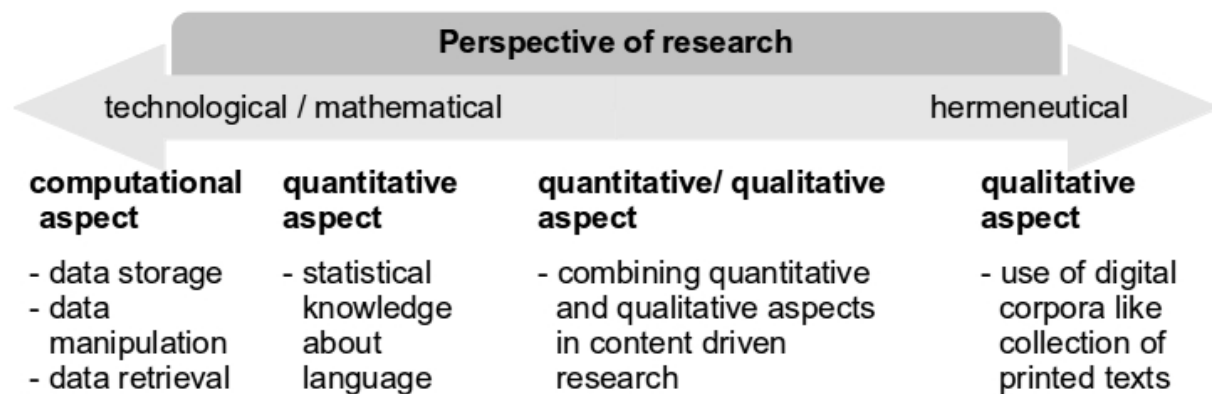
above for several reasons. Firstly, much research has been done on African Englishes, but very few direct comparisons have been made. The countries in said corpora share a similar sociolinguistic history, with English seeming to hold the same status in the countries in question. Although most people would expect very similar language use in countries that have a similar colonial history, this might not be true.

#### **1.4 Pragmatic markers**

Pragmatic markers (PMs) serve several purposes in discourse. One of their primary functions is to indexically point to features of the context (Schiffrin, 1987). Aijmer and Simon-Vandenberg (2009) further characterise PMs as reflexive, because they comment on the utterance, and thus assist in the interpretation thereof. The uses of PMs that were focused on in the current study were those outlined by Fraser (1996, 1999, 2006) in several studies. The first type of PM is the *basic* PM, with such markers conveying the illocutionary force of the speaker. The second type of PM is the *commentary marker*, which is used to indicate the fact that the following segment of discourse is connected to the previous segment. The several types of *commentary markers* that have been identified will be discussed further in Chapter 2. The third type of PM identified by Fraser is the *parallel marker*, which, in contrast to a *commentary marker*, is used to indicate that the following segment of discourse is separate from the previous segment. One of the subtypes of said type of PM is the *conversational management marker*. The fourth and final type of PM is the *discourse marker* (DM), which is also discussed in detail in Chapter 2.

## 1.5 Corpus linguistics

The compiling of corpora for linguistic purposes has been performed since the 1950s; however, the field expanded with the rise in computer technology. According to Baker (2007:1), corpus linguistics involves using “large bodies of naturally occurring language data stored on computers”, as well as “computational procedures which manipulate this data in various ways”, in order to find linguistic patterns. Stegmeier (2012) provides a summary of the different research perspectives that are adopted for corpus linguistics, as is illustrated in Figure 1.1 below.



**Figure 1.1. Research perspectives in corpus linguistics**

Source: Stegmeier, 2012:96.

The present study falls under the quantitative/qualitative aspect of corpus linguistic research, as both statistical and context-based data are presented and analysed in the study.

The two corpora used in the current study originated as part of the ICE project, which aimed to compile parallel corpora of varieties of contemporary English (Nelson, 2006). The ICE corpora have a common corpus design and a common methodology (Greenbaum, 1996), and data are only collected for the project in countries where

English is either the first language of, or is used as a second official language by, adult speakers.

## **1.6 Structure of the thesis**

The present chapter contains the background to the thesis, and the research questions motivating the study. Information on SAE and EAE is also provided in this chapter, as the context for the study. The chapter provides a brief overview of the nature of PMs, followed by a short description of corpus linguistics.

In Chapter 2, attention is paid to PMs, focusing in particular on the types of PMs identified by Fraser (1996; 1999; 2006) and on the five planes of discourse set out by Schiffrin (1987). The three PMs that are the focus of the study, namely *okay*, *anyway* and *shame*, are then discussed.

Chapter 3 provides a more detailed discussion of corpus linguistics, as the theoretical framework for the research. A characterisation of the ICE corpora used in the study is provided, followed by the research methodology.

Chapter 4 presents the data obtained, and provides a discussion of the findings of the corpus research. The chapter examines the occurrence of the three PMs mentioned earlier. Occurrences across the two corpora are discussed, and examples from the corpora are used to illustrate the discussion.

Chapter 5 concludes the thesis, providing a summary of the results of the study, as well as some of its strengths and limitations. Finally, I make some recommendations for further study.

## Chapter 2: Pragmatic markers

### 2.1 Introduction

Chapter 2 contains a brief outline of previous studies of PMs, as well as a broad definition of what PMs are, based on the work done by Fraser (1996, 1999, 2006) and Schiffrin (1987, 2001). I will explain Fraser's four types of PMs, as well as Schiffrin's five planes, on which PMs are used.

PMs have been studied in various fields in linguistics, including syntax (Fraser, 1999), pragmatics (Fraser, 1996, 1999, 2006), discourse analysis (Schiffrin, 1987, 2001), and sociolinguistics (Macaulay, 2002; Müller, 2005). Due to the above, the same part of speech has been referred to, variously, as "discourse particle", "pragmatic marker", "segmentation marker", "modal particle" and "pragmatic particle". According to Aijmer and Simon-Vandenberg (2009), the elements being treated as PMs are increasing, as well as the methods of study concerned.

Schiffrin (1987) characterises PMs as being context-bound and suggests that they have indexical features. Östman (1995, cited in Aijmer and Simon-Vandenberg 2009) states that the class-identifying functions of PMs are implicit anchoring. They are referred to as the "windows" that hearers use to make deductions and assumptions about the speaker's attitude and opinion. According to Aijmer and Simon-Vandenberg (2009), Hölker (1991) provides four key features of PMs: (i) PMs do not affect the truth conditions of an utterance; (ii) PMs add nothing to the propositional content of an utterance; (iii) PMs are related to the speech context or situation, rather than to the situation under discussion; and (iv) the function of the PM is emotive and expressive, rather than referential, denotative or cognitive.

The definition of a PM depends greatly on the linguistic approach that is taken in a particular study, which also influences whether or not an element is considered to be a PM. Moreover, most authors admit that their research is incomplete, and that further study of PMs is required.

## 2.2 Types of pragmatic markers

Fraser (1996, 2006) proposes four types of PMs. The first type is the *basic* PM. Fraser (1996:171) defines the basic marker as “having representational meaning” above their propositional meaning. These markers represent information that signals the force of the direct basic message of the utterance (Fraser, 1996:171). Fraser goes on to list eight types of *basic markers*, namely *structural basic markers*, *lexical basic markers*, *pragmatic idioms*, *hybrid basic markers*, *declarative-based markers*, *interrogative-based hybrids* and *imperative-based hybrids* (1996:171). Those subtypes pertaining to the current study are described in some detail below.

*Lexical basic markers* can be further divided into *performative expressions* and *pragmatic idioms* (Fraser, 1996:173). *Performative expressions* are used to introduce the illocutionary force of the speaker, that is, what the speaker is trying to achieve with the segment of discourse used. Examples of basic *performative expression* PMs are:

1. **I swear** I’ll be there.
2. **Please**, after you. (Here the illocutionary force is not a command, but rather a suggestion.)
3. **My complaint** about this place relates to the service.
4. **I don’t agree** that she is the best.
5. **My request** is that you leave today.

6. **I must ask you** to come back tomorrow.
7. **I would propose** a shift in our thinking.

One group of *pragmatic idioms*, namely *interjections*, are emotive words or phrases that often stand alone and that function as separate utterances. Some examples of interjections are *ah*, *ahem*, *ooh*, *huh*, *oops* and *whew* (Fraser, 1996:176). Notable in relation to *interjections*, is the fact that the meaning assigned is often conveyed by the intonation that is imposed on them, rather than the actual form. For example:

8. A: I see Western Province won their game last night.

B: Oh!

