Coherence and Cohesion
in Spoken and Written Discourse

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Edited by

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P U B L I S H I N G

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BASE	*British Academic Corpus of Spoken English*
ICE-GB	*British Component of the International Corpus of English*
CDA	critical discourse analysis
CP	Cooperative Principle
DG	Director-General
DMs	discourse markers
EEE	English for electrical engineering
ELF	English as lingua franca
F	frame
IDC	inside-the-deictic-centre (entities)
IDMs	interactive discourse markers
L1	First language
L2	Second language
LLC	*London-Lund Corpus*
MICASE	*Michigan Corpus of Academic Spoken English*
NP	noun phrase
ODC	outside-the-deictic-centre (entities)
Q	(maxim of) Quality
Qt	(maxim of) Quantity
S	script
SPACE	Specialised and Popular ACademic English
ST	source text
STA	Spatial-Temporal-Axiological (model)
TT	target text
VP	verb phrase
WMD	weapons of mass destruction

INTRODUCTION

COHERENCE REVISITED

How do people make sense of interaction? Why do our understandings of what a poem means, what politicians say or even what arrangements we have made for a dinner party sometimes differ? What can we do to make others interpret what we have said or written exactly as we want it to be understood? While dealing with different aspects of discourse interpretation, the answers to these questions have to deal with how different people see verbal interaction as a meaningful whole, i.e. how they derive coherence from discourse.

The research presented in this volume is inspired by our work on the project *Coherence and Cohesion in English Discourse*, which is supported by the Czech Science Foundation, the aim of which is to conceptualize cohesion and coherence as constitutive components of human communication, and to analyse how coherence is manifested in different genres of spoken and written English discourse.

Coherence is currently a topic of intense debate in the international linguistic community. Since English has become the "lingua franca" of the modern world, research into coherence and cohesion strategies in English discourse is considered relevant to all spheres of human communication. Although both cohesion and coherence are important linguistic notions, the one is more firmly established than the other. While cohesion has become accepted as a well-established and useful category for text and discourse analysis, coherence is a concept which in its complexity is still not fully understood in the same way by all linguists.

In recent years it has been possible to witness a considerable shift in the ways coherence is understood, namely a shift from a static text-based descriptive approach, according to which coherence is the product of textual connectivity and cohesion, to a more dynamic understanding, according to which coherence is conceptualized as a potentially variable cooperative achievement of the speaker/writer and the hearer/reader and can be seen as context-dependent, hearer/reader-oriented and comprehension-based, interpretative notion (Bublitz 1999).

In the approach adopted in this book, the authors assume that there may be variation in the coherent interpretation of one and the same discourse by different participants, or even by the same participant under different communicative conditions, and that coherence cannot be taken for granted but, depending on situation, genre or text type, rather viewed as being more or less temporary, since it is permanently in need of being checked against new information. The chapters of the book comprise essays by linguists working in the fields of pragmatics, discourse analysis, sociolinguistics, stylistics and translation studies who explore features that contribute to the perception of cohesion and coherence in spoken and written varieties of English, namely impromptu, academic and political discourse within the former variety, and media, academic and fictional discourse within the latter variety.

Part One deals with aspects of coherence in spoken discourse. Aijmer and Povolná view coherence in spoken discourse as the result of interaction and cooperation, and they explore the role of pragmatic markers in furthering the development of communication, namely in impromptu and academic discourse. Adopting a similar approach, Hüttner perceives interaction in impromptu discourse as fluent due to the presence of coherence and interactivity, thus stressing the dialogic dimension of coherence. The construction of coherence in political discourse is studied by two authors who share an interest in an interdiscoursal dimension of coherence: Cap explores coherence as conceptual connectedness holding between the building blocks of the rhetoric; Dontcheva-Navratilova studies the contribution of referential strategies to conceptual, evaluative and textual coherence. Another type of scripted spoken discourse is investigated by Malá, who considers complex condensation by participial adverbial clauses as means of promoting text organization in academic lectures.

