

The Spanish Discourse Marker *o sea* in the Speech of Bilinguals from Southern Arizona

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Abstract

There has been remarkable progress in understanding the use of discourse markers in natural language, especially in bilingual communities. This study analyzes the discursive functions that the Spanish discourse marker *o sea* fulfills in the *Corpus del Español en el Sur de Arizona* (CESA) (Carvalho, 2012-), a bilingual corpus consisting of 29 sociolinguistic interviews at the time of the current study. The status of *o sea* in CESA is multifunctional in spontaneous discourse; we identified and examined five discursive functions: clarification, utterance completion, correction, epistemic parenthetical, and expletive. In terms of frequency, Southern Arizona speakers favor the utterance completion and the expletive functions more than the other three functions. Furthermore, the analysis indicates that females and young adults favor the use of *o sea* in CESA. The current analysis of *o sea* is one-of-a-kind in presenting new findings of *o sea* in bilingual contexts, which no other studies have reported. The study aims to shed new light on the consistent research of discourse markers in US Spanish, and perhaps afford a deeper understanding on how bilinguals organize discourse.

1. Introduction

There has been remarkable progress in understanding the use of discourse markers (henceforth DMs) in natural language in recent years. DMs, expressions such as *so*, *well*, *like* and *I mean*, are now recognized to play an important function in the way speakers organize discourse; they may have grammatical, discursive, or lexical functions in natural language (Schiffrin, 1987). These ubiquitous linguistic elements in spontaneous speech can shed light on stylistic variation, code switching, language mixing, and language change, and most importantly, the way discourse is organized (Brody, 1987; Salmons, 1990; Solomon, 1995; Torres, 2002). Despite their ubiquity, there is no concrete agreement over the matter of defining and analyzing DMs. However, at the basic level, researchers agree that DMs contribute to the coherence of discourse by signaling or marking a relationship across utterances (Torres, 2002).

Many studies have attempted to provide a descriptive analysis of the functions that DMs fulfill in natural language. For instance, Schiffrin (1987) argues that DMs are “sequentially dependent elements which bracket units of talk” (p. 31). Similarly, Fraser (1988) claims that DMs are “lexical expressions which are syntactically independent of the basic sentence, and which have no general core meaning which signals the relation-

ship of the current utterance to the prior discourse” (p. 27). In the same line of thinking, Fuller (2003) proposes two criteria that a DM must meet upon its removal: the semantic relationship between the elements connected by the marker must not change, and the utterance must remain grammatical. Consider the examples in (1).

(1) (a) Pero, *o sea*, por supuesto que, *o sea*, estoy con uh, estoy de acuerdo en eso. (CESA013)

(b) Pero, \emptyset , por supuesto que, \emptyset , estoy con-uh, estoy de acuerdo en eso.

Example (1) clearly meets Fuller’s criteria: the removal of *o sea* does not change the semantic relation between the elements connected by *o sea*, and the utterance (1b) remains comprehensible.

This study analyzes the discursive functions that the Spanish DM *o sea* fulfills in the *Corpus del Español en el Sur de Arizona* (CESA) (Carvalho, 2012-), a bilingual corpus. While *o sea* has been widely studied in monolingual communities (Cortés Rodríguez, 1991; Casado Velarde, 1991; Schwenter, 1996; Travis, 2005; Félix-Brasdefer, 2006), to the best of our knowledge, no studies of *o sea* have been reported in bilingual discourse. Therefore, the present study aims to contribute to the consistent research of DMs in US Spanish and perhaps afford a deeper understanding of DMs in bilingual discourse. In particular, the study addresses the following research questions:

- a) What discursive functions does *o sea* show in the speech of bilinguals from Southern AZ?
- b) Do social factors play a role in the use of *o sea* in CESA?
- c) Do the English DM *I mean* and *o sea* share similar discursive functions in CESA?

