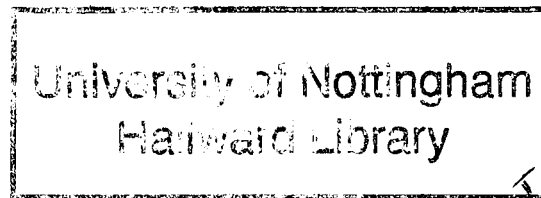


**DISCOURSE MARKING IN BURMESE AND ENGLISH:
A CORPUS-BASED APPROACH**



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ABSTRACT

This study is a comparative analysis of discourse marking systems in Burmese and in English, using a corpus-based approach within the framework of discourse analysis. The focus of this study is a set of lexical items in a particular word class called 'particles' in Burmese, which lack one-to-one equivalents in English and are characterized by highly context-dependent semantic values. Unlike traditional comparative studies involving less commonly studied languages that tend to base their analyses on the model of well-established linguistic systems such as English, this study is Burmese-originated. It starts out with an identification of discourse functions typically associated with high frequency Burmese particles, and their equivalent realisations in English are subsequently identified. Findings indicate that Burmese particles share common cross-linguistic characteristics of discourse markers as described in the current literature. The data offers clear evidence that discourse functions of Burmese particles investigated are commonly found in spoken English, but they are not realised through the same discourse marking system. This study therefore calls for a more effective comparative methodology that can compare syntactically-oriented discourse marking systems more effectively with lexically-oriented ones, such as in the case of Burmese and English respectively. Last but not least, this study also challenges the notion of 'word' as a unit of analysis for a corpus-based approach, as the notion of word cannot be easily defined in a syllabic language such as Burmese.

*To my late father U Kyaw Tun,
to whom I promised this accomplishment*

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¹ CANCODE stands for Cambridge and Nottingham Corpus of Discourse in English. The corpus project was funded by Cambridge University Press and the University of Nottingham. Cambridge University Press is the sole copyright holder. Permission to use or cite from the corpus data must be obtained from Cambridge University Press.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1. Background

In our present day language classrooms, spoken language has long been an integral part of the curricula. Most learners want to learn how to speak; and they want to be able to understand contemporary texts in the media and popular culture, which are rarely void of "spoken language" even in their written form. At the same time, spoken language is often considered a sloppy, corrupted version of "standard" language, and accordingly many of its important features are often excluded from traditional reference materials. As a result, questions frequently arise regarding various aspects of spoken language to which there are often no clear answers, and complexities of the spoken language remain intriguing. Being faced with such a situation over the course of my career as a language teacher (first of English and then of Burmese and French), the pursuit of a better understanding of the underlying structures and mechanisms of language is the main motivation for this study.

Growing research in the field of spoken discourse studies was a major inspiration for me. I see discourse analysis as a key to finding answers regarding certain aspects of spoken Burmese that remain mysterious to English speakers, and hope too that some of the answers will give a different understanding of English discourse from the perspective of another language community. Examining language as discourse, that is, investigating language use above and beyond the sentence level is an

intriguing direction: it allows us to explore meaning in context, whereas traditional linguistic studies tend to focus on the syntactic functions of smaller units. I am particularly interested in discourse markers, which seem to be a key element of any spoken language. It is a common misconception that discourse markers are a mere indication of uncertainty, inarticulateness or uneducatedness, or that they are mere 'fillers' because they do not contribute to the information content of the discourse (Watts, 1989). Findings of various discourse studies indicate however that, as well as other features typically held up as characteristics of informal spoken discourse such as unfinished sentences and repetitions, discourse markers play an important role in shaping the discourse. They can contribute either to 1) an understanding of the text: why the text means what it does, or 2) an evaluation of the text: whether or not it is an effective text for its own purposes. Upon close examination of language in actual use, it is clear that discourse markers convey important information regarding the speaker's attitude towards the message itself, the speech act itself, his/her interlocutor and/or the potential audience.

Furthermore, linguistic investigation through a corpus linguistic approach seems the best way to conduct a discourse analysis as it can shed light on the systematicity of language use by observing a large number of occurrences of key phenomena. As McCarthy and Carter (2004) point out, with a corpus-based approach using concordancing software, the most frequent words and their most frequent patterns and most frequent meanings can easily be identified. It is in fact the regularities in language use, or more precisely the relationship between recurrent forms and

recurrent meanings that can reveal insights into the discourse structure of a language.

In addition, I believe that a comparative study can offer a broader understanding of any given language, especially in the case of Burmese, which is under-represented in the field of discourse studies. With this idea as an underlying objective, my research topic was determined, i.e. to select a class of lexico-grammatical items in Burmese commonly known as "particles" in traditional grammars, and to examine their usage in terms of their discourse functions, in comparison to the well-documented forms and functions of discourse markers in English.

1.2. English and Burmese discourses as focus of the study

In spoken Burmese, discourse meanings are customarily expressed through the use of various particles, many of which also constitute the syntactic structure. Accordingly in traditional grammars, particles are usually described in terms of their syntactic distribution: these studies present different kinds of sentential environments, but often fall short of a systematic generalization describing their semantic or pragmatic properties. Hopple (2003) observes that Burmese particles have been classified according to their distribution within grammatical constructions, yet it can be found in actual language use that there is a wide spectrum of particle functions ranging from wholly grammatical to highly semantic or pragmatic. Some particles are obligatory for indicating grammatical relations between words, clauses, or utterances, and therefore often receive grammatical labels such as *subject marker*, *sentence-final particle*, etc. In

order to illustrate the functions of Burmese particles, let us consider first example (1.1) in which all the so-called particles are marked in bold.

- (1.1) /Thu-**gá**¹ **Limerick-hma** sa-dàn thwà-phaq-**teh-le**/
 S/he-**sbj mkr** Limerick in paper go read **ptcl ptcl**
 'S/he went and read a paper in Limerick, *you know*.'

I am deliberately omitting specific terms for some of the particles in (1.1), except when it is possible to give an exact equivalent in English, or a widely recognized label is available. In fact many particles do not have a gloss that has been agreed upon by previous researchers.

Burmese particle	English equivalent	Syntactic function	Syntactically Obligatory (O)/ Non-Obligatory (NO)
/gá/	N/A	marks the subject	NO
/hma/	in / at	marks place without movement	O
/teh/	N/A	marks the end of the sentence	O
/le/	<i>you know</i>	No syntactic function	NO

Table 1: Explanation of particles from utterance (1.1)

It is debatable whether certain particles (e.g. /gá/) are syntactically obligatory or not, but this issue is to be revisited later with analyses of the actual data. On the other hand, particles such as /hma/ and /teh/ are obligatory²: /hma/ has a syntactic meaning equivalent to prepositions in English; /teh/ has been known as a 'verb sentence marker' (Okell, 1969) [henceforth VSM]. In general, every declarative affirmative statement in Burmese ends with a VSM of some type, which may or may not be followed by an additional particle with a particular discourse meaning, such as /le/. While VSMs are considered syntactically obligatory, many

¹ There are two variants in pronunciation of the subject marker: /ká/ and /gá/ depending on their phonetic environment.

² Note: particle /teh/ may be replaced by another VSM such as /ta/. [See further details in actual analyses in Ch. 5.3.5]

other particles like /le/ are seemingly non-obligatory. There are in fact a large number of particles, which seem non-obligatory, as they do not affect the propositional or conceptual meaning of utterances. They do, however, affect discourse meaning – an essential component of the communication process.

Different particles are associated with different discourse functions. For instance, by simply altering the particles, (1.1) conveys different discourse meanings while maintaining the truth conditionality of the utterance [cf. the utterances in Table 2].

Burmese utterance	Possible discourse meaning expressed with the particle in bold
/Thu-gá Limerick-hma sa-dàn thwà-phaq- teh-le /	<i>you know</i> (provisional translation)
/Thu-gá Limerick-hma sa-dàn thwà-phaq- teh /	Neutral statement: stating a fact
/Thu-gá Limerick-hma sa-dàn thwà-phaq- teh-táw /	Expressing surprise <i>or</i> admiration

Table 2: Utterance (1.1) with different discourse particles

I will demonstrate further with the set of examples in Table 3 how the use of non-obligatory particles can modulate the discourse meanings of a simple imperative utterance equivalent to "Come" or "Please come" in English. The word /la-/ means, "to come"; it occupies utterance-final position (unlike English, additional information such as "here" comes before the verb), and various particles are postpositionally attached to it, affecting the pragmatic or discourse meaning of the utterance while maintaining its propositional content. The absence of particles also indicates a discourse meaning, as can be seen in utterance 8 in Table 3 below, which would be heard as a bald (and quite imposing) directive. In addition, socio-cultural rules in Burmese dictate that some of the particles

are acceptable to be used by those higher in the hierarchy, by age and rank, to their inferiors only (e.g. 6 & 8), and some among equals (e.g. 3, 4 & 7).

Phonetic transcription	English equivalent (provisional translations) & possible Discourse functions
1. /di-go la-ba/	<i>Please come here.</i>
2. /di-go la-naw/	<i>(Please) come, OK?</i> [Softening a request.]
3. /di la-kwa/	<i>Come</i> [compelling attention. cf. English "boy! man! my dear!" etc.]
4. /di-go la-kwe/	<i>Come</i> [compelling attention, but more sympathetic and less peremptory than the previous one]
5. /di-go la-le/	<i>Please come.</i> [Used in intimate friendly conversation, means more like "Come along." Implying something like "you should have come here already and now I have to insist"].
6. /di la-zàn/	<i>Please come,</i> [but it is more like a command, and conveys urgency].
7. /di-go la-s'o/	<i>(Please) come.</i> [Implying "I'm telling you to come, so please do come", or "... so just come!"]
8. /la/!	<i>Come!</i> [More of a command, can sound harsh]

Table 3: Imperative statement "to come"+various particles expressing different discourse meanings

Many of the particles lack one to one equivalents in English, as their semantic value is highly dependent on the context - one of the main sources of difficulty for learners of Burmese. For instance, compare the English equivalent of /le/ in (1) and in utterance 5 from Table 3. Likewise, Burmese speakers may feel inadequate if they search for lexical equivalents in English to express discourse meanings that are typically expressed with particles in Burmese. As can be seen from the examples above, the absence of clear lexical equivalents in English may mean the following: similar discourse meanings in English may be expressed either with a lexical item in different syntactical environment, or even purely

structurally, or with an intonation pattern³.

If it is difficult to find exact equivalents of Burmese particles in English, it may also be due to the cultural differences of the speech communities involved. In the words of Gumperz (1978) and Blum-Kulka, House & Kasper (1989), cultures have been shown to vary greatly in their interactional styles, and culturally coloured interactional styles create culturally determined expectations and interpretative strategies. Blum-Kulka, House & Kasper (1989) further observe that there are cultural differences associated with the selection, distribution, and realization of various pragmatic and discourse functions. Following their claims, the absence of certain lexical items in English (such as lexical equivalents of Burmese particles), may be associated with the differences in interactional styles that are cultural specific. For instance, they discuss cultural differences in "the level of directness in speech act realization", citing a study by Tannen (1981) which shows speakers of American English to be more direct than speakers of Greek; and a study by House (1989) which reveals that German speakers tend to realize requests and complaints more directly than do English speakers. By the same token, in comparison to English, Burmese seems to use more affectively charged words and expressions, which might explain why it is not an easy task to accurately communicate the affective involvement evoked by the Burmese particles in English (translations). It is therefore important that discourse structures of the two languages under study be examined in light of their respective socio-cultural elements.

³ Note however that prosodic features are not within the scope of this study.

Although Burmese particles share many characteristics of discourse markers, as described in existing literature, Burmese is considered a high-context culture in which interpretation of an utterance depends heavily on contextual information, and non-propositional information which is expressed through the use of various particles. The choice of such particles is often influenced by "the speaker's relationship to the psychological, social, and situational context" (Maynard, 1997: 83). Moreover, Burmese, like Japanese (and some other Asian languages), compared to western cultures such as English, is richer in language-explicit means for expressing affective aspects of communication, particularly through the use of particles. Hence, it makes sense to claim that Burmese particles are more similar to 'interactional particles [henceforth IP], a term used by Maynard (1997), based on a model of Japanese discourse. Generally speaking, Maynard recognizes two types of IPs: 1) those that play a primarily grammatical function, marking grammatical relations within a sentence; 2) those expressing the speaker's judgment and attitude toward the message and the partner, which seems to be the case for Burmese. [cf. further details in Ch. 3].

In short, it is clear that while findings from previous work on discourse studies in English have contributed many valuable insights that are potentially applicable to Burmese, English models are not entirely suitable to define a framework for Burmese discourse. Moreover, current definitions of discourse markers (hereafter DMs) tend to be anglo- or euro-centric and too restrictive: they do not include affect-sensitive particles such as Maynard's IPs (for Japanese). Additionally, DMs have been

mostly studied in English, using models for English, which depend on the notion of DMs as freestanding morphemes realized as words or phrases. Furthermore, corpus-based approaches use "word" as their basic unit of analysis, but the notion of word is problematic for Burmese [cf. Chapter 4, 5 & 6 for further details], a language that uses a syllabic script, rather than an alphabetic script such as English. Therefore, this study also questions the notion of word as a unit of analysis for a corpus-based approach across languages. Last but not least, the main objective of this study is to find out how discourse functions that are frequently expressed with Burmese discourse marking particles can be realized in English, a language that lacks directly comparable items in its linguistic system.

1.3. Scope of the study

This study is concerned with a comparative analysis of discourse markers in Burmese and in English, based on corpora of spoken language in various genres, which are delivered both in spoken and written media. Traditional approaches of comparative studies that involve little-studied languages tend to base their analysis on the model of a better-studied language such as English, on which a considerable amount of research has been done. Following a traditional approach, Burmese DMs would probably be examined based on an English model such as that of Schiffrin or Fraser. This study, however, aims to start with an attempt to identify some discourse features typically associated with a set of lexical items, commonly known as "particles", that represent a prominent characteristic of spoken Burmese, and then find their matching equivalents in English.