Part Two is concerned with different types of written discourse. Two of the authors explore discourse types showing features of orality in which the construal of coherence is dependent on situation and shared experiential background: Chovanec explores online sports commentaries and Tomášková studies the text colony of women's magazines. Academic written discourse is investigated by Krhutová and Schmied, who tend to view coherence as a primarily textual property; while the former explores lexical cohesive chains, the latter concentrates on the role of sentence adverbs for the creation of coherence. In her analysis of literary discourse from an interpreter's perspective Miššíková approaches coherence as an interpretative notion strongly dependent on inferential processes enhanced by hedges and intensifiers.

The manifold manifestations of coherence demonstrated in the book attempt to provide an insight into the various ways coherence works in a wide spread of spoken and written text types and interactional situations, all of which point to the dynamics of its nature. With its insight into different varieties of English discourse as presented by individual authors, the monograph attempts to present new ideas on how coherence is achieved and to suggest new directions for further research and study of spoken and written discourse.

References

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PART ONE

SPOKEN DISCOURSE

CHAPTER ONE

IMPROMPTU DISCOURSE

THE PRAGMATIC MARKER *WELL*: A TEXT STUDY[1]

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Abstract

It is argued that *well* has two major functions: as a speaker-oriented utterance particle with deliberative meaning and as an intersubjective dialogic marker. The deliberative function can combine with other functions and it can be extended to new uses which are less clearly deliberative. In the intersubjective function *well* is associated with epistemic and affective stance. It can be used with the rhetorical function to challenge expectations or beliefs attributed to the hearer. The intersubjective *well* can also signal uncertainty (hedging) or power (more certainty). The discussion of the functions of *well* provides the background for a corpus-based study of how *well* is used in different text types.

1 Introduction

In the following extract from a conversation between father and son we find many uses of *well*.

A. Why don't you uhm replace one of the back doors here and use the pane from
C. *Well* they're rotten now Dad so one day you'll have to
A. *Well* I'm just putting that off for as long as possible
C. *Well* if I ever have to replace a <,> back door I shall do so

Both speakers in this little dialogue choose to preface their conversational moves with *well*. What is *well* doing here and why is it

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used? The aim of this paper is to study the discourse functions of *well* focusing on what it is doing in different text types. The study is part of a larger corpus-based project which takes into account the variation of pragmatic markers in a corpus representing different regional, social and cultural varieties of English.

Well is a pragmatic marker whose functions need to be described with reference to its role in communication. Pragmatic markers are context- and discourse-bound elements outside the propositional framework and occupying a special (usually initial) slot in the discourse. They are metapragmatic (reflexive) commenting on the message rather than being part of the message itself; they are indexical, i.e. they point to features in the linguistic context and indirectly to speakers and their identities. Their meaning is procedural rather than referential: they are signposts clarifying the speaker's intentions and guiding the hearer's interpretation of the utterance.

Pragmatic markers are multifunctional and therefore difficult to describe functionally. In particular, they are characterized by a complex relationship between form, function, situation and the norms of the society and culture in which they are used. No single approach "can tackle the functions of these markers" (García Vizcaíno and Martínez-Cabeza 2005). It is therefore important to consider pragmatic markers from different perspectives. Östman (1995) has argued that pragmatic markers (Östman's term is pragmatic particles) must be described in a broad social perspective which includes the context, parameters and principles such as the Gricean cooperative principle. In his view, pragmatic markers are implicitly anchored to (implicated by) the parameters (cultural and discourse) coherence, involvement and politeness.

Discourse coherence falls under "context-relative language" (cf. Rühlemann 2007: 116) and has to do with "how discourse relates to other discourse". As seen from the extract beginning the article pragmatic markers have the discourse-deictic function to mark a transition from one part of the dialogue to another (e.g. from an initiating move to a response or from one topic to another). They provide the "grease" between the propositional parts of the discourse making it possible for the conversationalists to move quickly and smoothly from one topic to another. Discourse coherence is the result of interaction and cooperation. It involves both topical continuity and speaker change. In Gumperz' words:

> In discursive practice two or more individuals actively collaborate in the production of talk, alternately speaking, listening, and producing signs of recipiency through gaze, body posture or verbal back-channel signals. The collaboration that this involves is not automatic, it is in large part achieved

as part of the interaction… Once involved in an exchange, participants take on obligations towards each other that require them to do more than simply put information into words. While current speakers expect to be given a chance to complete, speaking-turns need to be timed in such a way as to allow for regular speaker change. Regardless of whether interlocutors agree or are actively disputing, some topical and thematic continuity has to be maintained.   (Gumperz 1996: 378)

The other parameters constraining the use of pragmatic markers are politeness (a concern for interpersonal relations) and what Östman (1995) calls involvement (emotions, feelings and opinions).