To approach these questions, we analyze 29 sociolinguistic interviews in CESA. Moreover, we compare the discursive functions identified in CESA with those reported in Travis (2005) and Cortés Rodríguez (1991) for Spanish monolingual discourse. In addition, we explore whether the English DM *I mean* (which we take to be the English equivalent of *o sea*) and Spanish *o sea* display similar discursive functions in CESA, and examine whether *o sea* triggers code switching in CESA. In what follows, we present an overview of the linguistic properties of *o sea*.

2. The linguistic nature of *o sea*

The lexicalized unit *o sea* is a combination of the conjunction *o* ‘or’ and the 3rd person singular present subjunctive verb form *sea*, from the verb *ser* ‘to be.’ As for its meaning, *o sea* literally means ‘or be it.’ Although there are no tokens of its literal meaning in the present data, it does occur in monolingual Spanish as example (2) illustrates.

(2) Para que el escogido *sea* un alemán *o sea* u francés *o sea* un japonés. (Travis, 2005)

Example (2) reveals many features that are commonly associated with the grammaticalization of DMs. Nevertheless, examples like this are not present in CESA.

Note also that the use of the subjunctive mood in *o sea* is important for its literal meaning. The indicative mood gives the verb *ser* ‘to be’ a different interpretation in: *es alemán o es francés*. Unlike the subjunctive mood in (2), the indicative mood implies that it must be one or the other, but cannot be both. Furthermore, when *o sea* carries its literal meaning, the two elements do not function as a single unit because other linguistic material can intervene between them (3).

(3) Para que *sea* un varón *o para que sea* una hembra.

Example (3) shows that a prepositional phrase (*para que*) can be inserted to separate *o sea*, which illustrates that *o sea* is not a lexicalized DM in this instance.

However, as a DM, *o sea* functions as a lexicalized unit. That is, morphologically, *o sea* is completely fused; nothing can intervene between the two elements.

- (4) (a) [E]n Tucson escucho- se escucha mucho el Spanglish, *o sea* aquí usas mucho inglés y español. (CESA017)
- (b) [E]n Tucson escucho- se escucha mucho el Spanglish, *o *que sea* aquí usas mucho inglés y español.

Since *o sea* is completely fused as a DM, no linguistic elements can intervene between the two lexicalized elements. As (4b) demonstrates, inserting the complementizer *que* makes the utterance incomprehensible, though the lexicalized form *o sea que* can also appear as a DM in Spanish.

Moreover, when *o sea* carries discursive functions, it lacks verb inflexion (5); only the present subjunctive form of the verb *ser* is possible (5a) but the imperfect form is not in (5b).

- (5) (a) Son de Madrid, *o sea*, madrileños.
- (b) Eran de Madrid, **o fuera*, madrileños.

In phonological terms, *o sea* is prosodically independent, often separated from the surrounding context by pauses, intonation breaks or both as illustrated in example (6). In this sense, *o sea* satisfies the phonological requirements put forth to characterize DMs (Fraser, 1990; Zwicky, 1985).

- (6) (a) Sea en mi casa, *o sea*, en la tuya.
- (b) Sea en mi casa *o sea* en la tuya. (Casado Velarde, 1991, p. 98)

O sea in (6a) functions as a DM because it is separated from the surrounding contexts by a pause and an intonation break, indicated with commas; this is not the case for (6b). Thus, (6a) translates into the idiomatic expression *Mi casa es tu casa*. Schwenter (1996) also points out that *o sea* is often reduced from its full phonological form [osea] to [osa] or [sa] in Latin American Spanish varieties. However, no reduction was observed in CESA.

Syntactically, *o sea* may appear initially, medially or finally in an utterance, among other places (see Travis, 2005). At the clause level, *o sea* can occur between clauses, within clauses, or in incomplete structures when making a correction (Schwenter, 1996). However, as Casado Velarde (1991) points out, *o sea* does not form a constituent in the clause. Note also that the syntactic context for *o sea* is similar to the English DM *I mean* in flexibility of position (Erman, 1978). In sum, as a DM, *o sea* functions as a lexicalized unit, which is morphologically fused. We turn next to the literature of *o sea* in monolingual discourse.