Therefore the analysis of Burmese will essentially be descriptive in nature, but the comparative analyses will be made in reference to relevant theoretical issues in the existing literature.

In doing this comparative study, I have to take into account a few important factors as described below:

a) There is not yet a clear consensus on the definition of DMs in general, and they have been referred to with various terms, including 'connectives', 'fillers', 'hedges', 'hesitation markers', 'discourse particles', 'pragmatic markers', etc. I will be using what has become the most generic term, 'discourse markers', which may function for any of these terms mentioned above. It is possible to use the term 'discourse particles' as an alternative or interchangeably with 'discourse markers'. The term 'discourse particle' may even seem preferable given that the focus of a part of the study is on 'particles' in Burmese. However, it may be more appropriate to use the term 'discourse markers' in describing their equivalents in English since they are likely to be lexical items (which originate in quite different distributional classes) other than 'particles' such as 'conjunctions', 'adverbs' etc. Moreover, it is better to make a distinction between 'particles' as lexical items with grammatical features (e.g. the particles in English phrasal verbs), and 'discourse particles', which can belong to any grammatical category but are to be described in terms of their discourse functions.

b) There is relatively very little work done on Burmese, particularly on Burmese discourse structure. I am proposing here a different model/format of presenting the Burmese grammatical sketch (cf. Chapter

2) which is not simply superimposed on an existing grammar of a western language, or following the organization of syntactical structures in traditional grammars to date, but instead a model more appropriate for describing the discourse structure of Burmese.

c) The Burmese lexical items that I have chosen to examine are quite unique: unlike DMs in other languages such as English, where DMs are freestanding morphemes, discourse-marking particles in Burmese are mostly bound-morphemes. Some of them have a dual role but most of them receive their semantic/pragmatic value based on their context. Many of them have no one-to-one equivalent in English, and the difficulties of translatability for these lexical items are in fact one of the underlying motivations for this study. It should be noted, however, that the concern for this study is not translation itself.

d) Particles make up a very important portion of the Burmese grammar in the current literature, in which particles are usually described mainly in terms of their syntactic functions: for instance, in three most frequently used books on Burmese grammar, two in English, and one in French⁴. Okell's *Reference Grammar of Colloquial Burmese* (1969) has two volumes of which one is devoted mostly to the description of these particles. Okell and Allott (2001) have recently dedicated an entire book to these particles in their *Burmese/Myanmar dictionary of Grammatical*

⁴ I am limiting myself here to resources in only three languages that I am familiar with, namely Burmese, English and French. I am aware of the existence of materials on Burmese grammar in German, Japanese, Russian, and possibly Chinese, but they are beyond the scope of my study. Besides given the trends of reference materials on Burmese to date, it is reasonable to assume that most of these studies are likely to be presented either from a strictly theoretical linguistic perspective or mainly for pedagogical purposes for learners of Burmese, rather than descriptive in terms of their discourse structure.

Forms. Similarly, Bernot (2001) also has a large portion of her *Grammaire Birmane* focused on these particles in detail. Notwithstanding the valuable information provided in these reference materials, it is my impression that there is still ample room for a clear explanation of the discourse functions of these particles in a systematic way. The descriptions in current volumes are presented according to sample utterances, which are apparently based on specific situations, but there is seldom sufficient information on the context.

It can be concluded perhaps that although these scholars have noticed the situation-dependent nature of particles, there is yet a need for a more systematic description of Burmese discourse structure through the use of particles. While traditional grammars describe them mainly in terms of their syntactic functions, this study aims to discover the management system of discourse in Burmese through the use of particles, using a corpus-based approach within a framework of discourse studies. Findings of the Burmese data will be compared to items in existing corpora in English with similar discourse functions, in order to find out if there are matching pairs of discourse marking particles in Burmese and DMs in English. In sum, the main objectives of this comparative study are 1) to identify discourse functions that are typically associated with a set of particles in spoken Burmese of different genres; 2) describe them as discourse marking particles and indicate their possible equivalents in English in terms of their discourse features; and finally 3) to determine how these findings justify or validate a discourse theory which is Burmese originated rather than English.

1.4. Organization of the study

The rest of this study is divided into seven chapters. Chapter two gives a brief account of the Burmese linguistic system: the historical background and a grammatical sketch in relation to aspects that are relevant to its discourse structure, and in comparison to English. Chapter three focuses on a review of the literature on spoken discourse, including English and other languages. Description of the data and an outline of the study are provided in Chapter four, followed by the analysis of the Burmese data in Chapters five and six, and English data in Chapter seven. In addition, more specific research questions and goals of the analysis are defined in Chapter five, and findings of the Burmese analysis are discussed and recapitulated in Chapter six. In Chapter seven, a specific comparative analytical framework is presented, followed by the discussion of the findings from the English data, in relation to the findings of the Burmese data. The thesis ends with concluding remarks in Chapter eight, where the initial hypotheses and research questions will be re-examined, where the success or otherwise of the thesis is evaluated and directions for further research put forward.

Chapter 2

The Burmese Language

2.1. General Background

Burmese is the official national language of the *Union of Myanmar*, previously known as *Burma*. Since the current government's decision to change the name in 1989, there have been ongoing debates and confusion – mainly for English speakers – regarding the use of the two names. Putting aside political issues, from a linguistic perspective, this variation in the name of the country reflects an important aspect of its language: Burmese makes a distinction between two "styles" of language use, namely "colloquial" and "literary". The English word "Burma" or "Burmese" is /bə-ma/ in colloquial, and /myə-ma/ in literary Burmese, and the two terms are usually used with another word attached. To refer to the language, /bə-ma/ or /myə-ma/ is followed by another lexical item /zə-gà/ "spoken language" or /za/⁵ "written language"; thus /myə-ma zə-gà/ and /bə-ma zə-gà/ for *spoken Burmese*; or /bə-ma za/ and /myə-ma za/ for *written Burmese* [cf. Table 4].

<i>Literary Bse</i>	<i>Colloquial Bse</i>	<i>Eng equivalent</i>
myə-ma + zə-gà	bə-ma + zə-gà	(spoken) Burmese language
myə-ma + za	bə-ma + za	(written) Burmese language
myə-ma + pyi	bə-ma + pyi	Burma (country)
myə-ma + nain-ngan	bə-ma + nain-ngan	Burma (country)
myə-ma + lu-myò	bə-ma + lu-myò	Burmese (nationality/ethnic origin)

Table 4: /bə-ma/ and /myə-ma/ as an adjective in Burmese

⁵ A variant pronunciation is /sa/, in a different phonetic environment.

The term "Burmese" is sometimes preferred over "Myanmar" in English, especially as an adjective, for practical and historical reasons, as is the case here. I will use "Myanmar" to refer to the country, and "Burmese" as a generic adjective to refer to the language, culture, speech communities, etc.

2.2. Colloquial and literary Burmese

Colloquial and literary Burmese are also known as informal and formal, or spoken and written Burmese respectively (Allott, Herbert & Okell, 1989), which seems to be a dominant lay perception as well. Hughes (1996) makes a distinction between medium, channel and mode in describing spoken and written discourse. In Hughes' terms, while the spoken/written distinction is based on the channel or medium in which a text is delivered, the distinction between colloquial and literary Burmese is associated with the mode or style of language use. In this study, I will use all three variations interchangeably, but later in the analyses, which deal with the comparative description between Burmese and English, I will mainly use spoken/written, which seems to be the most generic term.

As many linguists (e.g., Biber 1988; Hughes 1996; McCarthy 1993) point out, there is no clear dividing line between the spoken and written discourse, and it is often hard to generalize the co-occurring linguistic features that distinguish between all written texts and all spoken texts (in English). This fuzziness of the division between spoken and written discourse is also true for Burmese, as observed by Allott, Herbert & Okell (1989). Nonetheless, while the distinction between two styles

seems largely stylistic in English, distinguishing linguistic features are a lot more prominent in Burmese. The difference between the two styles is more immediately striking (than dialectal differences) particularly to the foreigner (Allott 1985; Allott, Herbert & Okell 1989). These two styles of Burmese can seem like two different languages for non-native speakers because their distinguishing linguistic features are a lot more divergent than, for example, those in colloquial and formal English.

For native speakers on the other hand, the choice between the two styles is often intuitive, and is closely associated with genres and registers of the discourse. Generally speaking, literary Burmese is reserved for formal speech, academic prose, and most communication for official/administrative purposes; colloquial Burmese is typically used in spontaneous as well as prescribed conversation (such as dialogues in fiction), and other informal discourse. Personal letters used to be written in literary style, but the trend is shifting more and more to colloquial style. While newspapers, especially those sponsored by the government, commonly use literary style, broadcast news, non-government newspapers, and popular magazines, especially those in the magazine or 'fanzine' genre, which aim to imitate conversational style (McCarthy 1993), are likely to use colloquial Burmese. Narrative sections in fiction or radio plays may appear in either style, or a mixture of both.

Uses that would once have been regarded as strictly colloquial are increasingly being used and accepted in what is ostensibly literary Burmese, and since about the mid-1960s there has been an effort on the part of some writers to have the written style abandoned altogether in favour of the spoken style. But opposition to this move is still strong for, to the orthodox, material on serious matters written

about in the colloquial style [sic. that] lacks gravity, authority and dignity.

Allott, Herbert & Okell (1989: 6)

If it is difficult to generalize clearly which style is used for which type of discourse, it is not the main concern of this study. The two styles are easily recognizable in Burmese; their difference involves routine choice of lexical items, especially in the choice of particles, which I will illustrate with examples in Table 5.

Literary Burmese	Colloquial Burmese	Word class	English equivalent
1./ ə-myi/	/na-meh/	Noun	<i>name</i>
2./s'aun-yweq/	/louq/	Verb	<i>to do</i>
3./pyaw-shwin/	/pyaw/	(Adjectival) verb	<i>to be happy</i>
4./t'o/	/èh-di/	Demonstrative	<i>that</i>
5./myi-thu/	/beh-thu/	Interrogative pronoun	<i>who</i>
6./hú/	/ló/	Particle: marks end of reported speech	<i>that</i>
7./twin/	/mha/	Particle: marks N location	<i>in, on, at</i>
8./thi/	/teh/	Particle: marks end of affirmative sentence (realis)	∅
9./myi/	/meh/	Particle: marks end of affirmative sentence (irrealis)	∅

Table 5: Literary and colloquial versions of Burmese lexical items

Furthermore, data from the actual language use indicates that spoken Burmese is richer in particle use. As McCarthy (1993) notes, DMs are significant clues in deciding whether a given text fits the spoken language better than the written. It is the particles that are typically found in colloquial Burmese, such as those in the second column, that constitute the main scope of this study. The objective is to investigate their usage in selected genres of colloquial Burmese with the purpose of identifying them as DMs. That said, it is clear that different sets of particles are

typically associated with colloquial and literary Burmese, and this variation can be explained in relation to the historical background.

2.3. Historical background

Burmese belongs to the *Burmish* sub-branch of the *Lolo-Burmese* branch, which is one of the four major branches of the larger *Tibeto-Burman* family. Burmese, along with Tibetan, the dominant language of Tibet, is one of the two most important languages of the Tibeto-Burman branch, which includes an undetermined number of smaller languages spoken in Pakistan, India, Nepal, Sikkim, Bhutan, Bangladesh, Myanmar, northern and western Thailand, and the Yunnan and Sichuan (Szechwan) provinces of China (Ehrhardt, 1998). Although spoken Burmese belongs to the Tibeto-Burman language family, Burmese script is an adaptation of *Mon* (spoken by the Mon people, a major ethnic group in southern Myanmar today), which in turn derives from *Pali* - the language of Theravada Buddhism - and ultimately from the *Brahmi* script of eastern India – a phenomenon similar to the influence of Latin on the European languages including English (Okell, 1994, Wheatley 2001).

As Wheatley (1990) explains, from the earliest times, Burmese has been in contact with the speech or writing of other languages (Mon, Pali and Pyu in the 12th and 13th centuries, Europeans such as Portuguese, Dutch, British and French between the 16th and late 18th centuries), and many of these languages have left their mark. Broadly speaking, the influence of languages in which written Burmese originated (e.g. Pali) seems to manifest mainly in literary Burmese and its syntactic structure.

whereas the influence of other languages is more visible in lexical items such as loan words⁶ [see also 2.5.2.3]. Over the centuries, the spoken language has evolved greatly but the written language has not changed in parallel: pronunciation of many words has changed whereas the word order and grammatical categories remain relatively stable, and so does the orthography. As a result, modern Burmese is quite different in its spoken form or colloquial style from its written form or literary style; and there are discrepancies between the orthography and pronunciation, which are more significant in Burmese than in English.

2.4. Burmese script

Burmese uses a script which is syllabic in nature. The Burmese alphabet is made up of 33 */eq-k'ə -ya/* (English equivalent of "letters" and therefore I will use the term "letters" in favour of uniformity and simplicity) and various "symbols" representing vowel sounds and tones. Each letter of the alphabet represents a syllable, and all of them except one – namely letter *ခ* */á/* - represent consonant sounds. Words can be formed through the use of the letters alone – in which case, their phonetic value is realized with the default vowel */á/* – or letters in combination with various symbols representing vowel sounds and tones. I will illustrate this with the letter 'စ', which represents */s/* sound. When 'စ' is used by itself, i.e. without other accompanying symbols, it is pronounced */sá/*. When it is

⁶ To my knowledge, the historical account of the evolution of particles for spoken Burmese is not well-documented, but it is not within the scope of this study.

accompanied by another symbol, or in combination with other letters, its phonetic and/or semantic value may change [cf. Table 6].