If we want to describe the association between social or cultural factors and pragmatic markers the work of anthropologists and sociolinguists is also of interest. Anthropologists (in particular Ochs, Gumperz) have drawn attention to the fact that linguistic forms can be indexically associated with affective and epistemic stance and less directly with social identities (whether for example the speaker is the prosecutor or the witness in a cross-examination), social relationships (friends, acquaintances), power and status (Ochs 1996). Epistemic stance includes "qualities of one's knowledge, such as degrees of certainty as to the truth of a proposition and sources of knowledge" (Ochs 1996: 422). These stances can also be constitutive of social acts. This is illustrated in the following example by Ochs [quoting Goodwin]:

Stacey: Fight yourself.
Ruby: Well you make me fight myself.
Stacey: I can't make you. Cuz it's a free world.
Ruby: I know it's a free world.   (Goodwin 1990: 154)

According to Ochs (1996: 423), Ruby uses the epistemic verb *know* both to "constitutively index her certain knowledge about the proposition 'it's a free world' and to construct a challenge to Stacey's possible assumption that 'it's a free world' is news to Ruby." Similarly *well* can be closely associated with social acts such as challenges, denials and rejections.

Many pragmatic markers can be classified with regard to a specific factor e.g. discourse coherence (*however, but*). *Well* on the other hand cannot be tied down to a single meaning or definition but is indexically linked to several language-functional parameters. It also involves phenomena such as planning, editing and self-repair which are "functionally related to the individual's needs both of managing his or her memory and of processing and articulating in the presence of an interlocutor" (Allwood et al. 1990: 4). Such processes (Allwood et al.

1990: 11 "speech management processes") require time. Pragmatic markers have the additional bonus that they "buy the speaker planning time, a convenience vis-à-vis the constraints of real-time processing" (Rühlemann 2007: 215). *Well* for example provides a solution to problems of speech management (such as the difficulty to find the appropriate word) and can be used for processes such as self-correction or reformulation which are part of speech articulation. In the following example from my corpus material (see Section 2 for a description of the corpus), *well* (*I guess*) and *uhm I don't know (or anything)* are the outward manifestation of ongoing planning difficulties. *Well* has the function of deliberation or hesitation. It mirrors an ongoing cognitive process in the speaker's mind while he is trying to think about examples of physical activities. (The speaker is involved in organizing activities for disabled persons.):

(1) (S1A-003 002-005 FACE)
    A. What sort of activities physical activities were available
    B. Well I suppose uhm the <,> the standard kind of physiotherapy <,> when you asked for it <,> uhm <,> and *well* sports *I guess* <,> But <,> I mean I'm not necessarily interested in doing sports and just because I became disabled <,> it doesn't mean to say that I suddenly had a surge of interest in <,> going to play <,> *uhm I don't know* basketball *or anything* <,>

Well in this function often cooccurred with pauses:

(2) (S1A-092 102-103)[2]
    A. One's about the human brain and language And the other's about uh this guy called Chomsky who's uh <,,>*well* one of the world's most important human beings if you happen to be interested in linguistics

    Both *well* and *I don't know* have a speech management function enabling speakers to gain time for cognitive processes "connected with prompting of memory, search of memory, hesitation and planning" (Allwood et al. 1990: 11). However there are also differences. *Well* has the function deliberation rather than lack of knowledge. Deliberation or consideration implies that the speaker carefully considers alternative options before coming to a decision. (Cf. Section 2 for a definition.)
    Allwood et al. (1990: 11) distinguish between choice-related speech management (SM) functions of the type illustrated in (2) and associated with memory search and hesitation and change-related speech management (SM) functions "based in the speaker's reactions to his or her