In example (8) speaker B could be expressing one of several possible reactions to speaker A's statement through the use of the marker **oh**. Speaker B could be genuinely surprised, disgusted (if the speaker is a supporter of the opposing team), or sarcastic (if the speaker watched the game live), or could express a lack of interest in the particular sport or could convey any of a number of other responses. Without the intonation being known, only a limited understanding of speaker B's response is possible.

The second type of PM marker, the *commentary* PM, has a "representational meaning specifying an entire message", as well as a "procedural meaning signalling that this message is to function as a comment on some aspect of the basic meaning" (Fraser, 1996:179). Since *commentary markers* comment on the message, they can be divided into several categories: *assessment markers* (e.g. **luckily**, **sadly**, **unfortunately**); *manner-of-speaking markers* (e.g. **frankly**, **speaking bluntly**, **to be honest**); *evidential markers* (e.g. **certainly**, **conceivably**); *consequent effect markers* (e.g. **to clarify**, **I repeat**, **by way of explanation**); *hearsay markers* (e.g. **reportedly**, **allegedly**, **apparently**); *mitigation markers* (e.g. **if I may interrupt**, **if you don't mind**, **if it's**

**not too much trouble**); and *emphasis markers* (e.g. **I insist, mark my words**) (Fraser, 1996:179–184).

*Commentary markers*, in their different forms, can also be used to indicate that the following segment of discourse is connected to the first (Fraser, 2006), even though it might not seem to be. In other words, without the *commentary marker*, there would be two completely separate segments of discourse.

Consider the two statements in example (9):

9. I invited Mary over for dinner without knowing she was a vegetarian. I had some quiche.

These two statements seem unrelated without the *commentary marker*, which is provided in example (10):

10. I invited Mary over for dinner without knowing she was a vegetarian; **luckily**, I had some quiche.

The third type of PM that Fraser identifies is the *parallel marker*, which signals “an entire message in addition to the basic message” (Fraser 1996:185). *Parallel markers* include *vocative markers*, *speaker displeasure markers* and *solidarity markers*.

*Vocative markers*, which refer to what a hearer is addressed as, include *deference markers*, such as **sir**, **madam** and **your honour**, as well as job titles or general nouns, such as **chairperson**, **brother**, **ladies and gentlemen** and **young lady**. *Speaker displeasure markers* are fairly self-explanatory – they are used to express the annoyance or anger of the speaker.

*Solidarity markers* are used to express the degree of solidarity that the speaker feels towards the hearer. For example,

11. **My friend**, we can do this if we are just honest.

12. **As your superior**, I expect you do something when you are asked to do so.

A further type of *parallel marker* is the *conversational management marker* (Fraser, 2006). Besides signalling “an entire message in addition to the basic message” (Fraser 1996:185), this type of *parallel marker* has the function of controlling or redirecting the conversation. Some examples of *conversational management markers* follow.

13. **Okay**, enough chat, we have work to do.

14. **Now**, what was I saying?

15. **Well**, what shall we do now?

The fourth PM that Fraser mentions is the *discourse marker* (DM). On the most basic level, a DM is used to link the segment of speech of which it forms a part to a prior one. The link concerned is normally in the form of <S1, DM+S2>, where S1 stands for the first segment, and S2 for the second segment. The link can be used for elaboration, inference, contrast, or temporal purposes. Said structure is, however, not the only possibility. The DM can also link one segment to several prior segments. The opposite is also the case, where a DM can link a segment to several following ones.

Fraser (1996:186–188) identifies four types of DMs, without claiming, however, that these are the only ones; rather, that they are the most common uses of DMs.

The first use of a DM is as a *contrastive marker*, with the most common being **but**. This type also includes **although**, **however**, **nevertheless**, **nonetheless**, **on the other hand**, and **on the contrary**. The second type of DM is the *elaborative marker*, included under



which are such words as **and**, **alternatively**, **equally**, **for example**, **for instance**, and **in other words**. The third is the *inferential marker* such as **so**, **all things considered**, **as a result**, and **because (of this/that)**. The fourth type of DM is the *temporal marker*, which includes such words as **then**, **as soon as**, **before**, **finally**, and **first**.

According to Fraser (1999:950), DMs are used in two general functions. On the one hand, the DM can be used to relate aspects of an explicit interpretation that are conveyed by S2 with some aspect that is associated with the segment S1. On the other hand, the DM can be used to relate the topic of S2 to the topic of S1 (Fraser, 1999:950).

Schiffrin's (1987) definition of DMs is broader than that of Fraser (1999); however, there are overlaps. Both authors agree that conjunctions like **and**, **but**, **or**, **so**, and **because** are DMs. Schiffrin (1987) also labels such particles as **oh** and **well**; time deictics, such as **now**, **then** and **finally**; and lexicalised clauses, such as **y'know** and **I mean** as DMs. Fraser does not classify the above-mentioned forms as DMs, but rather as *conversational management markers*. For the purpose of the current study, they will all be referred to as PMs, however.

Schiffrin's PMs are illustrated in the examples (16) – (19).

16. A: How are you doing?

B: **Oh**, alright I suppose.

A: Hmm?

B: I failed my exam, so I don't know what next.

In (16), speaker B uses the particle **oh** to let A know that further discussion is required.

17. A: How are you feeling about your presentation?

B: Pretty good, **but** if something does go wrong, I have a backup plan.

In (17), speaker B uses the conjunction **but** not only to link two utterances, but also to indicate that the second utterance stands in some sort of opposition to the first.

18. A: What are your plans for the afternoon?

B: I have a couple of errands to run, and then dinner with some friends.

(Speaker A turns away from B, distracted by their cell phone ringing, and then turns back to B.)

A: Sorry, **now**, what were you saying?

In (18), the word **now** is not used to indicate time, but it is rather used to draw the attention back to the interrupted conversation.

19. A: Are you going to vote this year?

B: No, **I mean**, I turn 18 the month after the election. So even if I wanted to, **y'know**, I'm not allowed to.

In (19), B uses **I mean** and **y'know** in slightly different ways. **I mean** is used to explain the negative response, and **y'know** is used to emphasise that B would like to perform the action, but legally cannot.

### 2.3 Five planes of discourse

Schiffrin (1987:24) sketches out a set of planes in which the PMs she identifies can appear. The five planes are the *exchange structure*, the *action structure*, the *ideational structure*, the *participation framework*, and the *information state*. The *exchange structure* and the *action structure* involve non-linguistic units, whereas the *ideational structure*, *participation framework* and the *information state* involve linguistic units.

### *Exchange structure*

The *exchange structure* is the framework of turn taking in a discourse. The framework includes situation-relevant adjacent pair parts, such as questions and answers, as well as greetings and responses. The structure represents the pattern of turn taking, and how the content of each turn is influenced by that of previous turns.

### *Action structure*

The action structure accounts for how actions occur within a context. However, the context is not defined in terms of the participants or the environment, but rather in terms of the previous actions. In other words, the actions occur in a linear sequence, because they are a response to the previous action or actions. Schiffrin (1987:25) considers both the *action structure* and the *exchange structure* to be pragmatic in nature, because of the vital role that the speakers play in negotiating the organisation of the structures.

### *Ideational structure*

Whereas the *exchange* and *action structures* are considered to be pragmatic, Schiffrin (1987:25) considers the *ideational structure* to have a semantic nature, with the units involved being propositions or ideas. Three types of relation exist between ideas: *cohesive relations*, *topic relations* and *functional relations*. “Cohesive ties are established when interpretation of an element in one clause presupposes information from a prior clause...because of the semantic relationships underlying a text” (Schiffrin, 1987:26). The structure concerned also deals with the topic and subtopics being discussed, and their organisation.

### *Participation framework*

The *participation framework* is the framework of how the speaker and hearer can relate to one another. Although using the fairly simplified terms “hearer” and “speaker”, everything that these terms imply must be kept in mind: the method of presentation; the intended hearer and those who simply (over)hear what is being said; and the relationship between the participants and what such a relationship implies for the communication. For example, the way in which a student and a teacher relate to each other within the participation framework is different from the way in which two teachers or two students relate to each other.

The *participation framework* also includes the relationship between the speaker and the utterances that are made. Whether a speaker distances themselves from a certain idea and presents it neutrally is of importance, as is whether a hearer immediately performs the action described in the utterance, or whether they are reluctant to do so. All of the relationships concerned are included in the participation framework.

### *Information state*

In the *information state*, the knowledge that the participants have, as well as their meta-knowledge (their knowledge of other participants’ knowledge), is organised and managed throughout the discourse.