3. DMs in monolingual and bilingual communities

The study of DMs is fundamental to understand the way discourse is organized. In a descriptive analysis of DMs in Peninsular Spanish, Casado Velarde (1991) and Cortés Rodríguez (1991) describe the use of *o sea* as a *muletilla* (crutch) in examples like those in (1). There are two types of *muletillas*: expletive and communicative; the latter being important for the organization of discourse, while the former serves merely as a delaying device, which allows a speaker to organize their thoughts (Christl, 1996, p. 177). Moreover, Cortés Rodríguez (1991) notes that expletives are irrelevant to what it is that the speaker wishes to express; that is, they lack conceptual meaning (p. 40).

However, Schwenter (1996) notes that the data classified as ‘expletive’ by Cortés Rodríguez (1991) tend to occur with belief verbs (such as *creer*, *pensar*, *suponer*, and *estar seguro*) and 1st person singu-

lar subjects, suggesting that the use of *o sea* marks a speaker's orientation toward their utterance. In this sense, according to Schwenter (1996), *o sea* functions as an 'epistemic parenthetical' that indicates the speakers' degree of commitment to what they are saying (p. 865). A similar observation regarding speakers' commitment has been described by Schiffrin (1987) for the English DM *I mean*. Schiffrin (1987) claims that the fact that "I" in *I mean* is a 1st person pronoun is a notorious influence on the use of *I mean*, focusing on the speakers' degree of commitment to their utterance.

Travis (2005) analyzes DMs in Colombian Spanish, and argues that the formulative function of *o sea* derives from its literal meaning 'or be it.' In this sense, *o sea* presents real-world alternatives, that is, it presents textual alternatives. Travis identifies five different functions for *o sea* in her corpus of Colombian Spanish: (i) clarify something the speaker has said, (ii) introduce an utterance completion, (iii) preface a repair, (iv) introduce a side comment, and (v) mark a conclusion that can be drawn from the prior discourse.

According to Travis (2005), the use of *o sea* to introduce a clarification introduces a real world alternative (p. 125-128). From this, the use of *o sea* extends to introduce an utterance completion and a repair, where the speaker wishes to clarify something that has not been fully stated in the prior intent of discourse. As for the use of *o sea* as a side comment, *o sea* does not introduce material that explains anything that has been said. Instead, *o sea* leads the upcoming utterance of the speaker. Let us now briefly discuss the literature of DMs in bilingual contexts.

4. Discourse markers in bilingual contexts

The study of DMs in bilingual communities may provide new insights about code switching, language mixing, and language change. DMs in bilingual discourse have received much attention lately, yet no studies have addressed the use of *o sea*. For instance, Torres (2002) examines the DMs *so* and *entonces* to

investigate the status of these DMs as borrowings or code switches in bilingual communities. Torres finds that the English DM *so* is frequently used in her data, and suggests that *so* seems to be fully integrated as a borrowing in bilingual discourse. Similarly, Silva-Corvalán (1995) notes that *so* has almost completely replaced the Spanish DM *así que* even in the speech of Mexican American Spanish monolinguals living in Los Angeles, and thus, *so* can be considered a core borrowing.

Moreover, Aaron (2004) examines the distribution of *so* and *entonces* in New Mexican bilingual speech. Aaron found that both *so* and *entonces* perform the same discourse functions with the same relative frequency, hence showing no evidence of specialization in function. Aaron concludes that it is unlikely that *so* is replacing *entonces*. Instead, she claims, *so* and *entonces* could be in stable variation (2004, p. 176).

The Spanish DM *como* has also received much attention in the literature of DMs in bilingual communities. For example, Kern (2014) finds that the discourse marker *como* mirrors the focus and quotative discourse functions of *like* in English. Kern also reports that female bilinguals use the quotative *como* more frequently than male bilinguals. Further, Kern (2014) claims that the discursive *como* is the result of an internal process of grammaticalization that may be either accelerated by or triggered from contact with English.

In sum, these studies show that research on DMs in bilingual discourse can shed new light on the way bilinguals use linguistic phenomenon, such as code switching or language mixing, at the discourse level. In the same line of thinking, the present study aims to shed new light on the consistent research of DMs in US Spanish, and perhaps affords a deeper understanding on how bilinguals organize discourse.