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[2] In the transcription <,> marks a short pause, <,,> a long pause.

own speech production". An example is (3) where *well* signals self-correction additionally expressed by the collocation with *I mean*:

(3) (S1A-006 028-031 FACE)
   A. Well Xepe seems to love this idea of having a picnic but I'm not too sure about this
   B. Not if you've had lunch
   A. Because I'll have eaten anyway *well I mean* part part of the reason I am eating will be so that I we don't have a picnic

Its multifunctionality makes *well* a good illustration of the semantic and pragmatic complexity typical of many pragmatic markers. There is "no general agreement on the specification of the various functions involved" (Bazzanella 2006: 456) and several pragmatic meanings representing different linguistic levels or domains can be expressed by the same element (what Bazzanella refers to as "pragmatic compositionality"). In the example "*well* it is this, Robin" (Bazzanella 2006: 456) Bazzanella claims that *well* functions as a turn-taking device, as a frame device (signalling "introduction") and as an inference marker (what I call deliberative).

I will not try to pressure the different uses of *well* into a theoretical straitjacket. The focus is on describing what *well* is doing in different text types. *Well* is multifunctional but has itself little or no semantic meaning. However two major functions can be distinguished. *Well* can be speaker-oriented (subjective) or hearer-oriented (expressing the speaker's attitude to the hearer and taking up a stance towards the hearer and the text). These functions will be further discussed in Sections 3 and 4.

2 The multifunctionality of *well*

Although *well* has attracted the interest of a large number of scholars there is little consensus on how many functions it has, what these functions are and how they are related to a model of discourse or communication (for some previous work see e.g. studies by Svartvik 1980, Carlson 1984, Schourup 1985, Schiffrin 1987, Norrick 2001, De Klerk 2005, Greasley 1994). In addition, contrastive studies based on translations have sharpened our insights about the meanings and functions of *well* (Bazzanella and Morra 2000, Cuenca 2008, Aijmer and Simon-Vandenbergen 2003, Johansson 2006).

Well has been analysed as a discourse marker with discourse management function (cf. Rühlemann 2007). *Well* is however not a typical discourse marker (or pragmatic marker). Fraser, for example, does not

regard *well* as a discourse marker, i.e. he does not associate it with establishing and maintaining coherence in the discourse but treats it as a pause marker (like *ahh*) which does not comment on or modify the message:

> There may be aspects of sentence meaning other than the propositional content and pragmatic markers. For example, are pause markers such as *well* or *ahh* to be considered a part of sentence meaning not, as I would propose, relegated to the domain of utterances? (Fraser 1996: 189)

As Fraser suggests, *well* can have functions which are not typical of discourse markers. It can also be used in ways which some speakers find irritating for example *well uh* (*uhm*), *uh well, well I don't know*. However these combinations throw some light on what *well* means.

The function of *well* is "deliberative". According to Biber et al., the speaker is neither certain nor uncertain but is thinking about things, collecting his or her thoughts (Biber et al. 1999: 1086). Cf. also Carter and McCarthy (2006: 152) who however regard *well* as a discourse marker: "A main function of *well* as a discourse marker is to indicate that the speaker is thinking about things". (Cf. also Norrick 2001 "considerative" meaning; Schourup 1985 uses the term "evincive" defined as "a linguistic item that indicates that at the moment at which it is said the speaker is engaged in, or has just been engaged in thinking".) My understanding of the term is close to Carlson's definition of deliberative as "weighing alternatives in terms of acceptability in order to arrive at a decision" (Carlson 1984: 86).

An account of *well* must include both the speaker perspective (the deliberative *well*) and the speaker's accommodation to the hearer (the intersubjective *well*). As pointed out by Johansson, *well* seems to mark both "negotiation in relation to the addressee and deliberation in the speaker's mind" (2006: 135). In the addressee-oriented or intersubjective meaning (negotiation in relation to the addressee), the speaker uses *well* to take up an epistemic or affective stance towards the text or the hearer or the implicit beliefs, assumptions, expectations, norms evoked by preceding discourse.