Letters and symbols ⁷	Bse word	Phonetic transcript	Eng meaning
၀	၀	/sá/	<i>to begin</i>
၀+၆န	၀၆န	/sə-ne/	<i>Saturday</i>
၀+နိ၀်	၀နိ၀်	/sə-niq/	<i>system</i>
၀+ — + —	၀ိ	/so/	<i>to be wet</i>
၆ + ၀ + — + င်	၆၀င်	/saun/	<i>blanket</i>

Table 6. Illustration of Burmese writing system using letter ၀ /sa/

As can be noticed from the examples in Table 6, unlike English, Burmese is not necessarily written with a sequence of letters progressing from left to right; symbols for vowels may be written before, above, below, or on the right of the letter representing an initial consonant. However, Burmese texts are written from left to right (as opposed to right to left as in Arabic, or vertically as in Japanese). Spaces separate phrases or clauses, and rarely words. In fact, it is difficult to define a word in Burmese using the western notion of word because of the syllabic nature of Burmese – another source of difficulty in using word as a unit of analysis for a corpus-based approach.

2.5. Linguistic sketch

"Burmese differs markedly from Western European languages in a number of ways. It has no agreement, for example, either with gender or number; words are formed by compounding rather than derivation; the Burmese equivalent of prepositions follow the word they modify rather than precede it; verbs are always placed at the end of a sentence;

⁷ The dash [–] represents space for the letter.

relative clauses always precede their head and classifiers or numeratives are used extensively".

[Allott, Herbert & Okell, 1989]

2.5.1. Sound system

Burmese is commonly known as a tonal language (i.e. pitch and pitch contour can change the meanings of words) with three or four tones, depending on the system of categorization: some identify three tones - *low, middle* and *high*; or *creaky, level*, and *heavy falling* (Campbell, 1991) - which correspond closely to the Burmese orthographic system; some use four tonal distinctions - *creaky, low, high*, and *checked* (Wheatley, 1990, 2001); or *level, heavy, creaky*, and *stop* (Okell, 1969). The additional fourth tone is an abrupt falling tone that occurs before the glottal stop final. For this study, I will distinguish three tones in the transcription of Burmese texts that is in line with the orthographic system of Burmese.

Burmese makes a phonemic distinction between *aspirated* and *unaspirated* consonants, unlike English and other European languages. For example, /kà/ with an unaspirated /k/ means *car* but /k'à/ with an aspirated /k'/ means *bitter*. A limited number of these aspirated-unaspirated pairs can denote *transitive-intransitive* or *causative-stative* pairs of verbs. Compare: /pyeq/ with unaspirated /p/ for *to be broken (not functional)* and /p'yeq/ with aspirated /p'/ for *to break (to destroy)*.

Like most Tibeto-Burman languages, Burmese shows a tendency toward monosyllabicity. Each syllable has C₁ (initial consonant), V (vowel) and T (tone) always present. Syllables can be full, i.e. with all components receiving their full phonetic value [cf. e.g. 1, 4-5. Table 6], or

reduced to a *schwa* /ə/ in certain phonetic environments [cf. e.g. 2-3. Table 6]. In addition, when syllables are pronounced in utterances, their phonetic values change via the process of 'juncture', i.e. voicing, weakening, or induced creaky tone (Okell, 1969; Wheatley, 1990, 2001). For example, polite particle /pa/ is pronounced /pa/ as in /mə-houq-**pa**-bù/ *It's not true* and /ba/ as in /la-**ba**/ *Please come*. Vowels may be pronounced with a final glottal stop⁸ as in /houq/ *to be true*, or nasalized as in /hìn/ *curry*. However, final consonants are not pronounced like in English, and consonant clusters or diphthongs are absent in the Burmese phonology. As a result, loan words with such phonetic values are usually pronounced with an extra vowel inserted between the consonants or the diphthongs to create a new syllable, as illustrated in Table 7.

Eng word	equivalent in Bse pronunciation
<i>black</i>	/bə-leq/
<i>air con</i>	/èh-yà-kùn/
<i>film</i>	/p'ə -lin/
<i>bus car</i>	/baq-sə -kà/

Table 7. Loan words and their phonetic equivalents in Burmese

As the saying goes in Burmese - "correctness is for written language, pronunciation is for spoken language"⁹ – there is a more significant discrepancy (than in English for example) between Burmese orthography and the way words are pronounced in actual language use. Furthermore, stress is not typically marked for individual words nor for emphasis in an utterance. However, intonation patterns are certainly

⁸ /q/ represents glottal stop, a convention used by Okell and many scholars working on Burmese.

⁹ Original saying in Burmese: ရေးတော့အမှန်၊ ဖတ်တော့အသံ /yé-táw ə-than p'aq-táw ə-mhan/

present in natural speech, just like other languages. Since prosodic features are not within the scope of this study, given the relative stability of orthography and the complex nature of the sound system of Burmese, corpus data will be transcribed in 'standardized' orthography, in order to maintain a maximum consistency in transcription and efficiency in accurate frequency counting for analysing the corpora.

2.5.2. Lexical items

For the purpose of my study to identify DMs in Burmese, I will describe the lexical items under two broad categories: 1) **those that can stand as free morphemes** – i.e. items that have an independent lexical meaning, although a verb in this category is always used with a particle attached, except for some imperatives¹⁰; and 2) **bound lexical items** which always co-occur with other items such as "particles" that serve grammatical as well as discourse functions – the focus of this study.

2.5.2.1. Lexical items that can stand as free morphemes

Under this category, we find grammatical properties indicating classes that also occur in Indo-European languages, (in particular English) such as nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs, which are classified under "open-class items" by Quirk et al. (1985: 2.40). They can be divided into three main sub-categories, namely **nouns**, **pronouns**, and **verbs**, as described in sections 2.5.2.1.1, 2.5.2.1.2 and 2.5.2.1.3 below, respectively.

¹⁰ Examples drawn from the present data of naturally spoken Burmese indicate that even imperatives are likely to be followed by one or more of the discourse marking particles [cf. Ch.1 Table 3]

In addition, interjections and idiomatic expressions [cf. Table 8] can also be included in this category, as they usually function holistically and have a non-compositional structure.

Category	Burmese	Phonetic	English equivalent
Interjection	အမလေး:	/ə-mə-lè/	Expressing shock [Literally <i>O mother!</i> = <i>Oh my God!</i>]
Interjection	အံ့မာ	/am-ma/	Expressing disbelief [and anger?] about someone's guts and cheekiness [= <i>How dare (he)!</i>]
Idiomatic expressions	သွားမယ်နော်။	/thwà-meh-naw/	Good-bye [literally " <i>I'm going, OK?</i> " or " <i>May I go?</i> "]
Idiomatic expressions	လိုလိုမယ်မယ်	/lo-lo-meh-meh/	" <i>Just in case . . .</i> (I need it)"

Table 8. Interjections and idiomatic expressions.

2.5.2.1.1. NOUNS

Nouns may be monosyllabic or polysyllabic shown in Table 9.

	Burmese	Phonetic	English
Monosyllabic noun	အိမ်	/ein/	<i>house</i>
Monosyllabic noun	မီး	/mì/	<i>fire</i>
Polysyllabic noun	လှေကား	/hle-gà/	<i>stairs</i>
Polysyllabic noun	ဖိနပ်	/p'ə-naq/	<i>footwear</i>

Table 9. Monosyllabic and polysyllabic nouns

Polysyllabic nouns are compound nouns that are formed by various combinations of nouns, verbs, and particles as illustrated in Table 10-13.

Burmese	Phonetic	English equivalent
အ	/ə/	N forming prefix
+ချစ်	+/k'yiq/	<i>to love</i>
=အချစ်	=/ə-k'yiq/	<i>love (N)</i>

Table 10. Compound noun: Particle+N

Burmese	Phonetic	English equivalent
ကစား-	/gə-zà-/	<i>to play</i>
+ စရာ	+ /zə-ya/	<i>particle</i>
= ကစားစရာ	= /gə-zà-zə-ya/	<i>toy (N)</i>

Table 11. Compound noun: V + Particle.

Burmese	Phonetic	English equivalent
လှေကား	/hle-gà/	<i>stairs</i>
+ခါတ်	+ /daq/	<i>something mechanical/ chemical or electrical</i>
=ခါတ်လှေကား	=/daq-hle-gà/	= <i>lift (elevator)</i>

Table 12. Compound noun: N + N

Burmese	Phonetic	English equivalent
သောက်-	/thauq-/	<i>to drink</i>
+ရေ	+ /ye/	<i>water</i>
=သောက်ရေ	= /thauq-ye/	<i>drinking water</i>

Table 13. Compound noun: V + N

When numerals are used with quantified nouns, they are usually expressed with numbers attached by lexical items known as *classifiers*. Different classifiers are required for different categories of nouns according to a salient feature of the nominal referent such as shape (e.g. /k'yaq/ for flat things as in /paun-moún 2 k'yaq/ 2 *slices of bread*; /yauq/ for people as in /s'ə -ya 2 yauq/ 2 *teachers*; /kaun/ for animals as in /weq 5 kaun/ 5 *pigs*, etc.)

2.5.2.1.2. PRONOUNS

In Burmese, there are equivalents of pronouns that are used in Indo-European languages such as *I, you, he, she, they* for /kyə-ma/ or /kyə-naw/; /shin/ or /k'in-byà/¹¹; /thu/; /thu-má/¹²; /thu-dó/, respectively. However, the use of pronouns is culturally loaded, in a way that is more complex than the mere distinction between formal and informal such as *vous* and *tu* in French, or *sie* and *du* in German, for example. Arguably,

¹¹ Burmese pronouns, in particular for the first and second persons, are gender-specific: the first one is for male speakers and the second for female speakers.

¹² In practice, 'thu' is used as a third person pronoun for both *he* and *she*.

Burmese pronouns have their own discourse functions. For example, the use of /dìn/ instead of /thu/ for a third person pronoun *he* or *she* expresses the speaker's anger towards the person in question, as shown in (2.1) below.

(2.1) **Dìn-gá** di-lo pyàw-thə-là.
He sbj mkr like this say Q ptcl
*Did **he** say (like) that? [expresses anger]*

Thu-gá di-lo pyàw-thə-là.
He sbj mkr like this say Q ptcl
*Did **he** say (like) that? [neutral]*

Moreover, the use of proper names in a pronoun-like way is also a common characteristic in Burmese societies, and represents an important discourse feature of spoken Burmese, as the choice of pronoun is made according to the cultural norms and their discourse functions. For example, the use of one's own proper name as a pronoun is a common practice for a female speaker with her friends and family members of older age. For a male speaker however, such usage is unlikely as it is considered too childish or may even seem "sissy". A mother may refer to herself as /me me/ *mother* in a normal situation with her children. In anger, however, she may switch to the proper pronoun /nga/ *I* which can be condescending, and certainly expressing anger. On the other hand, there are families in which the use of /nga/ as a first person pronoun is commonly practiced, in which case the anger may have to be expressed by a different means.

Another interesting aspect regarding the use of Burmese pronouns is their absence, especially in spoken discourse, compared with a language

like English. Since Burmese is a language in which subject omission is a common practice, subject pronouns are often unnecessary. Object pronouns can also be omitted, especially for the second person, as shown in Table 14.

Burmese	Phonetic	English
အမေ့ကို သတိပေးထားတယ်။	/ ə-mé-ko thə-tí -pè-t'à-teh/	<i>(I)'ve warned Mother.</i> [subject pronoun omitted]
အိမ်စာ လုပ်ပြီးပြီလား။	/ein-za louq pì-bi-là/	<i>Have (you) finished the homework ?</i> [both subject and object pronoun omitted]

Table 14. The omission of pronouns in Burmese

In addition, when English uses stress to imply reproach as in "You turned off the TV", or to express self-defence as in "I don't know how to do it", such discourse functions can be realized in Burmese with a specific particle following a pronoun¹³, as shown in Table 15. This is a good example of the kind of particles that I am particularly interested in for a comparative analysis between Burmese and English DMs.

Burmese	Phonetic	English equivalent & explanation
ခင်ဗျားပဲတီဘီကို ပိတ်လိုက်တာပဲ။	/k'in-byà- bè ti-bi-go peiq-laiq-ta-bè/	<i>Only you (=no one else) turned off the TV. (You yourself turned off the TV)</i>
ကျမကမှ မလုပ်တတ်တာ။	/kya-má- ká-mhá mə-louq-taq-ta/	<i>As for me, I don't know how to do it. (If I didn't do it, it's not my fault, or nor for lack of willingness)</i>

Table 15. The use of pronoun + particle for emphasis

2.5.2.1.3. VERBS

Burmese verbs can be divided into **non-stative verbs**, i.e. verbs that express action or event (cf. Table 16.1) and **verbs that express condition or state**, which are in fact equivalent to adjectives in English

¹³ Note: this is not the only way of expressing such discourse functions: for example, a different particle may be used in a different syntactical environment.

(cf. Table 16.2). Syntactical structures of the equivalent of English verbs and adjectives are the same in Burmese. Some linguists employ the terms verbs and adjectival verbs, following the model of English grammatical classes. Just like nouns, both types of verbs may be monosyllabic or polysyllabic. While all monosyllabic verbs are simple verbs, polysyllabic verbs may be simple or compound verbs, which may be formed through a combination of noun and a verb, two simple verbs, or a simple verb and a compound verb. Some compound verbs are strictly used in formal or literary Burmese, and it is a common practice to use the shorter version of the same word in colloquial Burmese. These are known as *pleonastic* verbs in linguistic terms, and described by Okell (1969) as "doubled verbs". Okell explains that they are "disyllabic ordinary compound verbs", usually found in formal or literary contexts, where one of its members alone could have carried the meaning equally well [cf. Section 2.2. Table 5.3]. Table 16 summarizes the major categories of Burmese verbs.