5. Methodology

The data for this study were extracted from 29 sociolinguistic interviews from the *Corpus del Espa-*

ñol en el Sur de Arizona (CESA) (Carvalho, 2012-). CESA aims to document and disseminate the Spanish varieties spoken in Southern Arizona. Out of the 29 interviews, only 18 speakers use the Spanish DM *o sea* and its variant *o sea que* (see Table 1). It has been reported that younger speakers favor the use of DMs in bilingual contexts (see Torres & Potowski, 2008; Said-Mohand, 2008). The interviews were divided into two groups to investigate the distribution of *o sea* among participants: Group 1's ages range from 19-25 and Group 2's range from 26-57.

All speakers were residents of Tucson, Arizona at the time of the interviews. Graduate and undergraduate students under PI supervision conducted the sociolinguistic interviews, which were all carried out in Spanish and consist of approximately one hour each. The interviews followed a typical protocol as discussed in Labov (1972; 1982). Participants were asked about their families, childhood, current issues, and memories, as well as specific questions about language use in the home and community. Interviews were conducted in an informal environment. The recordings were transcribed and edited by many peers.

Table 1: Age and gender information of *o sea* users in CESA

<i>Speaker code</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>Gender</i>
CESA001	57	F
CESA002	33	M
CESA003	25	M
CESA004	23	F
CESA007	21	M
CESA009	19	F
CESA013	33	F
CESA014	23	F
CESA016	27	F
CESA017	25	F
CESA018	25	F
CESA020	23	F
CESA021	25	M
CESA022	22	F
CESA024	22	M
CESA026	48	F
CESA028	20	F
CESA029	20	F
TOTAL		13F/5M

Table 2: Functions of *o sea* in the discourse of bilinguals from Southern AZ

<i>Function</i>	<i>Definition</i>
1. <i>Clarification</i>	<i>O sea</i> occurs turn-medially responding to the same speaker's speech
2. <i>Utterance completion</i>	<i>O sea</i> occurs as part of a smooth stream of speech, no truncated speech
3. <i>Correction</i>	<i>O sea</i> occurs following a truncated intonation unit produced by the same speaker, and introduces information that adds to what the speaker had been saying
4. <i>Epistemic parenthetic</i>	<i>O sea</i> tends to occur with belief verbs and first person singular subjects
5. <i>Expletive</i>	<i>O sea</i> is irrelevant to what it is that the informant wishes to express; it helps the speaker organize his thoughts

6. Data coding

The framework of the present analysis is based on previous studies, which have analyzed *o sea* in monolingual Spanish. Specifically, we follow the ideas of Casado Velarde (1991), Cortés Rodríguez (1991), Schwenter (1991), and Travis (2005) for the five different, discursive functions we identified in CESA (see Table 2, previous page).

The first function, *clarification*, occurs as a response to clarify a preceding thought, and thus, *o sea* marks the speaker's upcoming modification of the utterance. Thus, the modification marked by *o sea* includes both expansions of ideas and explanations of intentions. As Travis (2005) notes, as a *clarification*, *o sea* occurs following a complete utterance, meaning that the prior utterance to the use of *o sea* is syntactically and pragmatically complete. Consider the following examples.

- (7) (a) Cuando se paga semestral, el pago es por caja. *O sea* en efectivo o en cheque. (Travis, 2005)
- (b) Ay, me encantaba ir a México porque era en el campo. *O sea* mis abuelos eran campesinos. (CESA013)

Notice that *o sea* occurs after a complete utterance in (7), and it is functioning to clarify the preceding thought.

While *clarification* occurs in contexts where a speaker has completed one comment and goes on to make another as illustrated in (7), *o sea* can also occur utterance medially, where the material following the DM completes what the speaker had been saying prior to the use of the marker (Travis, 2005); this function is termed *utterance completion*. *O sea* occurs as part of a smooth stream of speech in an *utterance completion* instance. That is, *o sea* is prosodically incomplete, occurring with continuing rather than final intonation, indicating the closing of a thought.