I will first deal with the functions of the deliberative *well* in more detail followed by a discussion of the intersubjective use of *well*. This discussion will provide the background for a corpus-based study of how *well* is used in different registers or text types. Via the text type we can also get a picture of how *well* is indexed to social roles and speaker identity. The corpus I have used to study *well* in different text types is the

British Component of the International Corpus of English (ICE-GB).[3] The spoken material (600,000 examples) represents text types such as face-to-face conversation, telephone conversation, legal cross-examination, parliamentary language and "other".

The recordings of the spoken material are available making it possible to analyse *well* prosodically. The phonological and prosodic features together with the lexical form invoke "a frame of interpretation for the rest of the linguistic content of the utterance" (Gumperz 1996: 379 "contextualization cues"). The prosodic contextualization features include prosody (accent and intonation) but also rhythm, tempo and related phenomena such as pausing, overlaps and repetition. However the examples have not been systematically transcribed and I have had to rely on my own prosodic analysis of the data.

In addition, we need to consider the different phonological forms of *well*. *Well* occurs in a "full" version with the vowel pronounced as well as in the reduced form *w'l*. The vowel can also have a semi-reduced form [∂]. In addition, there is an "extreme" reduced form which could be represented as "W" (i.e. as schwa) where *well* may be difficult to distinguish from other pause markers (cf. Bolinger 1989: 333). According to Schourup (2001: 1047), *well* has the properties of a vocal "gestural interjection", i.e. its "articulatory/acoustic form is perceived as in some way suggestive of the mental state it portrays". Thus the reduced pronunciation of *well* to *w'l* would have properties making it suitable for certain uses.

3   The deliberative meaning of *well*

In the deliberative function *well* is above all an interjection closely related to pause-like elements such as *I don't know* or *uhm, uh*, etc. The function of the deliberative *well* to keep the conversation going is particularly apparent when *well* occurs turn-internally as in example 4 where it cooccurs with other similar markers *(uhm) no well yes no*:

(4) (S1A-091 158-168 TELEPHONE)
    A. And there's people in the room so you can't talk anyway
    B. Why yes
       Well there isn't any more actually <laughs>
    A. Have they gone now
    B. There's *uhm*
       No

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[3] See the web-site http: //www.ucl.ac.uk/english-usage/ice#

> *Well yes*
> *No* There's people here the
> there's no news I meant to say
> A. Oh I see

Uhm, well, yes, no facilitate "going smoothly" and are a sign of the conversationalists' active participation in the discourse (cf. Schegloff 1981: 78). The function of *well* is mainly phatic (i.e. it strengthens intimacy and rapport between the participants).

When *well* has initial position it has projective force and can have the function to introduce something new. Cf. Schegloff who makes the following comment about *uhm:*

> …participants sometimes begin a turn by producing an "uhm" just after the possible completion of a prior turn, then pausing, and then producing a turn rather than just delaying their start until they are 'ready'. They may be understood to proceed in this fashion precisely in order first to show their understanding of the current state of the talk and their stance towards it (i.e. a prior state is over, it is an appropriate occasion for a next turn, I will produce one)… (Schegloff 1981: 81)

The projective force is apparent also when *well* cooccurs with pauses and with other markers of hesitation:

(5) (S1B-027 140 BROADCAST DISCUSSION)
    A. *Uh <,> well I* uh no I thi
        I thin I think that's I think
        that's a quite technical uhm uhm question there

The deliberative *well* like an *uhm* functions as a feedback signal to show the speaker's attention, understanding and interest. According to Schegloff (1981: 78), "it is the capacity of *uhm* and cognate bits of behavior to betoken attention and understanding".

In the example below *well* signals deliberation/hesitation/planning, feedback and new information.

(6) (S1B-027 140 BROADCAST DISCUSSION)
    A. Can you tell me how did you both get involved in the Mike Heafy
        project <,,>
    B. Shall I go first
    C. Yes
    B. *Well* I got involved through Celeste who <,> I used to dance with with
        London Contemporary <,> going back <,> twenty years or so

Extra interest and involvement can be shown by the clustering of several markers (*oh well, well uhm yes*), combinations with assessment, exaggerated intonation, cooccurrence with laughter, repetition.