Type of verb	Bse	Phonetic	English equivalent
1.Non-stative	သွား- ထိုင်-	/thwà-/ /t'ain-/	<i>go</i> <i>sit</i>
2.V expressing condition or state	လှ- ကြောက်-	/lhá-/ /kyauq-/	<i>to be pretty</i> <i>to be afraid</i>
3.Monosyllabic	ရှက်- သိ-	/sheq-/ /thí-/	<i>to be shy</i> <i>know</i>
4.Polysyllabic	ကစား- အောက်မေ့-	/kə-zà-/ /auq-mé-/	<i>play</i> <i>think/miss (someone)</i>
5.Polysyllabic: one part with related meaning	နေ+ထိုင်-	/ne+/t'ain-/	<i>live+sit = live</i>
6.Polysyllabic: both parts unrelated meaning	က+စား-	/kə+/sà-/	<i>dance+eat = play</i>
7.Polysyllabic: pleonastic	ပျော်+ရွှင်- ပြော+ဆို-	/pyaw+shwin-/ /pyàw+s'o-/	<i>happy+happy=happy</i> <i>speak/say+say=say</i>
8.Simple verb	ပင်ပန်း- ဆွေးနွေး-	/pin-bàn-/ /s'wè-nwè-/	<i>to be tired</i> <i>discuss</i>
9.Compound verb: N + V	စိတ်+ပူ- လမ်းလျှောက်-	/seiq+pu-/ /làn+shauq-/	<i>mind+hot=to be worried</i> <i>road+walk=walk</i>
10.Compound verb: N + V	သတိ+ထား- ဆင်ခြင်+သုံးသပ်	/tha-tí+/t'à-/ /s'in-k'yin-/+ /thouñ-thaq-/	<i>care+keep=to be careful</i> <i>consider+analyze= contemplate</i>

Table 16. Summary of verbs

With the exception of imperative utterances, verbs in Burmese cannot stand alone: they are attached by a particle that indicates the utterance type such as affirmative statement, negative statement, or interrogatives, as shown in Table 17.

Type of utterance	Burmese	Phonetic	English
Affirmative statement	နားလည်တယ်။	/nà-leh-teh/	<i>(I) understand.</i>
Negative statement	နားမလည်ဘူး။	/nà-mə-leh-bù/	<i>(I) don't understand.</i>
Interrogative	နားလည်သလား။	/nà-leh-thə-là/	<i>Do (you) understand?</i>

Table 17. Verbs in different utterance types

Reduplication of stative verbs forms manner adverbials in spoken Burmese, and adverbials usually precede verbs. For instance, /p'yè/ *slow* can be reduplicated to form an adverb /p'yè p'yè/ *slowly*. Adverbials may also be formed by using onomatopoeic words in combination with particles, or with a set of particles (e.g. particle /tə/ with onomatopoeic /hà-hà/ for laughing sound as in /tə-hà-hà/ for *with laughter*).

2.5.2.1.4. Absence of verb *to be*

The English copular verb *to be* is non-existent in Burmese, especially in spoken language. As a result, sentences that normally require the copula are expressed with different syntactic structure in Burmese as follows:

- for noun attributes, two NPs are placed side by side - E.g. NP Subject Pronoun + NP noun attribute [cf. Table 18.1].
- English adjectives are expressed with adjectival verbs (verbs expressing condition or state), following the same syntactic structure as verbs [cf. 2.5.1.3. Table 16.2].

In literary Burmese or a more formal register of spoken Burmese, the equivalent of English verb *to be* is often expressed with dummy verb *to be*

/p'yiq-/ to happen¹⁴. For example, consider a sentence *He is a student* in spoken Burmese and in literary Burmese, as illustrated in Table 18.1 and 18.2 respectively.

Spoken vs. literary style	Burmese	Phonetic	English + comments
1.Spoken	သူက ကျောင်းသားပါ။	/thu-ká kyaùn-thà-ba/	<i>He+student</i> [No verb]
2.Literary	သူက ကျောင်းသား ဖြစ်ပါတယ်။	/ thu-ká kyaùn-thà p'yiq-pa-teh/	<i>He+student+</i> <i>"happen"</i> [dummy copula].
3.Spoken	ဒီစာက ကျွန်မ စာပါ။	/di-sa-ká kyə-má- sa-ba/	<i>This letter+my</i> <i>letter</i> [No V]
4.Literary	ဤစာသည် ကျွန်မ စာ ဖြစ်ပါသည်။	/I-sa-thi kyə-má-sa p'yiq-pa-thi/	<i>This letter+my</i> <i>letter+</i> <i>"happen"</i> [dummy copula]

Table 18. Verb to be in spoken and literary Burmese

In the absence of the copula, only non-stative verbs can occur in imperative utterances in Burmese. For verbs that express condition or state such as /lein-ma-/ to be good or /teiq-/ to be quiet, when they are used in imperatives, they may co-occur with a non-stative verb such as /ne-/ meaning to live or to stay, as shown in Table 19.1 & 19.2. On the other hand, we can probably argue that some verbs in this category do not require the verb /ne-/ in negative imperatives [e.g. consider the verb /kyauq/ to be afraid and /sheq-/ to be shy in Table 19.3 & 19.4], but their occurrences in positive imperatives such as /kyauq-pa/ *Please be afraid!* or /sheq-pa/ *Please be shy!* seem unlikely in natural spoken discourse.

¹⁴ This dummy verb was probably imposed in Burmese during the process of scholars trying to invent literary Burmese based on Indic languages in which the verb *to be* exists in their grammar.

Burmese	Phonetic	English
1.လိမ်လိမ်မာမာ နေပါ။	/lein-lein-ma-ma ne-ba/	<i>to be well-behaved</i> ¹⁵ + <i>live/stay</i> ="Be good!"
2.တိတ်တိတ် နေပါ။	/teiq-teiq ne-ba/	<i>to be quiet</i> + <i>live/stay</i> = "Be quiet!"
3.မကြောက်ပါနဲ့။	/mə-kyauq-pa-nèh/	V (<i>to be afraid</i>) in negative structure: /mə+V+pa-nèh/= "Don't be afraid!"
4.မရှက်ပါနဲ့။	/mə-sheq-pa-nèh/	V (<i>to be shy</i>) in negative structure: /mə+V+pa-nèh/= "Don't be shy!"

Table 19. Verb *to be* in imperatives

2.5.2.2. Bound lexical items

Lexical items under this category share features of those classified as "closed class items" or function words as described by Quirk et al. (1985). According to the *Dictionary of Language Teaching & Applied Linguistic* (1992), function words are defined as "words which have little meaning on their own, but which show grammatical relationship in and between sentences (grammatical meaning)" (p. 81). Also known as *form words, empty words, functors, grammatical words, structural words, structure words*, function words in English include, amongst other classes, auxiliary verbs, conjunctions, prepositions, and determiners. I would therefore propose a tentative alternative term "function words" in a broad sense to describe bound lexical items in this section, although this term is disputable and to be used with caution. I am by no means using the term

¹⁵ While a literal translation of "Be good" or "Sois sage" in French, is /lein-ma-pa/, this utterance is not likely to occur in natural spoken Burmese discourse. Adjectival verbs such as /lein-ma-/ "*to be well-behaved*", or /teiq-/ "*to be quiet*" in this example, are usually doubled and function as adverbs, when they co-occur with the verb *ne* that is used in place of the English verb *be*.

as a definitive proposal (for a new Burmese grammar), which is beyond the scope of the present study.

Included in this category are lexical items that do not belong to major word class categories such as nouns, pronouns and verbs that are described in 2.5.2.1. Like function words in English, these items in Burmese are used to show the relationship in or between sentences, but they are also often used for discourse functions, i.e. beyond-sentence functions, rather than grammatical functions alone. Unlike English function words, they are all bound morphemes; i.e. they are not morphologically free forms¹⁶. In addition, it is not certain that they form a closed set, as their discourse meanings may change over time. Many of these function words do not have one-to-one equivalent in English: their semantic value is closely associated with their discourse functions, which will be explained in more detail later.

In traditional grammars, these bound lexical items are known as *particles*. They are usually described as bound morphemes that are predominantly suffixes, and have syntactical limitations. Okell (1969: 112) distinguishes three types of particles as follows [cf. Table 20]:

- (a) 'formatives' – they include prefixes, suffixes, and processes¹⁷, and are involved in the construction of (derived) words.

¹⁶ It is arguable that an item such as /hma/ is a morphologically free form, as the item by itself can express equivalents of English prepositions *in, on, at* [compare to another bound morpheme /teh/ that has no semantic value on its own]. Nevertheless, /hma/ is certainly a bound morpheme as it always co-occurs with another free standing morpheme.

¹⁷ By "processes" Okell means a function such as "repetition" which is distinguished from prefixes and suffixes, and he gives the following example: /myan/ means *be quick* and its derived word through repetition process /myan myan/ which means *quick, quickly* is a formative. In Okell's definition, "Formatives are attached to words to form derived words". It can be argued

- (b) 'markers' – are mostly suffixes, and indicate the relationship between expressions and are involved in the construction of phrases, clauses, and sentences. Okell further divides the markers into *verb-sentence marker*, *subordinate marker*, and *co-ordinate markers*, based on their grammatical functions.
- (c) 'postpositions' – are all suffixes, and indicate relationships between sentences, with emphasis, or with the speaker's attitude.

	Particle used	Derived word	Eng equivalent	In translation
a. Formatives	/ə/	/ə/+k'yiq/	ptcl+ <i>to love</i>	<i>love</i> (N)
b. Verb-sentence mkr	/teh/	/la-teh/	<i>come</i> +ptcl	<i>(He) came.</i>
b. Subordinate mkr	/lò/	/mè-lò/	<i>ask</i> +ptcl (<i>because</i>)	<i>because (he) asked</i>
b. Co-ordinate mkr	/néh/	/thà-néh thə-mì/	<i>son</i> +ptcl(<i>and</i>) <i>+daughter</i>	<i>son and daughter</i>
c. Post-positions	/naw/	/la-naw/	<i>come</i> +ptcl	<i>Come, OK?</i>

Table 20. Main categories of particles according to Okell (1969)

A close examination of natural spoken Burmese data suggests that Burmese particles, except for the formatives as described in (a), can serve grammatical as well as discourse functions. In this section, I will describe them in three main categories based on their syntactic positions: **post-verbal particles**, **post-nominal particles**, and **post-sentential particles**, which I intend to serve as a framework for the selection of particles to be investigated.

2.5.2.2.1. Post-verbal particles

Post-verbal particles are mostly auxiliary verbs that are comparable to English modal verbs such as *can*, *should*, *want to*, etc. Just like in

however, that /myan myan/ is an adverb, with a propositional meaning, and therefore is not considered under the category 'particle' in this study.

English, the meaning of these auxiliary verbs are "connected with degrees of certainty and degrees of necessity, obligation or desirability" (Carter, Hughes & McCarthy, 2000: p.183). Unlike English, however, Burmese auxiliary verbs take the post-verbal position, as shown in Table 21. in which auxiliary verbs are marked in bold.

Burmese word	Phonology	English equivalent	In English
လာ + နိုင်-	/la/ + /nain-/	come + can	<i>can come</i>
ပြော + သင့်-	/pyàw/+ /thín-/	say + should	<i>should say</i>
ဝယ် + ချင်-	/weh/+ /k'yin-/	buy + want to	<i>want to buy</i>

Table 21. Auxiliary verbs in Burmese

It is also true for English that the verb pairs in the last column cannot stand on their own; to have a minimally complete utterance in English, a subject needs to be added before the verb. In Burmese on the other hand, a suffix particle needs to be added after the verb, whereas the subject pronoun may be omitted, provided that it is recognizable from the context who the subject is. In fact, as was explained in 2.5.2.1.3. all Burmese verbs need a suffix particle attached in an utterance. In addition, there are some auxiliary verbs in Burmese that do not have a one-to-one equivalent in English, at least not in every context, as shown in Table 21. For example, /taq/ is a verb that "usually denotes some skills" (Okell & Allott, 2001) such as *know how to (do)*, *be skilled at (doing)*, *can (do)* or *be apt to*, *likely to (do)*; *(do) usually*, *be in the habit of (doing)*. (Okell, 1969); /p'ù/ means *to have V-d before*, *have experience of V-ing* or *have ever V-ed* (Okell & Allott, 2001) [cf. Table 22].

Burmese word	Phonology	English equivalent	In English
1.ဖတ် +တတ်-	/p'aq/+ /taq-/	read+ know how to	<i>know how to read</i>
2.[ဆေးလိပ်]သောက်+ တတ်-	/s'è-leiq thauq/ +/taq-/	[cigarette]drink + have the habit of	<i>usually smoke</i>
3.ရောက် + ဖူး-	/yauq/+ /p'ù-/	arrive+ have had the experience of	<i>have been to (place)</i>
4.ကြား + ဖူး-	/kyà/+ /p'ù-/	hear+ have had the experience of	<i>have heard (before)</i>

Table 22. Auxiliary verbs with no fixed meaning

On the other hand, some of the English modal verbs are expressed in a different syntactic structure in Burmese. For example, the modal verb *will* is expressed by the use of a specific particle in clause-final position [cf. Table 23. and see 2.5.2.2.3 for further details]

Burmese word	Phonology	English equivalent	In English
လာ + မယ်။	/la/+ /meh/	come + future sent. final particle	<i>will come</i>
လာ + မလာ့။	/la/+ /mə-là/	come + future question particle	<i>Will (someone) come?</i>

Table 23. English modal verbs in different syntactic structure in Burmese

2.5.2.2.2. Post-nominal particles

Following nouns or NPs, post-nominal particles may serve grammatical functions such as *subject-marker*, *object-marker*, conjunction, or an equivalent to English prepositions such as *in*, *at*, *from*, *to*, *in* etc. Table 24 represents examples of post-nominal particles (in bold) attached to nouns, and their English equivalents are given as if they were full sentences, i.e. additional verb phrases are included between parentheses.