- (8) (a) Y cuál es la diferencia, *o sea* en plata. (Travis, 2005)

- (b) No es vulgar porque nosotros decimos esas palabras, *o sea* es diferente. (CESA014)

Unlike the examples in (7), *o sea* in (8) occurs as part of a smooth stream of speech, and helps to complete the speaker's utterance.

The third function we coded for in the data is *correction*. In this function, *o sea* occurs following truncated speech by the same speaker (pauses and any sort of the slip of the tongue phenomena were considered to result in truncated speech), and introduces information that adds to what s/he had been saying (Cortés Rodríguez, 1991). In most cases, truncated speech leads to syntactically incomplete utterances, showing that the speaker has cut off what s/he was saying. As a result, speakers normally change their wording following the DM. Furthermore, as Cortés Rodríguez (1991) observes, the use of *o sea* as correction “parece como un lapsus que introduce el hablante para dar cierto sentido de rotundidad a lo que viene” (p. 60). Consider the examples in (9).

- (9) (a) Pero vamos que hay montones de cosas que se ven...//*o sea* que no es que se acerquen. (Cortés Rodríguez, 1991)

- (b) Hay muchas palabras que (...) nosotros, las pro- *o sea* nosotros las decimos diferentes. (CESA021)

Example (9b) clearly demonstrates how the speaker truncates his speech, and changes his wording following *o sea*. Intuitively, we can say that the speaker meant to say *pronunciamos*, but fails to do so, and changes this verb to *decimos*, which is semantically related to *pronunciar*. Similarly, in (9a), the speaker fails to complete his thought (indicated by the pause (/)), and fills in the gap with *o sea* to

complete the idea, which has different meaning than the intended one.

Following Schwenter (1996), the fourth function identified in the data set was *epistemic parenthetical*. He observes that *o sea* tends to occur with belief verbs (*creer, pensar, opinar*, etc.) and with 1st person singular subjects. Thus, he takes this as evidence to suggest that the use of *o sea* marks speakers' orientation towards their utterance, and suggests that *o sea* is functioning as an epistemic parenthetical that "indicates speakers' degree of commitment to what they say" (Schwenter, 1996, p. 865). We coded as *epistemic parenthetical* when the 1st person subject either precedes the DM or follows it. 'Pensar' in (10) is a belief verb conjugated in 1st person singular.

(10) (a) Yo creo que, *o sea*, la tienen un poco co-to = para pasar las vacaciones.
(Schwenter, 1991)

(b) Yo pienso que hablo más: (...) trato de hablar más correctamente *o sea* (...) a veces cuando estoy hablando con amigos. (CESA021)

The fifth and final function we analyzed in the current study is *expletive*. According to Cortés Rodríguez (1991), the expletive function of *o sea* is "una forma propia para amparar las vacilaciones expresivas de la lengua hablada, propias de la improvisación elocutiva" (p. 40). Moreover, it has also been noted that expletives are irrelevant to what it is that the speaker wishes to express, and that they could become "una muletilla" (a crutch); that is, they lack conceptual meaning (Fuentes Rodríguez, 1987). We

also considered the presence of other DMs as a criterion to code *o sea* as an *expletive*. The use of other DMs illustrates that *o sea* could be irrelevant in that context. The examples in (11) illustrate this.

(11) (a) Puede que eso también/ entiendes/ pero/ *o sea*/ tienen cosas que sí y cosas que no. (Cortés Rodríguez, 1991)

(b) Pero, *o sea*, por supuesto que, *o sea*, estoy con-uh, estoy de acuerdo.
(CESA013)

Examples in (11) clearly show that *o sea* is irrelevant to what the speaker wishes to convey, that is, the use of *o sea* in (11) is irrelevant because it can be removed, and the utterance remains comprehensible.

7. Results

We identified 363 instances of *o sea* in CESA. The 363 tokens were further classified according to the five aforementioned discursive functions. Table 3 shows the results in terms of frequency for each classified use of *o sea*.