## **2.4 Okay as a pragmatic marker**

It is clear that among discourse function words, *okay* does more than its share of heavy pragmatic lifting.

(Gaines 2011: 2392)

In this section, some of the previous research done on *okay* as a PM is examined. This research includes work done by Levin and Gray (1983) on the use of *okay* by lecturers, Condon's (1986, 2001) research on the (discourse) uses of *okay*, as well as the research into the uses of *okay* conducted by Gaines (2011).

Levin and Gray (1983) investigated the way in which lecturers used the word *okay*. Although not all of their findings are applicable to the current study, their breakdown of the uses of *okay* is, nonetheless, relevant here. Levin and Gray (1983:167-167) identified five types of lecturer's *okay*, as follows:

1. *Canonical okay*
2. *Introductory okay*
3. *Elaboration okay*
4. *Conclusion okay*
5. *Embedded hesitation*

Levin and Gray (1983:196) observed that the *canonical okay* occurred at major discourse boundaries. In other words, *okay* was used to indicate the introduction of a new topic. The *introductory okay* was used when "okay" was the first utterance by the lecturer. Any *okay* that was used after that did not count as an *introductory okay*. The *elaboration okay* was used to develop the current topic further (as opposed to the *canonical okay*). The *conclusion okay* occurred when the lecturer was moving from the main body of the lecture to its conclusion. It was often followed by an utterance such as "in conclusion". The final type of *okay* identified was the *okay* that was used as *embedded hesitation*, which occurred anywhere in the utterance, and which was often surrounded by pauses and other hesitation markers.

Although the above classification was drawn from a very specific study, several of Levin and Gray's types can be used in relation to any discourse.

Condon states that it is a popular idea, as explored in the research of *okay*, that "OK appears at points in the discourse when the organization of the talk coincides with a larger, non-linguistic organization of the event" (Condon, 1986:73). This idea ties in well with the research that has been undertaken by Levin and Gray into uses of *okay*, as well as with the research that has been done into PMs. Merritt (1978, cited in Condon 1986:73) notes two uses for *okay*. The first involves the speaker acknowledging, approving or accepting a statement. The second function of *okay* is to acknowledge "that it is the speaker's turn or present obligation to take some verbal or nonverbal action, thereby releasing the other participant from any current obligation to continue his or her turn" (Condon, 1986:73). The second function of *okay* is clearly as a PM.

## **2.5 *Anyway* as a pragmatic marker**

As mentioned in Coll (2009:151), Lenk (1998) identifies two main ways in which *anyway* can function as a PM. The first is to indicate the end of a particular topic, and the second is to close a digression. Lenk further identifies five types of digressions: *situational digressions*; *wordsearch digressions*; *digressions supplying additional background information*; *clarifying digressions*; and *general digressions*.

The above-mentioned two functions are clearly very similar, with the only difference between the two uses being that when *anyway* is used to indicate the end of a topic, there is no return to that topic. However, when *anyway* is used to close a digression, there may very well be a return to the previous topic. When it is used to indicate the

end of a topic, *anyway* may also be used in the same utterance as the introduction of a new topic. For example:

20. A: Did you ever hear back from that job?

B: Oh, yes, they said my application wasn't successful.

A: That's a shame.

B: I was a little disappointed. **Anyway**, that's the end of that. What are your plans for the weekend?

There are several digressional situations where *anyway* is used. The first is a *situational digression*, where the digression is caused by the situation in which the conversation is taking place and not by the conversation itself. A *situational digression* is usually a short interruption, and it is not a threat to the conversation. For example, if a third party who is not taking part in the conversation interrupts, or when an event outside of the conversation interrupts, such as when there is a sudden, distracting noise.

The second type of digression identified is the *after word search digression*. When a participant cannot remember a particular word or name, *anyway* is often used to indicate that the conversation is still stable, despite the occurrence of the digression. Neither the *after word search digression* nor the *situational digression* adds any content to the discussion.

The third digression *anyway* can be used to close a digression that has provided additional information. This type of digression, despite being relevant to the main topic, disturbs the smooth pattern of the discourse.

The fourth type of digression is similar to the third, in that both types supply more information than would otherwise be present. This digression, however, clarifies a previous piece of content. They are both, therefore, relevant to the main topic, although they serve slightly different functions.

The final function of *anyway* is when it is used to close a general digression. Such closure could take any of a range of forms, ranging from the speaker wishing to correct themselves, to an attempt to cover up a situation of the speaker not remembering a topic, or the desire of a speaker to continue speaking on a previous topic.

According to Coll (2009:156), González (2004) identifies three PM functions of *anyway*. The first is when it is used for summing up, or indicating a conclusion. The second function is that of role-playing in structuring the discourse, as it is used in turn taking and boundary marking. The third function is the use of *anyway* as a resumption cue, after a digression has occurred.

Park (2010:3285) also discusses the uses of the PM *anyway* after a digression. Park, however, expands on this function, and claims that *anyway* is often used to resolve an impasse in the conversation. *Anyway* is used to acknowledge the impasse, and to indicate to the other participant(s) that the topic can be changed. It is most often the speaker who created the impasse who uses *anyway* in this manner.

The following example features *anyway* in several different positions and serving several functions. An analysis follows on the example.

21. <sub>1</sub> A: You won't believe what Matthew did to Mary's new cat.

<sub>2</sub> B: Yes?



3 A: Have you seen it? It is the cutest thing. Little black spots on its ears. And it just loves to play.

4 B: So sweet, I must go visit.

5 A: *Anyway*, Matthew got annoyed with it and tried to kick it.

6 B: He what? That's disgusting!

7 A: Well . . .

8 B: How could he? I hope Mary gave him a piece of her mind!

9 A: He didn't actually kick it. He just tried to.

10B: That doesn't make it any better.

11A: The cat was fine.

12A: *Anyway*.

13B: *Anyway*.

14B: Did you see John yesterday?

15A: No, he's got work and he has a test next week. I also think his mom is sick.

So he's very busy. *Anyway*, we made plans for next month sometime.

In line 5, the speaker introduces her utterance with *anyway*, used here as a *resumption marker* (Park, 2010:3283). It also follows a digression that contains additional information for the hearer (Lenk, 1998, cited in Coll, 2009).

In lines 12 and 13 both participants use *anyway* to resolve an impasse. This impasse was caused by the fact that speaker B reacted much more strongly to what speaker A

expected than the latter had expected. Both use *anyway* to acknowledge that the impasse exists, and that there can now be a topic change (Lenk, 1998, cited in Coll, 2009; Park, 2010), to which speaker B then responds by introducing a new topic in line 14. Speaker B's *anyway* in line 13 could also have acted as an introduction to the new topic, and played a role in turn taking (González, 2004, cited in Coll, 2009:156). Finally, in line 15, the final *anyway* appears, serving a summing-up function.

## 2.6 *Shame* as a pragmatic marker

As far as could be ascertained, no research has yet been done on the use of *shame* as a PM. Combined with the results of the data analysis undertaken for the current study, and my own intuitions, this lack of research on *shame* leads me to believe that it is a distinctly South African PM. As will become clear from the data, *shame* may be used as an interjection, a subtype of Fraser's basic PMs, as it signals "both surprise and either positive or negative emotional involvement" (Norrick, 2009:867).

In the *Oxford Dictionary of English*, *shame* is given several definitions, one of which is of it as a South African exclamation. It is regarded as being used to "express sentimental pleasure", especially when referring to "something small and endearing" (Oxford Dictionary of English 2010).

## 2.7 Conclusion

This chapter provided a description of the four types of PMs identified by Fraser (1996; 1999; 2006): the *basic* PM; the *commentary*; the *parallel*; and the DM. A description was also given of the various types of *commentary*, *parallel* and *discourse markers*. Fraser (1996, 2006) identifies four types of commentary PMs: *assessment*; *manner-of-*

*speaking; evidential; and hearsay markers*. The two types of *parallel* PMs are the markers of *deference* and *conversational management markers*. Finally, Fraser (1996) notes four types of DMs: *contrastive markers; elaborative markers; inferential markers; and temporal markers*.

A brief overview was also given of the existing research on the use of *okay, anyway* and *shame* as PMs. *Okay* has been studied as a PM quite extensively, and has been identified as playing a role in turn taking (Condon, 1986, 2001) and in monitoring understanding (Gaines, 2011). Levin and Gray (1983) identified several functions of *okay* in their study 'The Lecturer's OK'.