Repetition of *well* is associated with increased involvement. The participants in the conversation below are discussing whether a good story always needs to be repeated in the same form.

(7) (S1A 063 258-268 FACE)
    D. I know if something happens to my father he does recount it once and if you're there you know about it and that sounds great Then the next week you're still there You hear him say it again and it's totally different It's grown into a nice big story Oh absolutely And the viewpoint's changed and all sorts of things
    C. <unclear words>
    B. the viewpoint
    C. *well* perhaps you have
    B. <unclear words>
    D. Well *well* I tend to repeat almost exactly the same words to my friends

By means of *well well* the speaker strengthens the contrast with what her father used to do. D's father told a story in different ways even changing the viewpoint every time he recounted it, while the speaker tends to repeat almost exactly the same words. Involvement is also associated with the pronunciation of *well well* in a slow tempo with a lengthening of the vowel.

In (8) *well* combines with positive assessment ("that's lovely"). *Well* cooccurs with laughter which suggests perhaps that the assessment should be understood ironically. Speaker A has been showing a group consisting of the colleagues at work the sights of Islington:

(8) (S1A-094 61-66 TELEPHONE)
    A. Yes
    B. Yeah yes
    A. *Well* that's lovely a a mass trip <,>
        <laugh>

Well in exclamations is another example of how *well* can combine with involvement. A's emotional "well what the hell" in example 9 is caused by the fact that the off-licences have closed and that B has only got a few cans of beer at home. A and B are young female students.

(9) (S1A-039 202-212 FACE)
    B. D'you order a ball photo <,,>

A. Ball photo
B. Not ball Woodville Feast
A. Yeah Unframed
B.
A. But crested
B. Oh that's nice
A. *Well what the hell* <eh>

Several subfunctions of the deliberative *well* can be distinguished which do not always preserve its meaning deliberation or hesitation. Section 3.1 discusses different uses of *well* in question-answer exchanges. In Section 3.2 I discuss *well* with an interactional function. Section 3.3 deals with *well* introducing direct speech.

3.1   The deliberative *well* in question-answer exchanges

The deliberative *well* occurs both before questions and answers. When *well* introduces a question it suggests a new topic. In the following example from a cross examination (a question-answer session) the speaker uses *well* to prompt another speaker to take the floor:

(10) (S1B-061 157-160 CROSS EXAMINATION)
   A. And you didn't say that's *not what we agreed*
   B. No As far as I was aware the completion date would be the third of February and we'd taken all action necessary to arrange the mortgage offer before that date
   A. *Well* did you understand from Mr Sainsbury that if you didn't have money by the third of February it would cause problems

Well is above all frequent in answers to questions. In broadcast discussions the deliberative *well* was often used after a question inviting a new speaker to take the floor in order to elaborate on a topic. *Well* does not only answer a question but it introduces a contribution to the discussion which can be long and complex and often deals with several subtopics. Melvyn Braggs who is the President of the National Campaign for the Arts has been invited to discuss whether there should be more governmental funding of the arts. The deliberative *well* is pronounced with a full vowel.

(11) (S1B-022 12-14 BROADCAST DISCUSSION)
   A. Melvyn Bragg you're President of the National Campaign for the Arts the lead signatory in the letter part of which I quoted a few moments ago What do you think's gone wrong <,>

    B. *Well* before we start to talk about finances which'll occupy a lot of this programme and blame which'll occupy a lot of this programme the reason why I'm we're here and people are watching is because most people think that the arts add something to their lives that nothing else will give them

Monica is asked to give her opinion on the existence of "spirit guides" dictating a novel:

(12) (S1B-026 231-234 BROADCAST DISCUSSION)
    A. Monica you're a writer
        What do you make of all this
        Are \<unclear\> from the other side
    B. *Well I believe* that anything is possible because we have no proof that it isn't

When the deliberative or subjective *well* precedes the answer to a question the deliberative meaning can be weakened or lost. In the following example from a cross-examination *well* is used by the witness who answers the prosecutor's question directly and without hesitation (according to a courtroom agenda).