As we can see, Southern Arizona speakers use the *utterance completion* (29.20%) and the *expletive* (28.15%) functions more than the other three functions. In section 6, we pointed out that *utterance completion* occurs with continuing rather than final intonation, meaning that speakers use *o sea* to support the final thoughts of an idea in spontaneous discourse. Similarly, we noted that speakers use the *expletive* function as a property of improvisation in natural discourse. To put it differently, speakers use *o sea* to fill gaps in their running speech while trying

Table 3: Distribution of *o sea* according to discursive function in the speech of bilinguals from Southern AZ

	<i>Clarification</i>	<i>Utterance Completion</i>	<i>Correction</i>	<i>Epistemic Parenthetical</i>	<i>Expletive</i>	<i>TOTAL</i>
N	71	107	49	34	102	363
%	19.55	29.20	13.50	9.50	28.15	100

	<i>Males (N=5)</i>	<i>Females (N=13)</i>	<i>Total</i>
N	78	285	363
%	21.50	78.50	100

	<i>Group 1 (N=13)</i>	<i>Group 2 (N=5)</i>	<i>Total</i>
N	311	52	363
%	85.06	14.04	100

to grasp what they really wish to express; in this sense, *o sea* has no conceptual meaning. Therefore, the use of expletive *o sea* is not only helpful but also necessary in spontaneous discourse. See Section 8 for a complete discussion.

In terms of social factors, previous studies (Kern, 2014; Said-Mohand, 2008) have suggested that females usually lead the use of DMs in bilingual contexts. While the number of male and female speakers in CESA is not representative to make strong claims (see Table 1), the data seem to indicate that females favor the use of *o sea* more than males. Table 4 illustrates the results.

Furthermore, it has been reported that young adults use DMs more frequently than older speakers (Said-Mohand, 2008; Torres & Potowski, 2008; Kern 2014). In the present data, we find that younger bilingual adults take the lead on the use of *o sea*. The age interval for Group 1 is 19-25 years old, and that for Group 2 is 26-57 years old.

As suggested in previous studies (Said-Mohand, 2008; Torres & Potowski, 2008; Kern 2014), the analysis in Table 5 reveals that young adult bilinguals use the DM *o sea* more than the older group. However, one must be careful in interpreting these results because there are more speakers in Group 1 than in Group 2.

In sum, *o sea* is highly prevalent in the discourse of Southern Arizona speakers. We identified five functions of *o sea* in the following order in terms of frequency: utterance completion, expletive, clarifica-

tion, correction, and epistemic parenthetical. The data also show that females and younger adults favor the use of *o sea*. In what follows, we provide our interpretation of the present findings.

8. The use of *o sea* in CESA and in monolingual communities

The findings of the present study show that the status of *o sea* in CESA is multifunctional in spontaneous discourse; namely, Southern AZ speakers favor *utterance completion* and *expletive* more than *clarification*, *correction*, and *epistemic parenthetical*. We noted that *utterance completion* is used to complete a thought (this was indicated by continuous rather than final intonation), while the *expletive* function fills in gaps in spontaneous speech. Given our description of *utterance completion* in Table 6 (following page), one would expect the high use of *o sea* as an utterance completion; in other words, DMs are useful linguistic elements to let the interlocutor know what is coming next, the closing up of a thought in this case. Speakers make use of their DMs repertoire in spontaneous discourse. As we noted in Table 6, the use of expletive *o sea* is irrelevant to what the speaker wishes to express; thus, it must serve as support for the speaker to organize his discourse.

The use of DMs varies cross-linguistically. We discuss the behavior of *o sea* in CESA in comparison to other communities in terms of usage frequency by function. First, we compare the findings for *clarifica-*

Table 6: Comparison of the functions ‘clarification’ and ‘utterance completion’ between Travis (2005) and CESA

	Travis (2005)			CESA		
	<i>Clarification</i>	<i>Utterance Completion</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Clarification</i>	<i>Utterance Completion</i>	<i>Total</i>
N	39	7	46	71	107	178
%	84.78	15.22	100	39.55	60.45	100

tion and *utterance completion* from the present study with those of Travis (2005), who found 93 tokens of *o sea* in the conversations of 13 Colombian Spanish speakers. This comparison is possible because both studies followed the same criterion for coding these functions.