The PM *anyway* has been studied as a *resumption marker* in the past, but Park (2010) has added to this definition by stating that *anyway* is also used to recognise and to negotiate an impasse in the discourse. Coll (2009) identifies several types of digression that *anyway* can close, as well as the fact that it is often used to indicate a change in topic.

No research has yet been undertaken into the use of *shame* as a PM, but it could be classed as an *interjection* due to its emotionally expressive nature. It has been postulated that *shame* can also be recognised as a uniquely SAE exclamation.

## Chapter 3: Methodology

### 3.1 Corpora

In the language sciences a corpus is a body of written text or transcribed speech which can serve as a basis for linguistic analysis and description. Over the last three decades the compilation and analysis of corpora started in computerized databases has led to a new scholarly enterprise known as corpus linguistics.

(Kennedy, 1998:1)

Corpora have their origin in the 1950s. Initially, corpora were paper-based collections of newspaper cuttings and transcribed recordings. Although researchers had a good idea with the development of corpora, the collection and cataloguing of the data was just too labour intensive to make a viable project of it. The lack of viability changed with the rise of technology, and particularly with computerisation.

The first electronic corpus was developed by Francis and Kučero of Brown University in 1963/1964. The corpus consisted of 500 individual samples of 2 000 words each. The samples were selected from a range of text types, including press reportage, editorials and reviews, as well as general fiction and such selected genres as science fiction, humour, romance and mysteries (Nelson, 2006:734).

Many later corpora were based on the model used by the researchers at Brown. These included The Lancaster–Oslo/Bergen corpus in 1976, the corpus on Indian English by S.V. Shastri in 1978, and the Australian Corpus of English, which was compiled by Macquarie University in 1986 (Nelson, 2006:735).

In the 1980s, the field of corpus linguistics was becoming increasingly popular, and so Sidney Greenbaum, the then Director of the Survey of English Usage, conceived the idea of the International Corpus of English (ICE) project (Nelson, 2006:736).

### 3.2 International Corpus of English

In 1988, Greenbaum placed a call in *World Englishes* inviting researchers to collaborate on the compilation of parallel English corpora. In order to qualify for an ICE corpus, English has to be the first language of the nation, or at least a second official language. All data had to be collected from adults, in other words from those who were 18 years of age or older, and the data had to be collected after 1989. Greenbaum's idea was well received by researchers from around the world, and many volunteered to work on a corpus.

The ICE corpora consist of 200 samples of written texts, and 300 samples of spoken texts. The samples are drawn from several specified aspects of day-to-day life (see Table 3.1 below as an illustration of how an ICE corpus is compiled).

**Table 3.1. Design of ICE corpora<sup>2</sup>**

SPOKEN (300)	Dialogues (180)	Private (100)	Face-to-face conversations (90) Phone calls (10)
		Public (80)	Classroom lessons (20) Broadcast discussions (20) Broadcast interviews (10) Parliamentary debates (10) Legal cross-examinations (10) Business transactions (10)

<sup>2</sup> <http://ice-corpora.net/ice/design.htm>

	Monologues (120)	Unscripted (70)	Spontaneous commentaries (20) Unscripted speeches (30) Demonstrations (10) Legal presentations (10)
		Scripted (50)	Broadcast news (20) Broadcast talks (20) Non-broadcast talks (10)
WRITTEN (200)	Non-printed (50)	Student writing (20)	Student essays (10) Exam scripts (10)
		Letters (30)	Social letters (15) Business letters (15)
	Printed (150)	Academic writing (40)	Humanities (10) Social sciences (10) Natural sciences (10) Technology (10)
		Popular writing (40)	Humanities (10) Social sciences (10) Natural sciences (10) Technology (10)
		Reportage (20)	Press news reports (20)
		Instructional writing (20)	Administrative writing (10) Skills/Hobbies (10)
		Persuasive writing (10)	Press editorials (10)
		Creative writing (20)	Novels & short stories (20)

Although the ICE corpora can stand alone as useful tools for research, the true value comes from the fact that they are exactly comparable, and so are indispensable to today's study of World Englishes.

Although the ICE outline is based on the original Brown corpus, there are nevertheless some important differences. The most obvious difference is that whereas the Brown corpus only has written text samples, the ICE design includes both written and spoken

samples, with spoken samples making up the majority. The ICE outline has been specifically designed to be used in any country that qualifies for inclusion in the project, and so has dispensed with, or combined, some of the categories in the Brown corpus. For example, the ICE outline does not have a religion category, due to the possibility that there might not be any religious writing available in English in the country being studied. Also, the ICE outline includes fiction, but does not specify any particular genres that should be used, for much the same reason as that relating to the exclusion of religious writings, namely that particular genres might simply not be available.

The corpora that are currently available on the ICE website include those of *Canada; East Africa; Great Britain; Hong Kong; India; Ireland; Jamaica; New Zealand; the Philippines; and Singapore*. Some of the studies done using the ICE corpora include ‘Cultural discourse in the Corpus of East African English and beyond: Possibilities and problems of lexical and collocational research in a one million-word corpus’ (Schmied, 2004), ‘Emphasizer *now* in colloquial South African English’ (Jeffery & Van Rooy, 2004) and ‘Negation of lexical *have* in conversational English’ (Nelson, 2004).

South Africa was originally not to be included in the ICE corpora, due to political reasons; however, this ban was eventually lifted and research began in June 1992. Chris Jeffery of the University of Port Elizabeth was the lead researcher from the start, but worked with teams collecting data from all over the country. The initial plan was that all the data used would be collected between 1990 and 1996. The set timeframe, however, proved to be too restrictive and so was left open-ended. The population to be sampled had to be 18 years of age or older, and they had to have completed their education up to matriculation level in English (Jeffrey, 2003).

The texts for the East African corpus were collected between 1990 and 1996 by the University of Bayreuth, and later by the Chemnitz University of Technology, within the framework of the Special Research Programme on Africa. All samples came from adults who had been taught in English up until at least secondary level.

### 3.3 Methods of data collection and analysis

Given that the ICE corpora were designed in terms of samples of certain text types, the total number of words for each corpus is bound to differ. Accordingly, statistics on the composition of the two corpora were determined using the Concordance program WordSmith Tools (Scott, 2012). The total number of words for the spoken component of ICE-SA is 2.9 million, with an overall type/token ratio<sup>3</sup> (TTR) of 0.67. The ICE-EA consists of 4.3 million words, with an overall TTR of 0.54. While the ICE-EA corpus is considerably larger than the ICE-SA corpus, the number of types (distinct words) is relatively similar (23 584 vs. 19 645); this means that these two corpora can be used for purposes of comparison, despite the fact that the number of tokens (running words) in the ICE-EA corpus is nearly double that of the ICE-SA corpus.

For the current study, three words, namely *okay*, *anyway* and *shame*, were chosen to compare as PMs across the two corpora (see figures 3.2 to 3.4 below). Once the decision had been made regarding the three words and the two corpora, a search was started for each one in both corpora, using WordSmith Tools. Figure 3.1. below presents a screenshot of the WordSmith concordances of *shame* in the ICE-SA corpus.

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<sup>3</sup> Number of Types divided by Number of Tokens times 100.