(13) (S1B-064 113-115 CROSS EXAMINATION)
    A. At that point \<,,\> Mr Hook \<,\> on behalf of Ferndale had indicated to you that he was interested in further expansion of his business \<,\> had he not
    B. Well Hook said one thing and uh the other guy said something else
        They both were almost at conflict with each other

Speaker B (the witness) has used the reduced form *w'l*. If *well* had been pronounced with a full vowel, it would have suggested instead that something "is out of joint" (Bolinger 1989: 333).

The following (similar) examples are from conversations taking place at the university health centre. Speaker B is an elderly house-wife and A a young (male) medical graduate. B has earlier complained about suffering from glandular fever:

(14) (S1A-051 031- 032 FACE)
    A. and d'you have a reasonable diet d'you think
    B. *Well* I eat one good cooked meal a day of meat and vegetables

In example 15 with the same speakers *well* occurs both in the question and in the answer:

(15) (S1A-051 124-128 FACE)
    A. A sore throat
        Well how old were you when the tonsils were taken out
    B. *Well* I had them taken out <,> in January
    A   This year
    B. Yeah

The deliberative *well* in the answer does not signal that the question is unexpected or unwanted but it introduces a direct answer to a preceding question according to expectations or norms for doctor-patient communication.

Well in answers to questions can also express hesitation. The answerer fails to meet the demands of the question because he or she needs time to think ("let me see now"; cf. Carlson 1984: 37):

(16) (S1A-006 111-112 FACE)
    A. Yes Yes Have you seen the whole film though
    B. *Well* he has this stupid girl he falls in love with doesn't he or something

3.2 The interactional function of the deliberative *well*

Example 17 illustrates *well*'s interactional function (functions oriented to turn-taking, feedback and sequencing). *Well* is used to take the turn and simultaneously gives feedback (signalling the speaker's attending to the message, understanding and involvement). The example is identical to the one introducing the present paper:

(17) (S1A-007 106-109 FACE)
    C. Why don't you uhm replace one of the back doors here and use the pane from that
    A. *Well* if I ever have to replace a <,> back door I shall do so
    C. *Well* they're rotten now Dad so one day you'll have to:
    A. *Well* I'm just putting that off for as long as possible

In the following example *well* (*right well OK well*) signals that the speaker accepts the turn, gives feedback and is planning what to say next. Speaker A has been telling her husband (B) that she had "a horrible bank statement":

(18) (S1A-099 205-310 TELEPHONE)
    A. I put the cheque in <unclear word> <unclear word> <,> should get changed on Friday

A. Uhm <,,>
B. *Right*
    Well OK
    Well I'll try and get back a bit earlier <unclear words>
A. Well you know see how you go
    Don't worry about it

3.3   Well introducing direct speech

Well also occurs in collocations with *say* and *think* (in particular in the combination (subject) *said well*). I have regarded *well* as an utterance particle, i.e. as an example of the deliberative *well*. According to Rühlemann (2007: 140), *well* has developed into an utterance-opener acting as a demarcator "between the speaker's present discourse and the presented discourse". *Well* as an utterance-opener was phonologically reduced to [w∂l] or [w] in the examples in my corpus. When *well* was pronounced with a full vowel and with emphasis it would however be more likely to belong to the presented speech (e.g. the second occurrence of *well* in example 19 below).

In addition to its utterance-opening function *well* before direct speech contributes to the vividness of the conversation by presenting what took place as actually happening now:

(19) (S1A-091 75-78 TELEPHONE)
    And I said oh really <,>
    And uhm and he said <,> *well* what do you think Jenny
    And I thought of god
    And I said <,> *well* I couldn't say no you're not boring because it was so obvious

4   *Well* in dialogic contexts-a marker of epistemic and affective stance

The sequential organization of talk also explains that *well* can have the intersubjective function to take a stance towards a number of alternative or divergent attitudes implicated by the context. However the functions of the intersubjective *well* are difficult to pin down because of the fluid nature of stance. Depending on the expectations evoked by the preceding context the speaker disagrees with the previous speaker in different ways and more or less strongly. The speaker uses *well* to partially disagree, to modify or soften the disagreement, to express concession. Affective stance may be even more difficult to be precise about. *Well* has for instance normally

negative affect (it can convey reluctance, disappointment or surprise). Moreover affect or involvement can be heightened or reinforced by repetition, its use in exclamations and by prosodic means (cf. Section 3).