In terms of frequency, it seems that Southern Arizona speakers use the *utterance completion* function more than Spanish monolinguals from Colombia. The use of *clarification* is less frequent than Colombian Spanish as Table 6 illustrates, although the total number of tokens is higher in CESA. In section 6, we noted that both functions are semantically related: they are used to formulate a description of what the speaker intends to convey, and both occur in contexts that are syntactically and pragmatically complete (Travis, 2005). However, *clarification* occurs in contexts where a speaker has completed an idea and goes on to formulate another, while *utterance completion* occurs prior to completing a thought. Intonation makes this distinction: *utterance completion* occurs with continuing intonation, and *clarification* with final intonation. Given that speakers normally use incomplete sentences in spontaneous speech, the high usage of *utterance completion* is not surprising.

Cortés Rodríguez (1991) reports a slightly higher usage of *correction* than *expletive* discursive functions of *o sea*. Our data show a contrast as illustrated in Table 7, although there were only ten speakers and 210 instances of *o sea* in Cortés Rodríguez; again, both studies follow the same criterion for identifying these functions.

The robust difference in frequency for *correction* and *expletive* illustrates that Southern AZ speakers favor the use of *expletive* more than peninsular monolingual Spanish speakers, while the use of the *correction* function is approximately the same for both groups. Considering that our data come from spontaneous sociolinguistic interviews, we suggest that the high use of the expletives in CESA is expected because speakers use expletive *o sea* to fill in speech gaps when improvising in spontaneous discourse. Consider again example (1a), repeated here as (12).

(12) Pero, *o sea*, por supuesto que, *o sea*, estoy con-uh, estoy de acuerdo. (CESA013)

We have previously noted that expletives lack conceptual meaning, and thus, they can be removed from discourse. Furthermore, they also occur with

Table 7: Comparison of the functions ‘correction’ and ‘expletive’ from Cortés Rodríguez (1991) with the data of bilinguals from Southern AZ

	Cortés Rodríguez (1991)			CESA		
	<i>Correction</i>	<i>Expletive</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Correction</i>	<i>Expletive</i>	<i>Total</i>
N	40	26	66	49	102	151
%	60.60	39.40	100	32.45	67.55	100

other DMs such as *pero*, *entonces*, *como*, and *pues*, a criterion for identifying expletives in CESA.

In sum, the data in the present analysis demonstrate that the discursive functions of *o sea* in CESA differ in terms of frequency when compared to other communities. For example, we have suggested that *clarification* could be employed when a more formal environment is created. On the other hand, the high usage of the *expletive* function in CESA may be the results of a more informal environment. These, of course, are only intuitions. Future studies should focus on a qualitative analysis. Although the frequency of tokens differs for each group (e.g., CESA has more tokens than the other two groups), the differences in frequency are in line with the observation that DMs are known to vary cross-linguistically.

The next section explores whether the English DM *I mean* and the Spanish DM *o sea* share similar discursive functions in the speech of bilinguals from Southern AZ. Both DMs are present in CESA at the individual level.

9. The English DM *I mean* and the Spanish DM *o sea*

To address our third and final research question, we analyze the uses of *I mean* and *o sea* in CESA. Torres (2011) notes that Spanish-English bilinguals in USA tend to incorporate many DMs from both languages in their discourse. In this section, we focus on two areas: we explore the uses of English DM *I mean* in CESA (which we take to be the equivalent of *o sea*), and examine whether *o sea* triggers code-switching.

Schiffrin (1987) argues that the literal meaning of the expression *I mean* influences its function in participation frameworks: *I mean* marks a speaker's upcoming modification of the meaning of his/her own prior talk. The predicate *mean*, however, has several different senses, and thus the modifications marked by *I mean* include both expansions of ideas and explanations of intentions (Schiffrin, 1987, p. 296). The following is an example that Schiffrin pre-

sents to support this claim:

(13) But I think um ten years from now, it's going to be more liberal. *I mean*, when I started working for the government, there were no colored people. (Schiffrin, 1987)

Although there were only nine instances of *I mean* in CESA (keeping in mind that the interviews were conducted in Spanish), our data show examples that clearly fit with Schiffrin's definition of modification of prior talk.