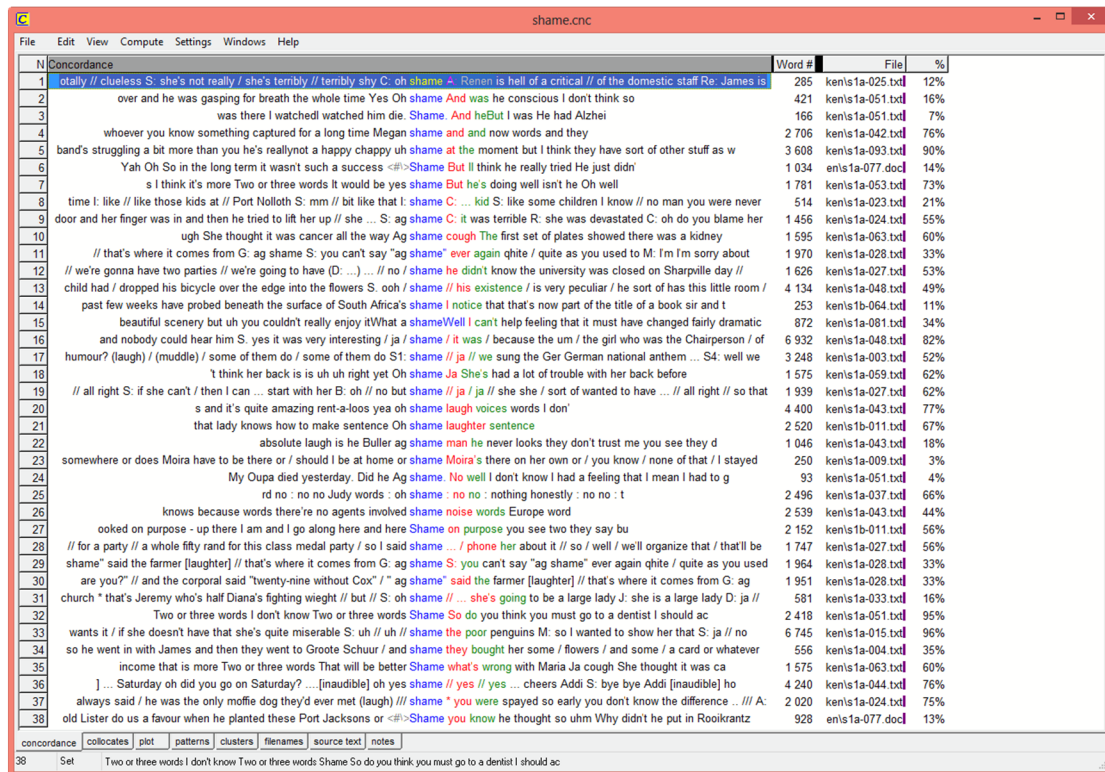


Figure 3.1. Screenshot of Wordsmith concordances of *shame* in ICE-SA

Once the list of total occurrences for each word had been obtained, they were scrutinised, instance for instance, to select all the instances of PMs. Figures 3.2., 3.3. and 3.4. below graphically represent the total number of each word found versus the number of instances of that word as a PM, for each corpus.

Interestingly, while the total number of occurrences of *okay* in the ICE-EA is nearly seven times that of the ICE-SA corpus<sup>4</sup>, nearly five times more occurrences of *anyway* was found in the ICE-SA corpus than in the ICE-EA corpus<sup>5</sup>. A comparison of the functions of these PMs in the two corpora will be provided in Chapter 4, as well as a discussion of the complete absence of the PM *shame* in the ICE-EA corpus.

<sup>4</sup> SAE/EA ratio of 5.

<sup>5</sup> EA/SAE ratio of 4.45

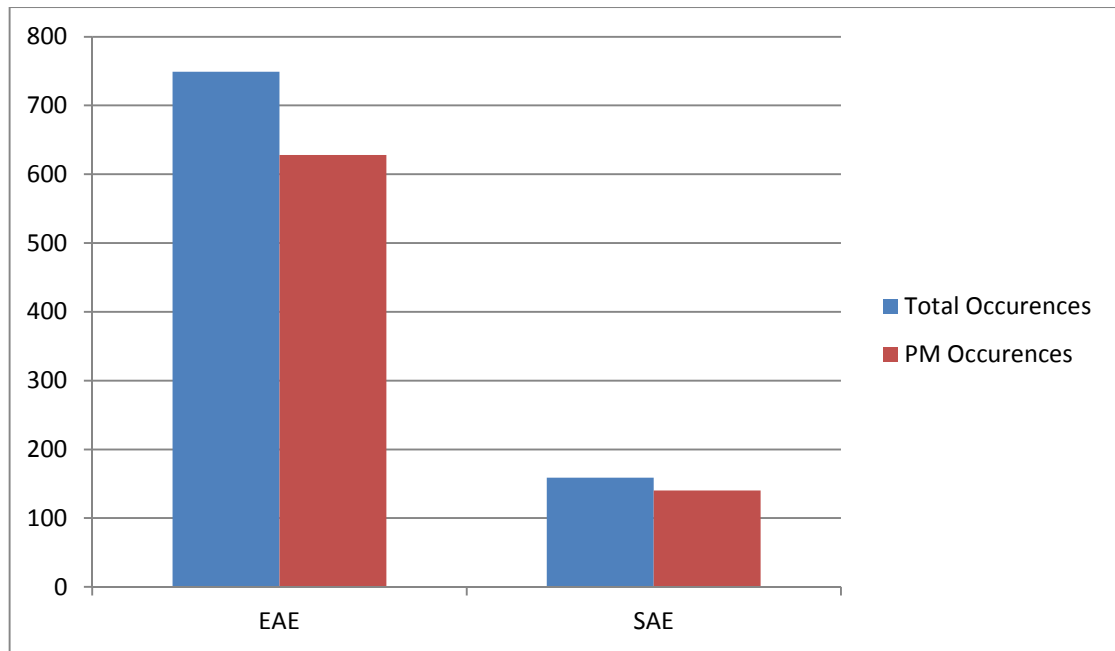


Figure 3.2. The total and PM occurrences of *okay* in each corpus

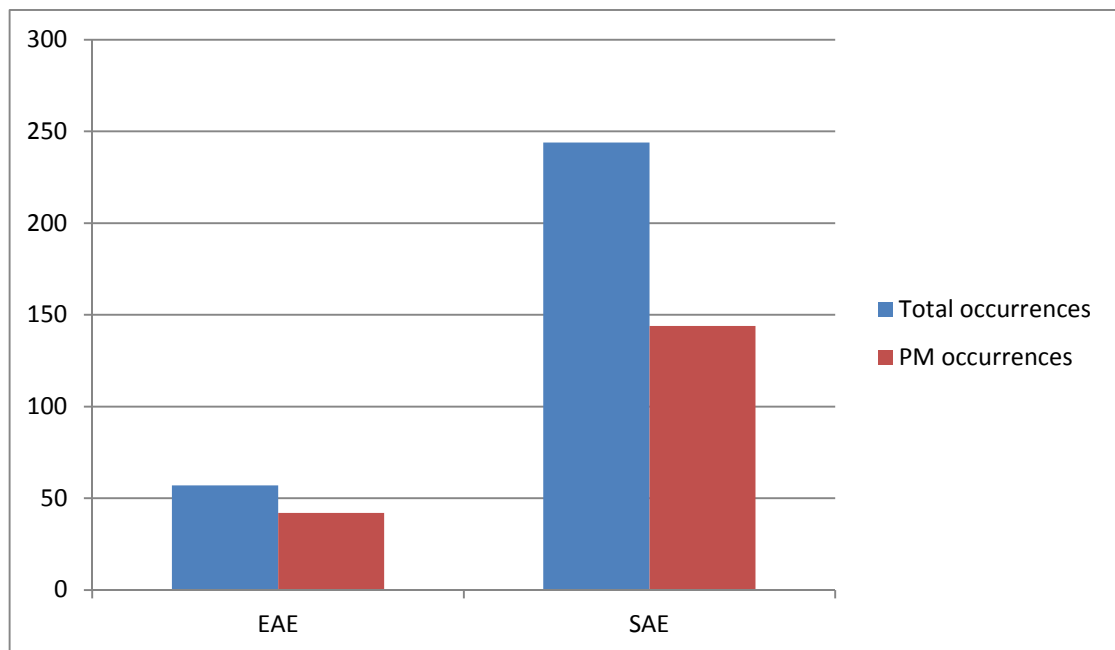
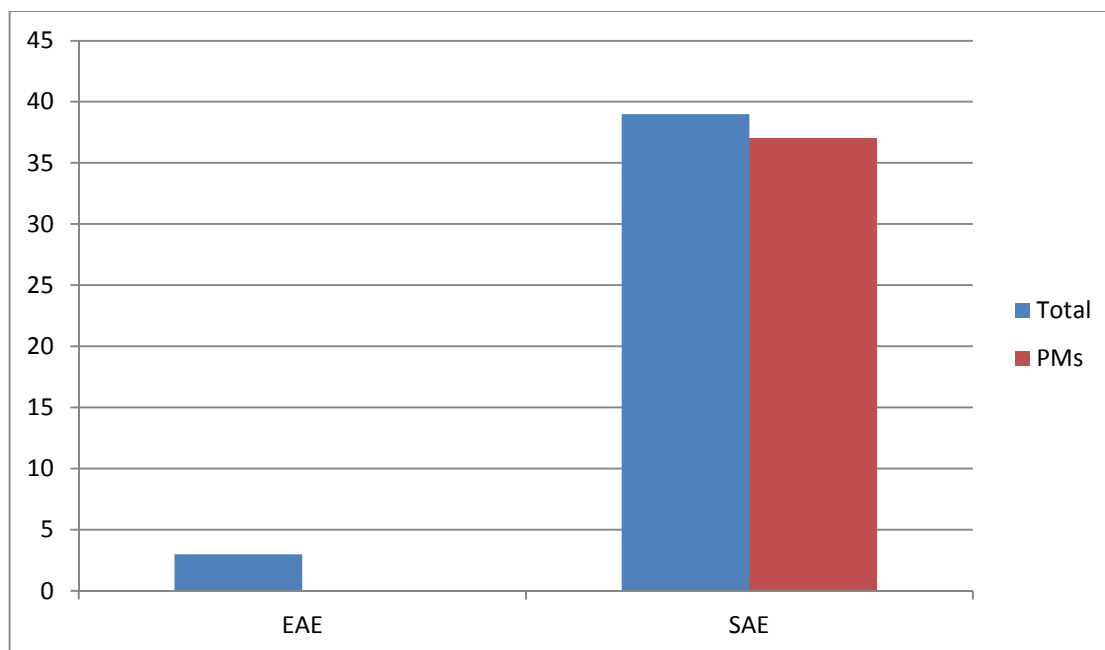