Bse word	Phonology	Syntactical function	English equivalent
ဆရာမ+က	/s'ə-ya-má + ká /	subject marker	<i>The teacher (said).</i>
သူ့+ကို	/thú- + go /	object marker	<i>(Let's ask) him her.</i>
ရန်ကုန်+မှာ	/yan-goun + mha /	preposition "in"	<i>(They live) in Yangon.</i>
ကျမ + ဆီမှာ	/kyə-má + s'i- mha /	preposition "at someone's" (French "chez")	<i>(Will you stay) at my place?</i>
သမတ+နဲ့+ သူ့ဇနီး	/thə-mə-dá + néh + thú-zə-nì/	conjunction "and"	<i>The president and his wife (are coming).</i>

Table 24. Post-nominal particles

2.5.2.2.3. Post-sentential particles

Post-sentential particles can be sub-divided into **utterance final particles** and **question particles**, as illustrated in Tables 25 and 26 respectively. Utterance final particles occur at the end of the utterance, which may or may not be an essential part of the syntactic structure. Particles that are syntactically obligatory are marked with [*] in Table 25. For question particles, they are all obligatory for the interrogative structure.

Bse word	Phonology	Grammatical/ discourse function	English equivalent
1. လာ+မယ်။*	/la-meh/	irrealis statements (future)	<i>(They) will come.</i>
2. လာ+တယ်။*	/la-teh/	realis statements (non-future)	<i>(They) came.</i>
3. လာ+ပြီ။*	/la-bi/	point of realization or fulfilment has been reached	<i>(she) is coming (already).</i>
4. ဟုတ်တာ+ပေါ့။	/houq-ta-páw/	for emphasis: "of course, no doubt, naturally, I suppose"	<i>Of course it is.</i>
5. မှန်မှန်+ ပြော+စမ်း။	/hman-hman pyàw-sàn/	conveys urgency, strong wish	<i>(You'd better) tell the truth!</i>
6. ခေါ်လိုက်။	/k'aw-laiq/	minimizing time & effort involved: equivalent to "just"	<i>Call him (no lexical equivalent)</i>

Table 25. Utterance final particles

Bse word	Phonology	Grammatical function	In English
နေကောင်း + သလား။	/ne-kaùn-thə- là/	Yes/No question particle for realis (non-future)	<i>Are (you) well?</i>
လာ + မလား။	/la-mə-là/	Yes/No question particle for irrealis (future)	<i>Will (she) come?</i>
ဘယ်မှာ+ နေ+သလဲ။	/be-mha ne- thə-lèh/	question particle for seeking new information (Wh- questions) – (realis)	<i>Where do (you) live?</i>
ဘာ+စား+မလဲ။	/ba-sà-mə-lèh/	question particle for Wh-questions (irrealis)	<i>What will (you) eat?</i>

Table 26. Question particles

2.5.2.2.4. Discourse functions of particles

In a nutshell, one of the most prominent features of Burmese is its heavy use of particles: Burmese utterances are likely to have one or more of the particles described in 2.5.2.2. They are bound or semi-bound morphemes which are postpositionally attached to syntactic or lexical

units. Many of the particles seem non-obligatory in the syntactic structure, as they do not affect the propositional or conceptual meaning of utterances. Findings in the actual data indicate however that they do affect discourse meaning, such as providing important information on the part of the speaker regarding his/her attitude towards the message, the speech act itself, or the interlocutor. Different particles are associated with different discourse functions. For instance, by simply altering the particles, the utterance in Table 27 conveys different discourse meanings while maintaining the truth conditionality of the utterance. It is in fact the use of seemingly non-obligatory particles such as /le/ or /gá/ that is the concern of this study, as they all express important discourse meanings.

Burmese utterance	Possible discourse meaning expressed with the particle in bold
/Thu-gá Limerick-hma sa-dàn thwà-phaq- teh-le /	<i>you know</i> (provisional translation)
/Thu-gá Limerick-hma sa-dàn thwà-phaq- teh /	Neutral statement: stating a fact
/Thu-gá Limerick-hma sa-dàn thwà-phaq- teh-táw /	Expressing surprise <i>or</i> admiration

Table 27: Burmese utterance with different discourse particles

I demonstrate further with the set of examples in Table 28 how the use of (grammatically) non-obligatory particles can modulate the discourse meanings of a simple imperative utterance equivalent to *Come* or *Please come* in English. The word /la-/ means, *to come*; it occupies utterance-final position (unlike English, additional information such as *here* comes before the verb), and various particles are postpositionally attached to it, affecting the pragmatic or discourse meaning of the utterance while maintaining its propositional content. The absence of particles also indicates a discourse meaning, as can be seen in utterance 8, which would

be heard as a bald (and quite imposing) directive. In addition, socio-cultural rules in Burmese dictate that some of the particles are acceptable to be used by those higher in the hierarchy, by age and rank. to their inferiors only (e.g. 6 & 8), and some among equals (e.g. 3, 4 & 7).

Phonetic transcription	English equivalent (provisional translations) & possible Discourse functions
1. /di-go la-ba/	<i>Please come here.</i>
2. /di-go la-naw/	<i>(Please) come, OK?</i> [Softening a request.]
3. /di la-kwa/	<i>Come</i> [compelling attention. cf. English "boy! man! my dear!" etc.]
4. /di-go la-kweh/	<i>Come</i> [compelling attention, but more sympathetic and less peremptory than the previous one]
5. /di-go la-le/	<i>Please come.</i> [Used in intimate friendly conversation, means more like "Come along." Implying something like "you should have come here already and now I have to insist"].
6. /di la-zàn/	<i>Please come,</i> [but it is more like a command, and conveys urgency].
7. /di-go la-s'o/	<i>(Please) come.</i> [Implying "I'm telling you to come, so please do come", or " . . . so just come!"]
8. /la/!	<i>Come!</i> [More of a command, can sound harsh]

Table 28: Imperative statement "to come"+various particles expressing different discourse meanings.

Many of the particles lack one-to-one equivalents in English, as their semantic value is highly dependent on the context - one of the main sources of difficulty for learners of Burmese. For instance, compare the English equivalent of /le/ in Table 27 and in utterance 5 from Table 28. From a discourse perspective, it can be observed in naturally occurring language that the particles may serve as *discourse-connectors*, *confirmation-seekers*, *intimacy signals*, *topic-switchers*, *attitude markers*, or *hedging devices*, etc. In general, Burmese particles share many

characteristics of DMs, as described in the existing literature. [cf. further details in subsequent chapters]

2.5.2.3. Loan words

Loan words are found in the predictable fields such as technology, modern commodities, foreign concepts and philosophy, etc. As Bernot (1994) notes, although a majority of loan words come from Pali and modern Indian languages, those borrowed from English are large in number. Some are completely integrated in the Burmese lexicon, and thus can be found in the dictionaries, e.g. measurement terms such as /main/ *mile*, /ga-lan/ *gallon*; administrative positions such as /man-ne-ja/ *manager*, products of modern technology such as /kun-pyu-ta/ *computer*, etc. As the country is 'opening up' since the 90s, and with an increasing exposure to foreign cultures and modern technology, the number of loan words is expanding. As a result, although some loan words have not yet gained an official status, they are increasingly making their way into everyday language use, especially in colloquial Burmese, e.g. /jin pin/ *jean pants*, /bə-leq kaw-p'i/ *black coffee*, /paq-sə-pó/ *passport*, /naiq-kə-laq/ *night club*, etc.

Nouns constitute the largest portion of loan words in Burmese, and they may remain as free standing forms (e.g. *hamburger*, *visa*, *christian*, *democracy*, etc) or they may participate in compounding structure (e.g. /pə-laq-sə-tiq/ *plastic* + Bse /eiq/ *bag* for *plastic bag*; /s'o-sheh-liq/ *socialist* + Bse /wa-dá/ *ideology* for *socialism*). There are fewer examples

of loan words being used as verbs, and in most cases they are adapted to the syntactic structure of Burmese. For instance, English adjective *ready* may be used in combination with Burmese verb /p'yiq/ *to happen*, which is also used as a dummy verb *to be*, to express *to be ready* as in /yeh-di p'yiq-pi/ *I'm ready*; or /yeh-di-là/ *Are you ready* in which /là/ is a question particle. In terms of pronunciation however, all loan words are adapted to Burmese phonology, e.g. *air con*, *bus car*, etc. [cf. 2.5.1. Table 7]

2.5.3. Syntactic structure

Burmese is an SOV language, or more precisely a verb-final language, which essentially means that the VP i.e. the (main/lexical) verb – which is usually followed by one or more particles with grammatical as well as discourse functions - occupies the final position in the sentence or clause. All types of predicates including nominal predicates and stative as well as non-stative verbs occupy this clause-final position. The predicate is the only obligatory element of clause structure, or the overall syntactic structure of Burmese sentences, including interrogative sentences. The place of the subject and object is often interchangeable in the utterance, and it is very common in Burmese to have ellipsis of the subject or even the object, when its role is considered obvious from the context. Nonetheless, if the word order seems relatively free, it is not without significance: different word order can express different discourse information such as expressing topic and comment.

Syntactic relationships are often expressed by particles following the noun, the verb or the whole utterance. Burmese does not use a tense

system: instead "with some exceptions, final verb phrases are followed by . . . particles that signal . . . features of polarity and mood, or polarity, mood and aspect" (Wheatley, 1991: 851). It makes aspectual distinctions between *realis* (non-future) and *irrealis* (future) and *punctative* (which expresses change of state). Different types of utterances are formed through the use of particles as shown in Table 29.

Sentence type	Burmese	Phonetics	English equivalent
Affirmative statement (<i>realis</i>)	မိုးရွာ+တယ်။	/mò-ywa-teh/	<i>rain+ptcl = It rains It rained.</i>
Affirmative statement (<i>irrealis</i>)	မိုးရွာ+မယ်။	/mò-ywa-meh/	<i>rain+ptcl = It will rain.</i>
Affirmative statement (<i>punctative</i>)	မိုးရွာ+ပြီ။	/mò-ywa-byi/	<i>rain+ptcl= It's (already started) raining.</i>
Negative statement (<i>realis</i>)	မ+ပျော်+ဘူး။	/mə-pyaw-bù/	<i>ptcl+happy+ptcl = (He's) not happy.</i>
Negative statement (<i>irrealis</i>)	ပျော်မှာ +မဟုတ်ဘူး။	/pyaw-mha mə-houq-bù/	<i>happy+ptcl + it is not = (He) will not be happy.</i>
Question (<i>realis</i>)	ရှင်းပြသလား။	/shìn-pyá- thə-là/	<i>explain+ptcl= (Did/Does he) explain?</i>
Question (<i>irrealis</i>)	ရှင်းပြမလား။	/shìn-pyá- mə-là/	<i>explain+ptcl= (Will he) explain?</i>
Question (<i>punctative</i>)	နားလည်ပြီလား။	/nà-leh-byi-là/	<i>understand+ptcl= Have (you) understood? (Understand now?)</i>
Imperative (polite)	ရှင်းပြပါ။	/shìn-pyá-ba/	<i>explain+ptcl= Please explain</i>

Table 29. Different types of utterances

Tha Noe (2001), a Burmese linguist, argues that there is no such thing as a complex sentence structure in Burmese, but there are only two different types of sentences: **simple** and **compound**. In essence, independent or subordinate clauses can be conjoined together to form compound sentences, which can be demonstrated with Table 30-32:

Independent cl 1	Independent cl 2	Compound sentence
သူလာမယ်	မထင်ဘူး။	သူလာမယ် မထင်ဘူး။
/thu-la-meh/	/mə-t'in-bù/	/thu-la-meh mə-t'in-bù
<i>He'll come</i>	<i>(I)don't think</i>	<i>I don't think (that) he'll come</i>

Table 30. Compound sentence 1: *I don't think he'll come.*

Subordinate clause	Main clause	Compound sentence
မသိလို	မေးတာ။	မသိလို မေးတာ။
/mə-thí-ló/	/mè-ta/	/mə-thí-ló mè-ta/
<i>Because (I) don't know</i>	<i>(I) am asking</i>	<i>(I)am asking because (I) don't know</i>

Table 31. Compound sentence 2: *I'm asking because I don't know*

Subordinate clause	Main clause	Compound sentence
မိုးရွာရင်	မလာဘူး။	မိုးရွာရင် မလာဘူး။
/mò-ywa-yin/	/mə-la-bù/	/mò-ywa-yin mə-la-bù/
<i>If it rains</i>	<i>(I) don't come</i>	<i>If it rains, (I) don't come.</i>

Table 32. Compound sentence 3: *If it rains, I don't come*

Indirect speech in Burmese can be expressed through the use of two different particles, namely /déh/ and /s'o/ meaning *it is said that* and *it is true that* respectively, that occupies the utterance-final position [cf. Table 33-34].

English	Burmese	Phonology + English
<i>it is said that</i>	တဲ့	/déh/ ptcl. (<i>it is said that</i>)
<i>it will rain</i>	မိုးရွာ+မယ်။	/mò-ywa-meh/ <i>rain</i> ptcl (irrealis)
<i>It is said that it will rain.</i>	မိုးရွာမယ်တဲ့။	/mò-ywa-meh-déh/

Table 33. Indirect Speech with particle /déh/

English	Burmese	Phonology + English
<i>I heard that... is that true?</i> ¹⁸	ဆို	/s'o/ ptcl. (<i>is it true that?</i>)
<i>it will rain</i>	မိုးရွာ+မယ်။	/mò-ywa-meh/ <i>rain</i> ptcl (irrealis)
<i>Is it true that it will rain?</i>	မိုးရွာမယ်ဆို။	/mò-ywa-meh-s'o/

Table 34. Indirect Speech with particle /s'o/

¹⁸ This particle /s'o/ is put in the category of indirect speech because it implies that the preceding clause is said by someone other than the current speaker.