(14) El barrio fijate que sí, ha cambiado *yo di:go* for the worst/u/ oh God, yeah. *I mean*, I love it because that's [where] I grew up. (CESA013)

Notice that *I mean* in both (13) and (14) shows an expansion of what the speaker wishes to convey: in (13) *I mean* expands the hope for things to be more liberal, while (14) expands the notion that something has changed.

Another function that Schiffrin (1987) reports for *I mean* is *replacement repair*, which are substitutions of prior material (note that this excludes repetitive restarts such as *I--I did it*). In addition, *replacement repairs* do not provide subordinate material; rather, they switch the direction of the developing discourse to that initiated by the substitution as the following data demonstrate:

(15) Not at all. And not t'my disadvantage. *I mean*, not to my advantage. (Schiffrin, 1987)

(16) Porque también, depende, totalmente porque pues si estoy en la clase de inglés, *I mean*, de español. (CESA009)

Both examples (15) and (16) clearly show how speakers use *I mean* to repair and replace what they had said before; the replacement normally occurs at the word or phrase level.

It is important to highlight that the same speakers who use *I mean* also show *o sea* in their discourse. Consider the following example.

- (17) Y: *o sea* para entrar en un lugar donde era puro gringo pues era algo diferente. Y...*I mean* (CC) tenía mi familia cuando llegaba a casa y todo. (CESA037)

The fact that both *o sea* and *I mean* in (17) seem to have a similar discursive function led us to suggest that *I mean* could display the same functions as *o sea* in bilingual discourse. However, we need more data to investigate whether they are interchangeable. Similarly, the fact that Southern Arizona Spanish-English bilinguals can incorporate English DMs in their Spanish discourse illustrates that DMs are sequentially dependent elements which bracket unit of talk (Schiffrin, 1987), and that their removal does not change the semantic relationship between the utterances connected by the marker (Fuller, 1999).

As already pointed out, it has been suggested that borrowed DMs such as *so* can trigger code switches in bilingual speech (Brody, 1987; Torres, 2002). The present data show only two instances of code switches with *o sea que* (which we take to be a variant of *o sea*) and none with *o sea*.

- (18) La única cosa es que mi mamá y mi abuela siempre me corrigen. /*[risas]*/ *O sea que* (...) sí, it gets on my nerves. (CESA007)

Studies of DMs in US Spanish have reported that DMs may trigger code switching (Torres, 2002). However, no code switches triggered by *o sea* were identified in CESA. The fact that *o sea* does not trigger code switching may suggest that only certain DMs are more susceptible for code switching (e.g., *so* and *entonces*). Only future studies can confirm this intuition.

In conclusion, this paper explored the status of the Spanish DM *o sea* in the *Corpus del Español en*

el Sur de Arizona (CESA). *O sea* is a multifunctional DM in CESA. Five discursive functions were identified for *o sea*: utterance completion, expletive, clarification, correction, and epistemic parenthetical. The first two are more frequently used than the other three. Regarding social factors, we noted that females and young bilingual adults favor the use of *o sea* in CESA. We also pointed out that these functions differ when compared with monolingual communities in terms of frequency. Finally, we noted that Southern Arizona bilinguals can incorporate English DMs in their Spanish discourse, and suggested that the English DM *I mean* and Spanish *o sea* share similar discursive functions in CESA. However, *o sea* does not seem to trigger code switching in CESA.

Future studies should examine whether certain DMs are more susceptible for code switching than others. Similarly, a comprehensive analysis of DMs in CESA is necessary to fully understand the role DMs play in the speech of bilinguals from Southern Arizona. The present study is relevant in extending the contribution of DMs to the way speakers organize discourse by examining a highly used Spanish DM, *o sea*, in a specific community; the study also provides new insights on the consistent research on DMs in US Spanish.

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