Figure 2.3. The total and PM occurrences of *anyway* in each corpus



**Figure 3.4.** The total and PM occurrences of *shame* in each corpus

After the procedure outlined above had been completed, each instance of the PMs was analysed in order to categorise them. In the case of *okay*, patterns were found in the position that it occupied in the utterance, namely utterance-initial position, utterance-final position and utterance-medial position. The figures pertaining to the spread of *okay* can be found in Chapter 4. In the case of *shame*, a pattern was detected regarding whether or not *shame* was preceded by *ag* or *oh*. Unlike *okay* and *shame*, *anyway* was not found to be associated with particular patterns, but it was possible to identify the major functions that *anyway* had in the two corpora.

## Chapter 4: Data presentation and analysis

### 4.1 Introduction

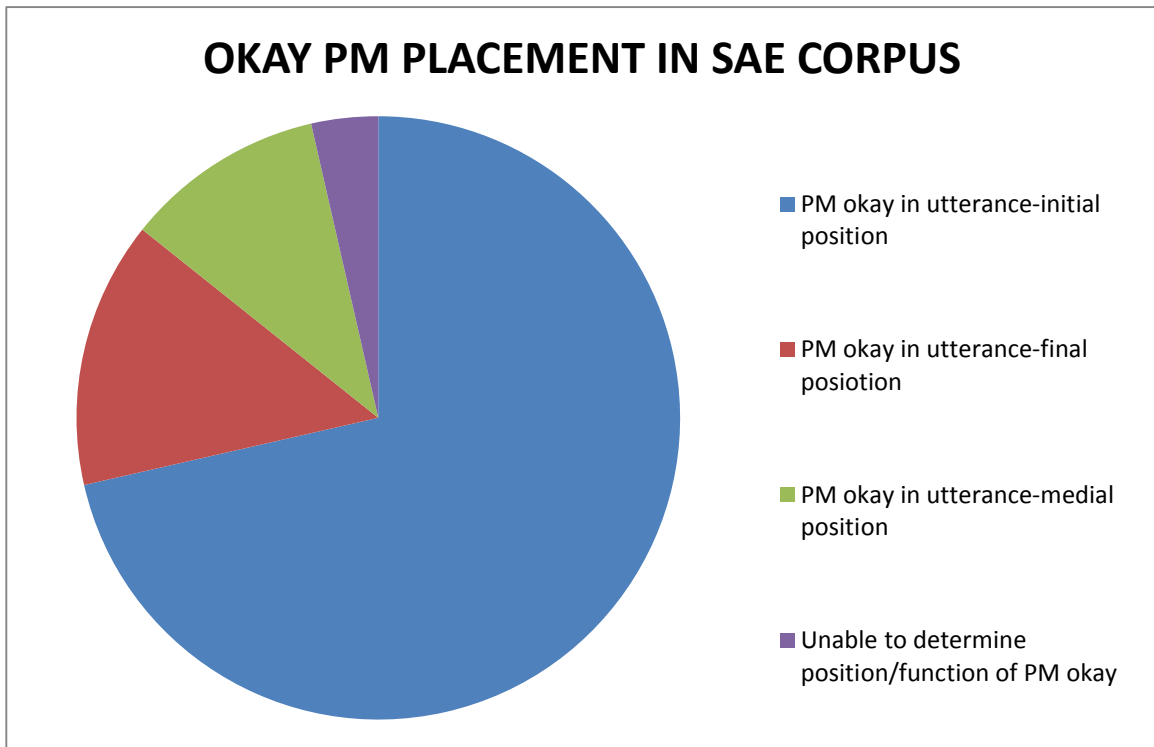
In this chapter, the data collected from the corpora are presented. The data pertaining to *okay*, *shame* and *anyway* are broken up into three sections. Each section also contains a discussion of the data, and an interpretation thereof.

### 4.2 *Okay*

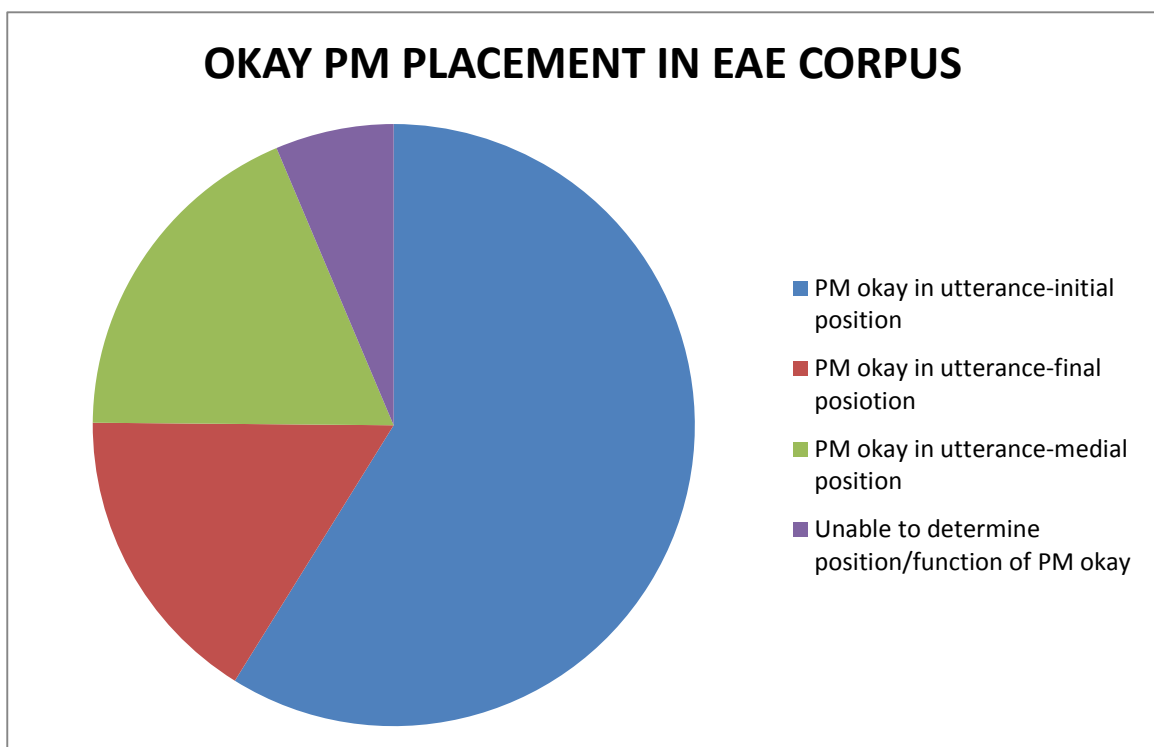
The PM *okay* appears in several positions throughout the corpora. Firstly, it may appear in the utterance-initial position; secondly, in the utterance-final position; and thirdly, in the utterance-medial position. The following examples serve to illustrate these placements:

22. **Okay** so we don't know where the Writing Centre Project will be (SAE, s2a-046)
23. education and growing up, which makes you interpret things in a certain way  
<,>**okay** (SAE, s1b-003)
24. [d]irector of Social Sciences uh Martin Martin Oosthuizen uh **okay** so that's  
(SAE, s1a-093)

The occurrence of *okay* in utterance-initial position was found by far to be the most common in both corpora. Figures 4.1 and 4.2 present a graphical representation of the placement of *okay* as a PM in the two corpora.