In addition, since Burmese is a verb-final language, it is common in Burmese discourse to have a text starting with the subject, followed by a direct quote of several sentences, and end with a main reporting verb such as *say, state, inform, ask*, etc. For instance, to express the following sentence *The lawyer said (that) I would win this case* [cf. Table 35], possible word orders for a Burmese equivalent are 1-3-2 or 3-1-2, which represent equivalents of *The lawyer, (that) I would win this case, said** or *"I would win this case", the lawyer said* respectively in English.

English	Burmese	Phonology + English
1. The lawyer	1. ရှေ့နေက	/shé-ne gá/ lawyer ptcl (subj mkr)
2. said	2. ပြောတယ်။	/pyàw-deh/ say ptcl
3. that I will win this case	3. ကျမ+ဒီအမှုမှာ+ နိုင်မယ်+လို့။	/ky'-má di ə-hmú-mha nain-meh-ló/ I this case ptcl(in) win-ptcl-ptcl quote mkr

Table 35. Example of Burmese indirect Speech

2.6. Comparison of important features in Burmese and English

Burmese and English belong to different language families and speech communities that do not share a cultural background. Naturally their differences are numerous, and they can be found at all levels of language structure – phonological, morphological, lexical, syntactical, and discursal. At the phonological level, Burmese is a tonal language, i.e. different tones represent different semantic value, and there is also a phonemic difference between aspirated/unaspirated pairs of consonants. Burmese does not use stress for individual words like English, where difference in tone does not change the semantic value of words but intonation plays an important role. While Burmese tends to rely heavily

on lexical items such as particles to express discourse meanings, such function is likely to be realized with intonation patterns in English. Phonetic values of consonants are more variable in Burmese than in English, as their pronunciation is subject to the process of juncture through voicing, weakening and induced creaky tone [cf. 2.5.1], e.g. according to the phonetic environment, the utterance-final particle may be pronounced /teh/ or /deh/; the polite particle may be pronounced /pa/ or /ba/. Consequently the difference between Burmese orthography and the way words are pronounced is greater in Burmese than in English.

The two most significant features of Burmese that are relevant to this comparative study concern lexical items. First, Burmese makes a heavy use of particles that are non-existent in English [cf. 2.5.2.2]. Findings from the data indicate that most of the particles express discourse meanings [cf. 2.5.2.2.1-3], which may be expressed with intonation or a different syntactic structure in English. Secondly Burmese is a syllabic language and uses a syllable script whereas English uses an alphabetic script. Each syllable (spoken as well as written) may be a free standing or bound morpheme. For instance, let us consider the lexical item /ká/ which may be a particle that functions as a subject marker, an equivalent of English preposition *from*, a free standing morpheme *to dance* as a monosyllabic verb, or a part of a polysyllabic verb /kə-sà/. As a result, given the syllabic and polysemic nature of the Burmese lexicon, the notion of word as used for English is not (entirely) suitable to describe lexical items in Burmese.

Syntactically, Burmese is an SOV language whereas English is a SVO language. Grammatical information such as relationship between clauses or utterances is expressed through the use of particles in Burmese. Unlike English, which uses a tense-aspect system, Burmese only makes use of an aspect system, making a distinction between realis, irrealis, and punctative [cf. 2.5.3]. Burmese verbs always have to co-occur with a particle in a sentence, except for imperatives [cf. 2.5.2.1.3]. There is no copular verb in Burmese: consequently there are utterances with no verb, and equivalents of English adjectives are expressed with stative verbs (verbs that express condition of state) in Burmese. Compared to English, subject or object NPs are more often omitted from the utterance in Burmese when this information is deemed retrievable from the context. When the subject or object NPs are explicitly used, usually followed by a particle, their discourse meanings seem to indicate that the information is new, or an emphasis is on the agent or the topic – a function which is likely to be expressed with a phonological stress on the subject NP or with a pattern *It is NP that . . .* in English. Moreover, proper names are often used as subject pronouns in Burmese, which is conditioned by socio-cultural rules based on gender, age, etc. Location and time expressions are usually marked with particles known as postpositions in Burmese, which are expressed with prepositions in English. Word order is also flexible in Burmese, except for the position of verb, which is always clause or utterance final.

Table 36 below summarizes the most significant differences between the linguistic structures of Burmese and English. It can be

concluded that, inasmuch as linguistic features are significantly different in Burmese and English as I have explained, their discourse structures are bound to be different, which this study seeks to investigate in detail with selected corpora from the two languages.

Burmese	English
Sound system <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tonal language: different tones represent different meaning - Phonemic difference between different tones, aspirated/un-aspirated pairs - Stress is not marked for individual words 	Sound system <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Difference in tone does not change meaning - Stress is marked for individual words - Intonation plays an important role
Writing system <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Uses syllabic script - Each letter represents a syllable 	Writing system <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Uses alphabetic script
Lexical items <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Adjectives and verbs function in the same way. English adjectives are expressed with verbs - Ns are free-standing morphemes, but Vs are not - Absence of copula: sentences can be formed without any verb - Heavy use of particles - bound morphemes that express grammatical or discourse meaning - Uses post-positions to mark location and time expressions 	Lexical items <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Verbs and adjectives are free standing morphemes - Particles are practically absent - Uses prepositions for location and time expressions
Syntactic structure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SOV - Subject/object of the sentence can be omitted if it can be recognized from the context - Uses aspect system for verbs: makes distinction between realis, irrealis, punctative - Word-order is flexible: position of subject and object is often interchangeable, but verb is always sentence-final 	Syntactic structure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SVO - Subject is usually present in the sentence - Uses tense-aspect system - Word-order is a lot less free

Table 36. Comparison of Burmese and English

This chapter has presented a brief description of Burmese, the official national language of Myanmar, including its historical background, a linguistic sketch, and its particularities in comparison to English which are summarized in Table 36. In addition, as mentioned in 2.2, the distinction between spoken and written Burmese, also known as colloquial and literary Burmese, is more distinctly marked than in English. Nonetheless, Burmese is fairly uniform in its standard variety – spoken as well as written¹⁹ – throughout the country, roughly comparable to English in Britain, despite the existence of many dialects and different accents.

¹⁹ It is predictable however that written Burmese remains more uniform than spoken Burmese, especially that the media and press have long been controlled/monitored by the central government in Yangon, the capital of Myanmar. On the other hand, the spelling rules are not strictly enforced, and variation in orthography is quite common. In recent years however, there is an increasing growth of private journals which report news about modernized Myanmar, which encourages a heavy use of loan words. Facing such a situation, the standardized form of Burmese is likely to change in the future.

Chapter 3

Review of literature

3.1. Written and spoken language

Issues of spoken vs. written language have long been a focus of linguistic studies, particularly in discourse studies. Using empirical research, scholars have identified features that are typically associated with speech and writing, but no generalizations are uniformly accepted. Nor has a clear distinction between speech and writing been defined. Notwithstanding, it is undeniable that spoken and written discourses are different manifestations of language, and contradictions and inconsistencies in findings are probably due to the differences in research methodologies adopted, such as quantitative vs. qualitative approaches.

Research findings have attested that it is impossible to label every text as written or spoken, based on a single linguistic element or dimension (Biber, 1988). Instead, texts can be located on a continuum with archetypal spoken texts (e.g. spontaneous face-to-face conversation) and archetypal written texts (e.g. a quality newspaper article, a last will and testament) at the opposite ends. In the middle are texts with some features of spoken and some of written discourse, as shown in Figure 1 where X represents archetypal spoken texts and Y archetypal written texts.

XXXXXXXX XXXY XYX YXY YX YXXY YYYYYY

Figure 1. Spoken and written texts on a continuum

It is the texts that are likely to be located at/towards the X end that this study is concerned with.

There is a general tendency to define spoken or written language in terms of the channel/medium in which a text is delivered. Yet, medium is not an accurate indicator, as "any text can potentially be delivered to its receivers via either spoken or written medium" (McCarthy, 1993: 170). Language used in written personal notes or dialogues in written fiction is more likely to have qualities of orality or spokenness. Conversely, formal academic lectures delivered in spoken medium probably manifest characteristics associated with literacy or writtenness. Similarly, spoken language is more readily associated with informal contexts and written language with formal contexts, but using formal/informal dimensions have no a priori linguistic validity as we can easily find examples of informal writing, and of formal speech (Biber, 1988; Hughes, 1996).

McCarthy & Carter (1994) suggest a useful distinction between *medium* and *mode*: medium is concerned with how the message is transmitted whereas mode is concerned with how the message is composed stylistically. Hughes (1996) on the other hand, makes a distinction between *medium*, *channel* and *mode*. Channel is the means of production and reception of the language – i.e. oral/aural in opposition to visual/motoric. Medium is preserved for precise method and/or material substance used to convey the discourse – e.g. over the phone, on film soundtrack, etc. In this study, the terms medium and channel are used interchangeably, and mode is what we are concerned with for identifying spoken and written discourse features. The corpus data for this study include texts in spoken mode that are produced or delivered in spoken as well as written medium.

3.1.1. Are spoken and written discourses different?

Blankenship (1962) argues that there is no significant distinction between speech and writing, based on her quantitative study examining the sentence length and the distribution of other linguistic features such as passive constructions, the frequency of adverbs and adjectives, etc. On the other hand, Carter & McCarthy (1995; 2006) and McCarthy & Carter (1997), based on their investigations of the CANCODE corpus, have identified significant differences between spoken and written English including the prevalence of certain types of ellipsis in spoken language (e.g. of subject pronouns, auxiliary verbs, articles, initial elements of fixed expressions), different formal types of speech reporting in spoken and written (e.g. written texts use a range of reporting verbs and of adverbial modifiers such as *angrily*, *faintly*, whereas spoken texts rely mostly on the reporting verb *say*), and the occurrence of pre- and post-posed items ('headers' and 'tails') in conversation (Carter & McCarthy, 2006). Biber (1988) also discusses findings contradictory to those of Blankenship's studies, citing work on passive constructions by Chafe (1982) and Brown & Yule (1983); on the frequency of adverbs by Poole & Field (1976) and Tottie (1984); and on adjectives by Cayer & Sacks (1979), and Chafe (1982), etc.

Biber's own corpus-based study, using a multi-dimensional/multi-feature approach that investigated 67 linguistic features in 481 texts, shows that linguistic features cluster or co-occur differently in different spoken and written texts. He concludes however that the findings are not adequate to claim absolute differences between speech and writing, and that "the

variation among texts within speech and writing is often as great as the variation across the two modes" (Biber, 1988: 24).

To my knowledge, literature on systematic comparative analyses between spoken and written discourse in Asian languages is rare, although there is an increasing number of studies published on specific features of spoken discourse, but they are mostly concerned with so-called 'bulk' languages such as Chinese (e.g. by Li & Thompson, 1982, Tao 1996) or Japanese (e.g. by Maynard 1989, 1993, 1997, 2001, Soga, 1983). One of the few examples of comparative studies on written and spoken discourse of Asian languages can be found in Biber's (1995) multi-dimensional approach to register variation, which includes a comparison of spoken and written texts in Korean (along with English and Somali). His findings demonstrate that the two modes provide strikingly different potentials and their differences are similar cross-linguistically. Nonetheless, certain characteristics typically found in Asian languages, especially those less-commonly studied such as Burmese, are often overlooked in the current literature. Findings of such studies are much needed as they can give valuable insights into our understanding of the spoken discourse, and consequently contribute to stronger discourse theories. For example, unlike English, the distinction between spoken and written Burmese is more easily recognizable in the use of lexical items, especially in the use of particles [cf. Ch 2], which is therefore the main instrument used to identify spoken Burmese for this study. This is an important difference between Burmese and English discourse: as explained in chapter 2, while the differences between written and spoken English are mostly stylistic in

nature, the differences between spoken and written Burmese are (lexically) a lot more prominent and striking, especially to a non-native speaker. However, I am by no means suggesting that particles alone are sufficient for distinguishing all written and spoken Burmese texts, which is not the main concern of this study. Besides, as Biber (1988: 36) puts it, "there is no linguistic or situational characterization of speech and writing that is true of all spoken and written genres", which is likely to be true for Burmese as well.

3.1.2. Important features typically associated with spoken and written discourses

As a point of departure, I will adopt Halliday's (1989: 78, 81-86, 97) position that written language represents phenomena as *products* and spoken language represents phenomena as *processes*, which is probably a good basis for an initial distinction between spoken and written discourse. Moreover, spoken discourse is typically processed and produced on-line and received in real time (Carter & McCarthy, 2006), which has important implications for the discourse structure such as co-production of the discourse by the participants, the role of listenership (McCarthy, 2003), etc. Conversely, in a typical situation more time is allowed for editing and revision in writing, which makes the product appear more structured and organized. Processing necessitates trials (and therefore implies errors), which in speech cannot be erased once it is produced. Although written discourse also involves processing, errors and trials are eliminated along with the drafts in the final product. As a result, spoken discourse is

typically loaded with false starts, fillers, hesitation markers, hedges, etc. which are often accompanied by lexical items commonly referred to in the literature as *pragmatic markers* or *discourse markers* (Hughes 1996, McCarthy 1993, Carter & McCarthy 2006). The present study is concerned with such lexical items found in spoken Burmese and English.