The corner-stone in this approach to analysing *well* is the rhetorical or argumentative discourse function (cf. White 1993). W*ell* and other epistemic markers are looked upon as rhetorical options which can be chosen by speakers to position themselves in the context by taking into account expectations or assumptions attributed to the hearer.

The combination *well but* suggests for example that the speakers are having an argument. The French author Maupassant has appeared as a "spirit guide" dictating a story. Speaker A is now arguing that the story would not have been as good as the genuine thing.

(20) (S1B-026 121-124 BROADCAST DISCUSSION)
    D. And so it's bound to come out in the terms she would use
    A. *Well*
       But it's very uneven because I mean the Maupassant story is actually
       quite Maupassant and quite good

The view expressed in the clause introduced by *well* contradicts, challenges or rejects a view which can be attributed to the hearer (or which is implicit in the context). *Well* is similar to other stance markers such as *but, so, actually.* What makes *well* different from *but* is that it is used to consider an opposing position without necessarily accepting this view. Cf. Carlson (1984: 44):

> [*well*] can be construed as giving due consideration to the opposing view without implying acceptance of the view itself. More importantly, *well* does not make the contrast between the two viewpoints explicit in the way *but* does; *well* is ater [sic] all used in many other ways too, introducing harmless remarks as well as challenging moves. It lets the listener work out the conclict [sic] between his position and the new contribution.

Well is not usual before a direct denial or explicit disagreement. "*Well* may show up if the dissent is partial or hesitant, or if it is disguised as a comment for reasons of politeness or dramatic effect" (Carlson 1984: 41). Speakers try to conceal their disagreement by appearing to agree even when they do not or they indicate that their disagreement is not whole-hearted (because other alternatives are left open). For example in (21) the speaker signals that he only partially or weakly disagrees with the hearer by means of *mm well*:

(21) (S1A-033 38-42 FACE)
  A. But the thing to do is we're going to look forward and see the areas
      you're interested in, wanting to get into because philosophy is a good
      general background for all sorts of things.
      Doesn't give one skill like many of the courses here
  B. *Mm... well* it's not vocational

The collocations *well anyway, well at least* are other signals that the speaker wants to avoid disagreement.

As suggested by Carlson, the speaker does not explicitly disagree with the hearer when *well* is used but other alternatives are left open. In other words, *well* means neither yes nor no but signals a position between the two poles. The topic discussed in (22) is the Tory leadership contest fought out in newspapers and on TV and, in particular, "whether there is any pleasure in it". The speaker Michael Dobbs has been an assistant of Margaret Thatcher:

(22) (S1B 024 45-46 BROADCAST DISCUSSION)
  A. Uh you don't take any pleasure in this do you Michael
  F. *Well* not pleasure because I actually happen to think unlike most
      people here that there is a serious side to politics

Well indicates less than full-blown disagreement with the preceding suggestion that politics should be acted out with the audience's pleasure in mind: there is also a serious side to politics which does not involve pleasure only. Its phonological realisation also functions as a contextualization cue to the interpretation of *well*. *Well* was pronounced with a reduced vowel. The pronunciation with a full vowel would have suggested deliberation and reservation or doubt.

From a different perspective the intersubjective *well* can contribute to maintaining a friendly speaker-hearer relationship. *Well* modifies the speech act either downtoning or boosting its illocutionary force (Holmes 1989). In the example below *well* introduces an element of uncertainty and softens the utterance it introduces.

(23) (S1A 006 174-176 FACE)
  A. Why do you want that
  B. Well *I don't know*
      I just think he'd like it

Combinations such as *well I think, well perhaps, well maybe* are associated with uncertainty and downtoning. In (24) *well maybe* is downtoning and associated with a suggestion. A previous speaker has been