**Figure 4.1.** PM *okay* placement in the SAE corpus



**Figure 4.2.** PM *okay* placement in the EAE corpus

The PM *okay* appears to be able to serve several functions in the utterance-initial position. The simplest function is that of the *basic marker*, signalling the illocutionary force of the utterance (Fraser, 1996:168). In the case of *okay*, we find the speaker drawing attention to themselves, or indicating that they are ready to start talking. In terms of this function, *okay* plays an important role in the indication of turn taking. For example:

25. behind tailing uh tailing the vehicle I can't say that <\$A><#>**okay** that's uh uh  
 now I want to ask you why did didn't you stop the vehicle you (SAE, s1b-066)

As shown in example (25), the second speaker introduces their utterance with *okay* in order to express the illocutionary force of acknowledgement, in other words, “yes, I have heard and understood you, now I have a question”.

Another function of the PM *okay* is that of the speaker indicating the introduction of a new topic; in other words, *okay*, in such cases, functions as a *parallel marker* (Fraser, 1996:168). Specifically, *okay* is used as a *conversation management marker*, a subtype of *parallel marker* (Fraser, 1996:168), as the speaker uses it to steer the conversation towards a forgotten, or unrelated, topic. For example:

26. [a]nd the high density plastic Both of them are recyclable **okay** the question is  
 what happens to the stuff when once we collect (SAE, s2a-027)

In example (26), the conversation moves from discussing the fact that the bags are recyclable to a related, but different, topic with the use of the PM *okay*.

In the South African usage of the word *okay*, in several of the conversations in the ICE–SAE corpus, *okay* serves to indicate that the speaker is about to say goodbye. For example:

27. ah well enjoy it **Okay** thank you **okay** Bye now Bye Gené (SAE, s1a-091(b))

28. Yah very pleasure word **Okay** Peter **okay** thanks Chris See you then **Okay** Bye  
(SAE, s1a-091(a))

In examples (27) and (28), the PM *okay* is used to introduce the farewell segment of the conversation. In fact, in example (28), one of the *okays* is actually used in the place of *bye* when greeting Peter. Again, in the given instance, *okay* is functioning as a *conversational management marker*.

When *okay* appears as a PM in the utterance-final position, it seems to serve one of two functions. The first function has to do with turn taking: *okay* is used as an indicator that the speaker has finished speaking, and that it is now the other individual's turn to start talking. As was mentioned before, the second speaker will often start with the PM *okay*, as for one of the previously-mentioned reasons. For example:

29. the conjunctions isn't it and possibly that's why I never put the parentheses **okay**  
The parentheses become very important when the symbols are different (EAE,  
speech-lectk)

The most likely reason for *okay* appearing in the utterance-final position is that the speaker is giving someone else the option of asking for clarification of what they have just said. Much of the data in the corpora comes from educational situations, so that an educator is often seen to end an utterance with *okay*. The utterance appears to be an informal, almost throw-away, way of asking whether the students understand what has been said, and whether they are ready to move on to the following aspect of the topic. For example:

30. the history of or the narrative of spirit on the way to truth <,>**okay** That's not a problem for him But now the problem that we have (SAE, s1b-003)

The final position in which *okay* appears in example (30) above is the utterance-medial position, which can be for several reasons. The first might be that the speaker needs to pause in order to collect their thoughts, but does not want the pause to be silent. For example:

31. For the educated woman be because you **okay** you would like to be here in the office for instance you would like to (EAE, conversation 2k)

A second reason might be to check whether the hearers are following what the speaker is saying. Without the extralinguistic context of the utterances in the corpora, it is impossible to determine exactly why speakers make use of *okay*, although certain assumptions can be made in this regard. For example:

32. Then they changed it to Third World **okay** to make us feel better (EAE, br-discussionk)

33. in LDCs in in less developing countries because of the nature of the market **okay** because of the nature of the market is small compared to the developed (EAE, speech-lectk)

In examples (32) and (33), a teacher or lecturer might be visualised as addressing a class, and as seeing some learners looking confused. In this case, the educator concerned might have used the PM *okay* as a way of indicating that the students might ask a question if they wished to do so.

In some cases, *okay* appears in the utterance-medial position but nevertheless acts as if it were in the utterance-initial position. This phenomenon is found when the speaker



reports speech. Often a speaker starts reported speech in exactly the same way in which the speech was given, that is, with the PM *okay*. For example:

34. The only fact is it's it's a reality like like **okay** I've had a girlfriend Now the relationship is over I mean when (EAE, conversation1k)

As shown in example (34), although *okay* appears in the middle of the utterance, it is being used in an introductory manner. The speaker is relaying a thought process to the hearer, with the thought process starting with the PM *okay*. It is clear from the preceding examples that the function of *okay* in both corpora is primarily that of *conversational management*.

*Okay* as a PM seems to appear most prominently as a *conversational management marker*, as it is used to control the flow of the conversation. In such control, *okay* is used to introduce reported speech or thought processes.

The use of the PM *okay* across the two corpora shows both differences and similarities. Specifically, the number of occurrences is not similar (see Figure 3.1), but the functions are the same throughout the two corpora. It seems plausible to assume that such PM uses of *okay* are so prolific that they are universally applicable.

### 4.3 *Anyway*

*Anyway* appears as a PM in both corpora, although it appears more often in the SAE corpus (see Figure 3.2). The PM *anyway* has several functions, as is discussed below.

The first function of *anyway* is as the basic marker *interjection* (Fraser, 1996:176). As was pointed out earlier, interjections act as emotive utterances, and often stand alone.

For example:

35. I'd bought two cooler boxes as presents for the coaches and all // **anyway** // and um so we chat away (SAE, s1a-028)

36. See I guess yeah uh 'cause \par <#/>**Anyway** \par But he's one of the guys yeah (EAE, conversation1k)

Examples (35) and (36) might not make much sense unless one takes into consideration that the *interjections*' meaning is largely based on the intonation involved. In both of the examples, it would seem that speaker in (35) is either struggling to explain what they wish to say, or they are going off on a tangent. Depending on the intonation that is used by the speaker in (36) when saying *anyway*, they may be conveying the fact that they are bored with the story, or that they are trying to keep the first speaker on track.

The second function of *anyway* is as a *mitigation marker* (Fraser, 1996:183). *Mitigation markers* are used to reduce the loss of face that is associated with a certain message. For example:

37. Yes it's a problem at the moment uhm But **anyway** then I got hold of Sister Ethel at the Missionvale (SAE, s2a-027)

38. coming from a Christian family and this is what you are doing <#/>**Anyway** that was life at that time (EAE, conversation2k)

In example (37), the speaker has had to contact a nun for assistance of some form, and in example (38) the speaker has indulged in what they consider to be unchristian behaviour. Both speakers are embarrassed by what they have to say, and so use the *mitigation marker anyway* in an attempt to save face.

The third function of the PM *anyway* is as a *conversational management marker*, which is a subtype of Fraser's (2006) *parallel marker*. *Anyway* is used to resolve an impasse

(Park, 2010), and so is used to control or to regulate the flow of the conversation. For example:

39. **Anyway** I see your point This you're you're right in your own way (EAE, conversation1k)

40. she didn't bite me ... doesn't like me very much // oh / sorry // **anyway** um // up here // (SAE, s1a-016)

In example (39), the two participants have clearly had a disagreement, and the speaker is using *anyway* to manage the conversation and to try to resolve the impasse. In example (40), the first speaker has revealed that the dog has taken a dislike to her, and so has created an impasse. The second speaker uses *anyway* to resolve the impasse, and to ensure that the conversation continues.

The fourth and final function of *anyway* that is addressed in the current study is the DM function (Fraser, 1996:186). DMs are used to connect two segments of speech; in the case of *anyway*, this occurs when *anyway* is used as a *resumption marker* (Park, 2010).

For example:

41. poly It's polypropylene the bags A certain material of plastic **anyway** which can resist high temperatures because (EAE, br-interviewt)

42. reservoir and it's lovely and they all swim in the reservoir / and **anyway** there / there're these sheer rock faces (SAE, s1a-004)

In example (41), the speaker seems to become distracted by exactly what the material is out of which the bags are made. By using the *resumption marker anyway*, the speaker is able to resume the presentation smoothly, as well as to indicate to the hearer(s) that the two segments of speech are still connected. In example (42), the speaker was telling

a story about an event that happened at some sheer rock faces, but went off at a tangent when describing the rocks' position and appearance. They then used *anyway* to indicate that the following piece of speech was connected to the previous one.