Halliday (1989: 97) also argues that written texts are produced *synoptically* and spoken texts *dynamically*. Consequently spoken discourse is likely to have a lower lexical density than written discourse (Ure, 1971). In respect to lexical density, Halliday further explains that written discourse generally has a relatively higher frequency of *lexical items* and spoken discourse has a relatively higher frequency of *grammatical items*. By lexical items, he refers to *content words* in English, and grammatical items include determiners, pronouns, prepositions, etc. without neglecting the fact that some grammatical items such as certain classes of adverbs (e.g. English modal items like *always*, *perhaps*, and some conjugations) are on a borderline. The use of the term 'lexical items' is problematic, as Halliday himself observes, since all words are 'items' and 'lexical', and therefore they are all 'lexical items'. Without going into further debate regarding this definitional problem of the terms, it is nonetheless an important observation that can be applied (with caution and modification) to Burmese. As explained in chapter 2, spoken Burmese is rich in particles, and it is interesting that they are traditionally known as 'grammatical forms'. With the findings of the data, this study intends to demonstrate that such so-called grammatical items express discourse

functions characteristic of spoken Burmese which may have more fully lexical realisations in English.

Chafe (1982) argues that spoken discourse is associated with *fragmentation* and written discourse with *integration*. McCarthy (1993: 171) challenges this position by stating that there are texts in spoken mode which "package information tightly and efficiently", but in terms of tendency/ potentiality, we can say safely that fragmentation is a prominent characteristic of spoken discourse. Hughes (1996: 27) concurs by stating that spontaneous conversation, an archetype of spoken discourse, tends to employ "'unfinished' clauses, abbreviations, short clauses and simple phrases" which she partially attributes to the temporally bound aspect of speech. She further explains that in a casual conversation, the speaker cannot be sure how long his/her interlocutor(s) will allow the floor to be held, and therefore is under pressure to get the message over quickly, using short clauses with few words.

Shorter clauses with a lower lexical density of speech may mislead us to a conclusion regarding the complexity of spoken and written discourses. There is a tendency to assume that speech is less complex than writing, but findings from previous research suggest that it is not true. As Halliday (ibid: 87) points out, both speech and writing are complex in a different way, and "the highly information-packed, lexically dense passages of writing can often tend to be extremely simple in their grammatical structure, as far as the organization of the sentence (clause complex) is concerned". This grammatical complexity of spoken discourse is an interesting point that deserves further investigation. In

Burmese, besides the syntactic structure, the use of particles seems to reflect the intricate nature of spoken grammar that Halliday discusses. For instance, many particles in spoken discourse seem 'unnecessary' as their absence does not change the propositional meaning of the text, and they are likely to be absent in the written version of the same text. Yet, their use is not arbitrary, which makes the 'grammar' of spoken Burmese seem complex, especially for the learners of Burmese. What then governs the use of such particles in spoken discourse, or the choice between two particles with identical grammatical functions such as *sentence final markers*, or the presence or absence of subject markers? It is such questions that this study attempts to answer with findings from the data.

Complexity of spoken discourse may be related to its tendency for implicitness. As McCarthy & Slade (2002) points out, formal written texts tend to be explicit whereas informal spoken discourse tends to be implicit, leaving a lot unsaid. Hughes (1996) notes that speech involves a highly complex process of interactivity between the participants in the communication process. Given the temporally bound aspect of speech, spoken discourse tends to reflect the "dynamics of the relationships between the participants particularly clearly" (ibid: 27). Biber (1988) and McCarthy & Slade (2002) attest this tendency for detachment vs. (interpersonal) involvement in written and spoken discourse respectively. For Burmese in addition, interpersonal relationships are highly conditioned by socio-cultural rules, which in turn are reflected in language use. This probably explains the richer use of particles in spoken Burmese, particularly those with discourse meanings rather than grammatical meanings, which will be discussed further

in the later chapters. Another thing worth mentioning may be that writers (often writing for 'invisible/unknown' readers) tend to orient more towards the text itself, whereas speakers in face-to-face interaction orient towards their listeners.

In this section, I have discussed key features of spoken and written discourse, which can be summarized in Table 37 below.

Spoken discourse	Written discourse
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - typically associated with informal contexts - represents phenomena as processes - production on-line, under time constraint, received in real time - loaded with false starts, hesitation markers, discourse markers - lexical density <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - lower density of content words - higher frequency of grammatical items (particles in Burmese, with discourse functions) - complexity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - more fragmented - structural complexity seems to replace lexical density of written language - more implicit, a lot unsaid - complex interactivity among participants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - typically associated with formal contexts - represents phenomena as products - more time for editing & revision - few (and different sets of) discourse markers - lexical density <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - higher density of content words - lower frequency of grammatical items (in Burmese - different set of particles, mostly with grammatical functions) - complexity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - more integrated - grammatical structure tends to be simpler - likely to be more explicit - likely to manifest detached relationships among participants

Table 37. Summary of important features typically associated with spoken and written discourse

3.2. Spoken discourse analytical models

Analytical models for spoken discourse draw on insights from various disciplines including ethnomethodology, sociolinguistics, structural-functional linguistics and social semiotics. In the following sections I will discuss key models that are the most influential in the investigation of spoken discourse, in particular **conversation analysis**, **exchange structure analysis**, and **systemic functional analysis**²⁰.

3.2.1. Conversation analysis (CA)

Originally developed in the 1960s by Sacks, Schegloff, & Jefferson from the field of ethnomethodology, conversation analysis (CA) views conversation as a social activity, governed by certain conventions of behaviour. The goal of CA therefore is to "explicate the shared methods interactants use to produce and recognize their own and other people's conduct" (Pomerantz & Fehr, 1997: 69). Using transcribed tape recordings of naturally occurring speech, CA focuses on micro-structural aspects of everyday conversation, usually in short extracts. Based on the two common sense observations that 1) only one person speaks at a time and 2) speaker change occurs, CA considers conversation as a fundamentally turn-taking activity (Eggins & Slade, 1997: 25), and it can be explained in terms of three key elements: *turn-taking*, *adjacency pairs*,

²⁰ There are other models such as Schiffrin's model of coherence in talk, but as they seem to have drawn upon different aspects of the discourse models mentioned above, and focus on specific features of discourse such as discourse markers, they will not be included in this section, but covered in later sections.

and *topic management*. As McCarthy & Slade (2002) formulate, central questions of CA include:

- How do speakers take orderly turns in conversation?
- How do speakers open and close conversations?
- How do speakers launch new topics, close exhausted topics, etc.?
- How is it that conversation generally progresses satisfactorily with little or no conflict or confusion?

3.2.1.1. Turn-taking

CA uses the speaker turn as a basic unit of analysis. A turn is everything one speaker says until another speaker begins to say something. Points of potential speaker change in the conversation are indicated by what Sacks *et al.* (1974) call *Turn Constructional Units (TCUs)*, which they consider possible grammatically complete units of discourse (i.e. equivalents of clause, phrase or sentence in writing). Each turn is occupied by one speaker, which ends when another speaker takes the turn, and allocation cannot be agreed in advance but must be continually negotiated at each TCU boundary (Eggins & Slade, 1997). According to Sacks *et al.* (ibid), speakers typically take turns when they are selected by the current speaker, which is signalled by the use of names, questions directing at a specific individual and/or other paralinguistic features such as gaze, gesture, etc. If no one is directly selected, there may be a self-selection by a speaker, or the current speaker may continue. As McCarthy & Slade (2002) point out, turn-yielding or turn-taking is signalled by devices provided by the language system, which vary in their

appropriateness according to different context and speaker relationships. In addition, such devices are likely to be different in different cultures.

An underlying assumption of the CA is that speakers usually try to avoid 'interruptions' or 'lapses' (where no one speaks), an activity which is governed by social norms, which are cultural specific. For instance, acceptable forms of interruption vary from culture to culture²¹. Furthermore, as McCarthy (1998: 57-58) points out, the degree of tolerance for silence (e.g. longer silence between turns in Finnish conversations vs. silence filling discourse styles found in American English), or styles of back-channels (e.g. repeated *yes* in Spanish) may vary from culture to culture. However, McCarthy & Slade (2002) distinguish 'true interruptions' from common occasional overlaps in ordinary informal everyday conversation. Similarly distinction should be made between real lapses (i.e. complete silence) vs. vocalizations and short expressions such as back-channel responses (e.g. *Mmm, uhuh, yeah, sure, right* in English) which indicate that the listener is allowing the speaker to continue and how the message is being received, a key characteristic of a good listenership (ibid) or "demonstrations of continued, co-ordinated hearership" (Schegloff, 1968: 380).

Within turns, Eggins & Slade (1997: 186) identify moves. They define a move as "a unit after which speaker change could occur without

²¹ It is a common observation that French speakers tend to 'speak at the same time' i.e. without waiting for their turn, or the opening of the floor as they engage themselves in heated discussion even in an informal context. This phenomenon can also be observed in broadcast debates between politicians. I am not aware of any specific literature based on empirical studies, but it is possible that 'waiting until the turn opens' may make you seem 'boring' or 'bored' during the conversation. If this observation is attested, a research question can be posed differently for spoken French: how do speakers 'interrupt' or 'fight for their turns' and eventually gain the floor.

turn transfer being seen as an interruption". They further observe that although moves are units of discourse rather than of grammar, given that a move is a fundamental component of language structure (also Halliday, 1989) most of the time a move is realized by a clause and consequently most moves are clauses and vice versa. Owen (1981: 101) also suggests that the turn-taking system is structurally motivated and therefore turns are structural units into which functional units – moves – are slotted.

3.2.1.2. Adjacency pairs

The most basic pattern in CA is known as adjacency pairs. Each adjacency pair has three characteristics: a) two utterance length; b) adjacent positioning of component utterances; and c) different speakers producing each utterance (Schegloff & Sacks, 1974: 238). As McCarthy & Slade (2002) puts it, an adjacency pair is "a pair of turns that mutually condition one another". It functions as a turn-transfer technique: it is used to allocate the next turn or exit from the current turn, but it should be noted that it is not a system of determination but of expectation (Eggins & Slade, 1997). Typical examples of adjacency pairs include questions – answers, greeting – greeting, wishes – thanks, of which the components are referred to as *first pair part* and *second pair part* respectively.

First pair part	Is that your key?	Bye.	Have a good trip.
Second pair part	Yeah.	See you.	Thanks, bye.

Table 38. Adjacency pairs (with preferred second pair part)

The second pair part in turn can be *preferred second pair part* as in request – grant, or *dispreferred second pair part* as in request – reject.

Eggins & Slade (ibid: 28) observe that preferred second pair parts tend to be "briefer, linguistically simpler, supportive or compliant and oriented towards closure", as shown in Table 38. On the other hand, dispreferred second pair responses can be short, as shown in example 1 (where the speaker is downright rude) or longer as the speaker tries to make the response as "little threatening to the other's *face* (sense of personal esteem and dignity) as possible" (McCarthy, 2002?), as shown in E.g. (3.2).

- (3.1) A: Have you got the time?
B: Get lost!

[from McCarthy & Slade, 2002]

- (3.2) A: Could I borrow the car tonight?
B: Well, I'm afraid I might need it myself: I have some books to drop off at the library ...

Although adjacency pairs are the basic unit of CA, longer stretches of conversation can be interpreted in sequences (of adjacency pairs), of which the best known are "insertion sequences (Schegloff, 1972), pre-sequences (Schegloff, 1980), side sequences (Jefferson, 1972), closing sequences (Schegloff & Sacks, 1974), and repair or clarification sequences (Schegloff *et al.*, 1977) [in Eggins & Slade, 1997]. Eggins & Slade (1997) also distinguish 'routine adjacency pairs' (that are often connected with politeness, small talk, openings and closings) from those which may be found in everyday conversation such as *solidary routines* (e.g. A: *I have a terrible headache.* B: *Oh, I'm sorry, do you want to lie down?*) and *converging pairs* (e.g. A: *I just love those roses.* B: *Oh, so do I, aren't they wonderful!!*) (see Pomerantz, 1984).

3.2.1.3. Topic management

The third key element of CA is its recognition of topic management as a distinct but interrelated aspect of conversational organization (Eggins & Slade, 1997: 30). It is concerned with what the speakers talk about when they get their turn, how they make their topics acceptable (mentionable) to other participants, or how they shift from one topic to another in a 'natural' way. Given the underlying assumption of CA that interactions need to be done smoothly, negotiation of topics is necessary among participants, where interpersonal relationships and cultural values play an important role.

In sum, the two most significant strengths of CA are that it is based on actual data of naturally occurring interactions, and that it has influenced the perception of the validity of spoken discourse studies. Eggins & Slade (1997: 31) observe three major drawbacks in CA, namely its lack of systematic analytical categories (e.g. difficulty in recognizing adjacency pairs and TCU boundaries which makes a comprehensive quantitative analysis impossible), its fragmentary focus (e.g. sustainability of conversations is not taken into account), and its mechanistic interpretation of conversation (which neglects to see conversation as a "linguistic interaction that is fundamentally social" (ibid)).

3.2.2. Exchange structure analysis

Also known as the Birmingham School model, exchange structure analysis was developed by Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) with a goal to describe discourse as a level of language organization beyond the levels of

grammar and phonology (Eggins & Slade 1997). It is modelled on the concept of a *rank scale* from Halliday's descriptive units at the grammatical level. Using classroom data in English, Sinclair & Coulthard view the exchange as a minimal structural unit of (classroom) interaction, and propose five descriptive ranks, namely *act*, *move*, *exchange*, *transaction* and *lesson*. These units are ordered in a hierarchical order, i.e. acts can be combined to make up moves, which in turn combined to make up exchanges, which in turn combined to make up transactions which make up lessons, as illustrated in Figure 2.