Although *anyway* has the same functions in both corpora, it should be mentioned that the SAE corpus contains a much higher occurrence of *anyway* as a *resumption marker* than does the other corpus. *Anyway*, like *okay*, seems to be a well-established PM in the two corpora studied, as well as serving the same functions.

#### 4.4 *Shame*

*Shame* appears only three times in the ICE–EAE corpus. The occurrences are as follows:

43. He sees the death of the minister as a bringer of **shame** and wanton destruction (EAE, sch-broadcastk)
44. We women we have that **shame**. We are not like guys have no **shame** and guys you see... (EAE, conversation1k).

*Shame* does not function as a PM in either of these examples. Instead, in all three occurrences this element functions as a noun, with the canonical meaning of “a painful feeling of humiliation or distress caused by the consciousness of wrong or foolish behaviour” (Oxford Dictionary of English 2010).

In the ICE–SAE corpus, however, *shame* appears 39 times, of which 37 are PMs. This shift in function and the bleaching of semantic meaning can be categorised, in Aijmer's (1997) terms, as “pragmaticalisation” (cited in Aijmer & Simon-Vandenberg, 2009).

The PM *shame* occurs primarily in two situations in South African speech. The first is when it follows either *ag* or *oh*<sup>6</sup>. Out of the 37 PM instances, 16 occur together with *ag* or *oh*, as the following examples illustrate:

45. She thought it was cancer all the way Ag **shame** [cough] The first set of plates showed there was a kidney (SEA, s1a-063).

46. he was gasping for breath the whole time Yes Oh **shame** And was he conscious (SAE, s1a-051).

In these two cases, the combinations *ag shame* and *oh shame* function as compound PMs. It is unclear from the transcription where one speaker's turn ends and another's begins, but, from the context, it appears that *ag shame* and *oh shame* are used as *interjections* in these examples, in accordance with Fraser's thinking (1996:176).

A further ten instances of *shame* occur either as the first word in a turn, or are the only word spoken in a turn. For example:

47. was there I watched I watched him die. **Shame**. And he...(SAE, s1a-051)

48. // no / **shame** he didn't know the university was closed on Sharpville Day (SAE, s1a-027)

In SAE, the PM *shame* is used as a *solidarity marker* (Fraser, 1996:185). Although the usage does not appear to be the same as in the examples used earlier, it is used in the same manner. The function of *shame* in said context is likely to express sympathy with the hearer or with the character in the story that they are relating. Due to the incomplete nature of the South African corpus, it cannot be established for certain who is speaking in the following examples; they do, however, serve to illustrate this function:

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<sup>6</sup> These elements can also be classified as interjections.

49. she's not really / she's terribly // terribly shy C: oh **shame** A: Renen is hell of a critical // of the domestic staff (SAE, s1a-025)

50. should I be at home or **shame** Moira's there on her own (SAE, s1a-009).

Given the incomplete nature of the SAE corpus transcription, it is not possible to determine the exact position of the remaining instances of *shame*, although they appear to occur either in utterance-initial or utterance-final position, which is consistent with what is known about PMs as contributing additional, non-semantic content to an utterance. The following example illustrates the difficulty involved:

51. because words there's no agents involved **shame** noise words Europe word (SAE, s1a-043)

An additional function of *shame* is harder to define. It is used as another way of saying something is adorable. Such an expression is most notably used with regard to young animals and children.

52. **shame** the poor penguins (SAE, s1a-015)

Example (52) concerns a discussion of a postcard with a picture of penguins on it. It is important to note that there is nothing wrong with the penguins. The speaker in example (52) is simply expressing the fact that the penguins are "cute".

Although it cannot be known for certain, as the gender of the speakers is not used for data collection in the corpus. Anecdotally, the first function of *shame* seems to apply equally for male and female first language speakers of English, while the second function seems to be used predominantly by women.

*Interjections*, as described in Chapter 2, express much of their meaning in their intonation. Due to said characteristic, *interjections* can be used sarcastically. In SAE, the same holds true for the use of *shame*. For example:

53. He's got a cold, and it's the end of the world to him. **Shame**, he's taking it very hard.

In example (53), *shame* is being used to assign childlike reactions or qualities to an adult. The use seems to be a combination of the two uses that were previously mentioned, namely to show empathy and to express pleasure, in this case possibly perverse pleasure, due to a desire to smooth over a situation and to be endearing.

The use of *shame* as a PM appears to be distinctly South African, based on the comparison of the two corpora as well as on the paucity of research regarding this lexical item. As regards the question of how the use of *shame* as a PM came about, one could speculate that it was as a result of the influence of the Afrikaans language, specifically of the expression *siestog*, which functions in the same way as *shame* does in example (52). Another possibility is that the PM (*ag/oh*) *shame* is derived from the more standard English expression 'that is a shame', which functions similarly.

From the above examples, and the data collected, it is clear that the use of *shame* as a PM is a uniquely SAE function. This uniqueness is likely due to the many influences that there are on the English language in South Africa, as was discussed in Chapter 1.

#### **4.5 Conclusion**

In the current chapter, data from the two corpora used were presented and analysed. The chapter was divided between the presentation and analysis of the PMs *okay*,

*anyway* and *shame*. It was found that *okay* has a very similar spread across the two corpora, and is also used with the same functions across the two. *Okay* mostly appears in one of three positions: utterance-initial; utterance-final; and utterance-medial. In the utterance-initial position *okay* functions as a *basic marker* and as a *conversational management marker* (Fraser, 1996, 2006), and also plays a role in turn taking. In the utterance-final position, *okay* is used by the speaker to monitor the hearer's/s' understanding as well as being involved in turn taking. In the utterance-medial position, *okay* is used as a "filler" for the speaker to gather their thoughts, or as a word search pause, as well as allowing for the monitoring of the understanding of the hearer(s).

Although the functions and positions of *anyway* were not quantified, the analysis of the data showed great similarity in the functions, if not in the spread, across the two corpora. *Anyway* functions as an *interjection*, a *mitigation marker*, a *conversational management marker*, and a DM (Fraser, 1996, 2006).

The PM *shame* appears to be a uniquely SAE PM, which functions as an *interjection*, as well as as a *solidarity marker* (Fraser, 1996, 2006). The meaning of *shame* as an *interjection* is heavily determined by the intonation, which may give rise to many possible interpretations in one utterance. *Shame* also functions as an exclamation that is used to express sentimental pleasure.

It would seem that the similar sociolinguistic history has resulted in a similar use of PMs in South African English and in East African English. However, as with a comparison between any two varieties, there is evidence of the existence of unique words and functions.



## Chapter 5: Summary and Conclusion

In Chapter 1 of the thesis, some background information was given on South African English, East African English, corpus linguistics and PMs. In Chapter 2, more detail about PMs was given, including the types of PMs identified by Fraser (1996, 2006), and the five planes of discourse put forward by Schiffrin (1987). A brief summary was then given of the existing research on the use of *anyway*, *okay* and *shame* as PMs. Chapter 3 provided a description of the methodology used in this study, including an overview of corpus linguistics, with a particular focus on the ICE-project. That chapter also included a description of the methods used for data collection and analysis in the study. Finally, Chapter 4 presented a description and analysis of the data, along with a discussion on the findings.

Several functions were identified for each PM in Chapter 4. *Okay* occurs, in the majority of instances, in one of three positions. In each position, the PM functions as a *conversational management marker* and a *basic marker* (Fraser, 1996, 2006). It also plays a role in turn taking, and in the monitoring of understanding. *Anyway* also serves several functions, namely as an *interjection*, a *mitigation marker*, a *conversational management marker*, and a DM (Fraser, 1996, 2006). *Shame* was found to function as an *interjection*, as well as as a *solidarity marker*, a subtype of *parallel marker* (Fraser, 1996, 2006).

The study was limited by the restricted scope of the analysis. The nature of the ICE–South African English corpus has also placed some limits on the study: it is unannotated and the poor transcription, as shown in example (51), has restricted the ability to present and to analyse statistical elements. One of the major limitations of this type of study is moreover the fact that much meaning assigned to PMs is based on a speaker's

intonation, and so cannot be comprehensively analysed with a corpus consisting only of written transcriptions of spoken texts.

Despite the above-mentioned limitations, it is important to note that the study is one of the first to use the ICE–South Africa corpus, and it also provides a novel comparison of two African varieties of English. The study furthermore offers preliminary insights into *shame* as a PM in SAE.

Recommendations for further study would be to compare the findings using the ICE–South Africa corpus to other ICE corpora, especially other southern hemisphere varieties. In view of the limited scope of the present study, it would also be valuable to conduct further research into other PMs in SAE.

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