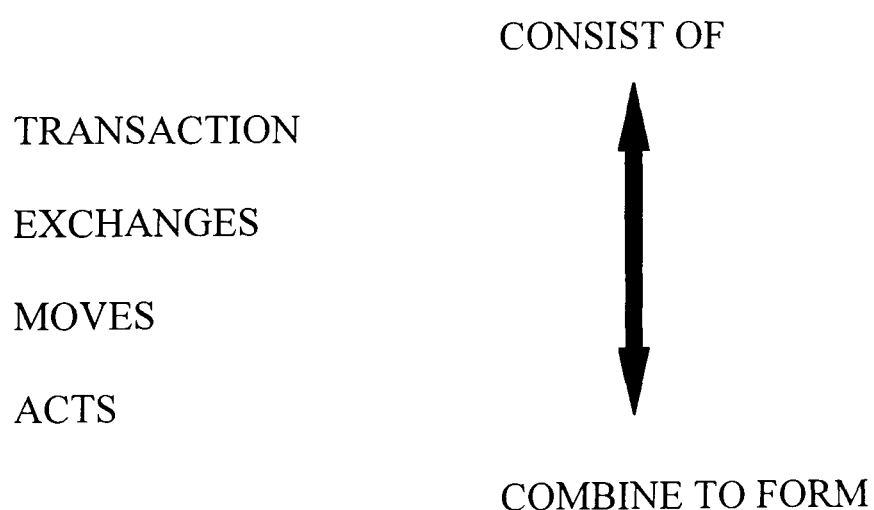


Figure 2. Different levels of exchange structure (McCarthy & Slade 2002).

Tsui (1994:9) points out that Sinclair & Coulthard's acts need to be distinguished from acts in Speech Act Theory, in which "an act refers to the action that is performed in making an utterance". Speech Act Theory has typically examined utterances in isolation, and accounts for the function of an act in an utterance in terms of its lexico-grammatical features and psychological conditions of the speaker, etc. The main difference is that Speech Act Theory does not generally take into account the discourse context in which the utterance occurs, whereas in Sinclair &

Coulthard's model, an act is characterized according to its function in the discourse.

As illustrated in Figure 2, acts combine to form moves. Sinclair & Coulthard maintain that a typical classroom exchange is made up of three moves: *initiation*, *response* and *follow-up moves*. Table 39 illustrates a three-part classroom exchange (from Sinclair & Coulthard, 1975:67). This model suggests that "... the discourse value of an item depends on what linguistic items have preceded it, what are expected to follow, and what do follow" (ibid. 34), and the boundaries between different phases of the lesson are likely to be signalled with discourse markers (e.g. the use of vocative in initiation move).

Speaker	Utterance	Move
Teacher	What does the next one mean? You don't often see that one around here. Miri.	Initiation
Pupil	Danger falling rocks.	Response
Teacher	Danger, falling rocks.	Follow-up

Table 39. Typical classroom exchange with three moves

Attempts have been made to extend the Sinclair & Coulthard model to the discourse of everyday conversation, and raise some questions regarding its applicability. For instance, it is unlikely that a typical exchange in social discourse has the same three-part moves as in the classroom, since the third move in classroom discourse serves an evaluative function such as *right*, *good*. Another criticism is that exchanges in casual conversation are far more open-ended. However, in a later study Coulthard & Brazil (1979: 40-41) propose a modified exchange structure that can be more suitable for social conversation, by adding more elements. This new formula may consist of minimally two elements as

shown in Figure 3 in which items in parenthesis are optional (from Eggins & Slade, 1997: 46).

(Open) ^ Initiation ^ (Re-Initiation) ^ Response ^ (Feedback) ^ (Feedback) ^ (Close)

Figure 3: Modified exchange structure for social conversation

McCarthy & Slade (2002) also observe more drawbacks of exchange structure analysis: for example, in social conversation, response and follow-up moves typically include affective reactions (e.g. marked with items in bold in Table 40), and follow up is not designed to evaluate the respondent's performance, and various loops and checks might be necessary before the exchange can be closed, which can be illustrated with Table 40.

Speaker	Utterance	Move
Customer	Erm when will you be able to let me know?	Initiation
Travel Agent	This afternoon.	Response 1
Customer	Sorry?	Re-initiate (check)
Travel Agent	L=later on this afternoon	Response 2
Customer	This afternoon?	Re-initiate (check)
Travel Agent	Yes.	Response 3
Customer	Okay, lovely.	Follow-up

Table 40. Modified exchange structure applied to social conversation [from McCarthy & Slade, 2002]

3.2.3. Systemic functional analysis (SFL)

Systemic functional analysis (SFL) is a socially oriented model of analysis, which views language as meaningful choice in social contexts (i.e. Halliday's *social semiotic system*; Halliday 1978), and aims to describe the relationship between language, texts and social systems. One of the most powerful aspects of this model is that language is viewed as a resource for making not just one meaning at a time but several strands of meaning simultaneously (Eggins & Slade 1997). Consequently it is

possible to analyse a spoken text from different perspectives: different analytical tools can be used to unveil each strand of meaning. E.g. *ideational meaning* can be analysed in terms of lexical cohesion or transitivity (Eggins & Slade, 1997: 48). According to this model, a text involves three types of meaning, collectively known as *metafunctions*, which can be described as follows:

- **ideational meanings**, realised by the *field* of a text, refer to meaning about the world – e.g. what topics are talked about, when, by whom, how topic transition and closure achieved, etc.
- **interpersonal meanings**, realised by the *tenor* of a text, concern meanings about roles and relationships – e.g. what kinds of role relations are established through talk, what attitudes interactants express to and about each other, what kinds of things they find funny, and how they negotiate to take turns, etc.
- **textual meanings**, realised by the *mode* of a text, are concerned with meanings about the message – e.g. different types of cohesion used to tie chunks of the talk together, different patterns of salience and foregrounding, etc. (Eggins & Slade, 1997: 48-49; Martin 2003: 45)

Furthermore, in SFL "social context is modelled through register and genre theory" (Martin, 2003: 45) and therefore register analysis and genre analysis are also two commonly used models. Martin (1992, 2003) considers Halliday's system of field, tenor, and mode collectively as *register*, and *genre* is "an additional level of context, above and beyond tenor, field, and mode" (ibid).

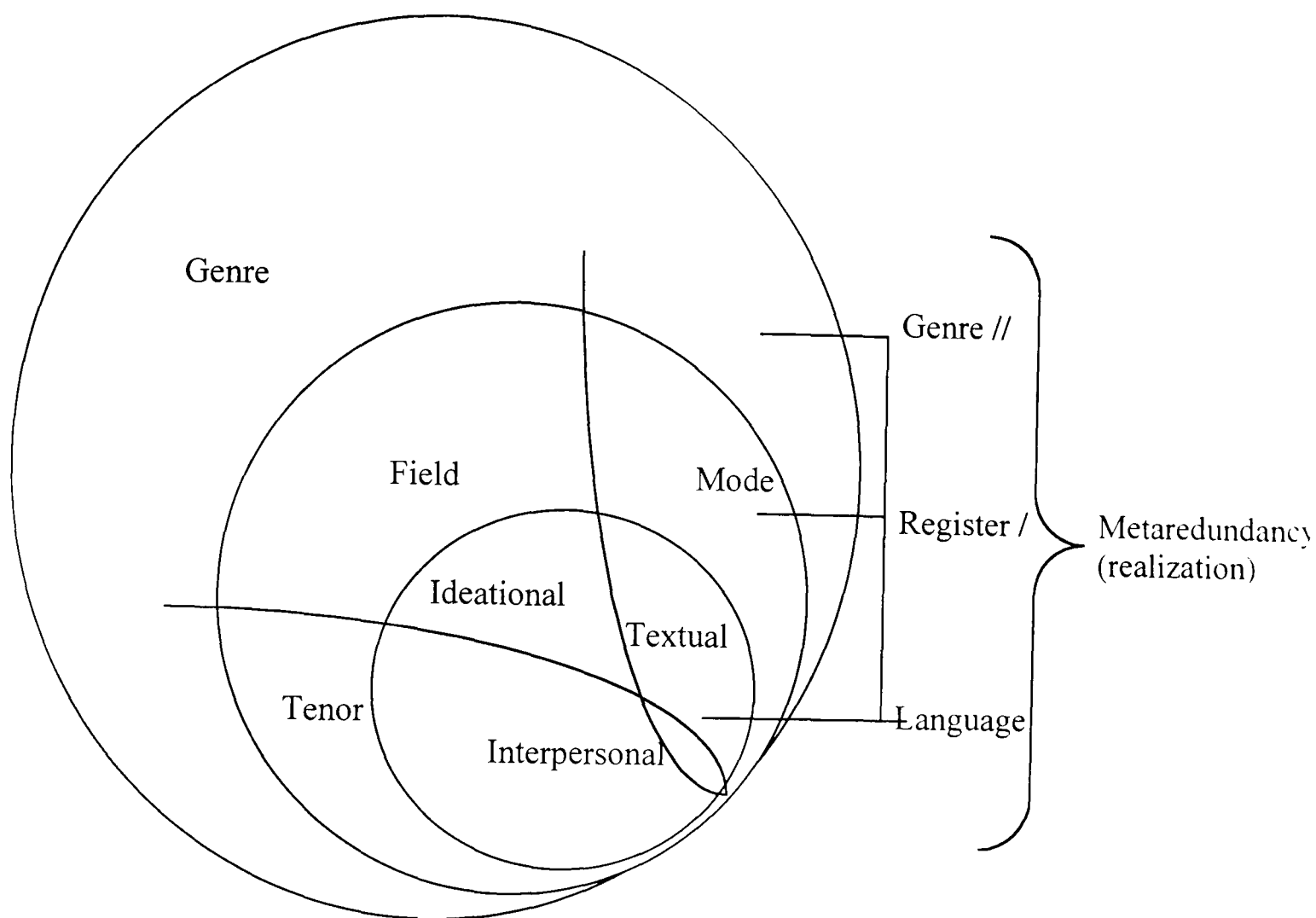


Figure 4. Metafunctions in relation to register and genre. [Martin, 2003:46]

For Biber & Conrad (2003), registers are situational parameters that define language varieties, which can be general (e.g. novel, memos, ads) or highly specified (e.g. methodology sections in experimental psychology articles). They point out that "any functional description of a linguistic feature will not be valid for the language as a whole" (ibid. 176) but what it usually reveals is strong patterns of use associated with specific registers. They illustrate lexical variation across registers with examples

of English *downtoners*, which are adverbs that scale down the effect of a modified item, most often a following adjective.

- (1) It did look *pretty* bad. (Conversation)
- (2) The mother came away *somewhat* bewildered. (News reportage)
- (3) Different laboratories have adopted *slightly* different formulations.
(Academic prose). [ibid: 177]

Genre analysis views speech as goal-oriented processes, and offers extensive socio-cultural, institutional and organizational explanation of the language use. McCarthy (1998) notes that different types of speech can be identified by genres, i.e. in terms of their communicative purposes in particular social settings. Examples of genres include service encounters (in the market, post office, travel agents, etc.), narratives, which is one of the most studied genres, interviews (for jobs or political events), academic genres (such as lectures, classes) etc. McCarthy & Slade (2002) summarize that "genre analysts are interested in regularities of patterning in such events, both in terms of larger phrases or stages (e.g. a typical shop service encounter might follow the pattern: request for service → statement of availability of service → transaction of service → thanks) and the local grammar and lexis that characterize such events (e.g. the use of present-perfect tense/aspect in the concluding sections of anecdotes to 'bridge' back to the present – *And ever since then I've always been scared of rabbits!*)".

Narrative is considered a major category of genre in discourse. In Mitchell's (1981: 8) words, narratives are "a means by which human beings represent and restructure the world". In telling stories or anecdotes.

which are the most familiar types of narratives, speakers organize their data and present them with special patterns, which are organized in a specific way according to the social norm. The most influential work on the structure of narratives is William Labov's personal experience narrative, known as PEN. Labov (1972) defines narratives as 'temporal sequencing of events', and Labov & Waletzky (1967) argue that "fundamental narrative structures are evident in spoken narratives of personal experience" (in Eggins & Slade 1997: 38). With a focus on structure and organization of narratives, Labov's model consists of six components as summarized below, of which those in parentheses are optional:

1. **(Abstract)** To provide a summary of the story in such a way that it encapsulates the point of the story (Answer to *What is the story about?*)
2. **Orientation** To orient the listener in respect to place, time and behavioural situation (Answer to *Who, when, where, what*)
3. **Complication** To present temporally sequenced events which culminate in a crisis of problem. It is the main section of a narrative (Answer to *What happened?*)
4. **Evaluation** To reveal the attitude of the narrator towards the narrative. (Answer to *How is the story interesting?*)
5. **Resolution** To show how the protagonist's actions resolve the crisis. (Answer to *What happened finally?*)
6. **(Coda)** To make a point about the text as a whole. It serves as the bridge between the story world and the non-story world
[Adapted from Labov & Waletzky 1967]

Whereas the focus of Labov's model (also supported by Tannen 1980) is the overall structure of narratives, another approach to the study

of narratives examines how story telling is embedded in its interactional context (Johnstone, 2003: 643), and application of this approach can be seen in work by Polanyi (1985), and Schiffrin (1984, 1996) among others. As "personal narrative is how we make sense of ourselves as individuals and as members of groups" (Johnstone, *ibid*), socio-cultural aspects need to be accounted for in studying narratives.

3.2.4. Summary of analytical models

The three models that I have described in the previous sections have undoubtedly their strengths and weaknesses. It is not my present intention to formulate a comparative criticism of them, but to select applicable features for my study from their key elements as summarized in Table 41.

Conversation analysis	Exchange structure analysis	Systemic functional analysis
-turn-taking system -adjacency pairs -topic management	-rank order of elements -exchanges and moves -focus on lexico-grammar	Ideational meaning Interpersonal meaning Textual meaning Genres

Table 41. Key components in CA, Exchange Structure, and SFL models

In a typical spoken interaction, there is more than one speaker. During the interaction, speakers take turns, and findings from the previous research indicate that the turn-taking system is highly structured and organized. The turn-taking system of spoken interaction can be examined in terms of CA's adjacency pairs and topic management at the micro-level, and exchange structure analysis model at the macro level, which helps our understanding of the overall structure of spoken discourse.

Unlike written discourse, spoken discourse is a joint-production in which all three meanings – ideational, interpersonal, and textual – as proposed by SFL are to be taken into account. Turns are constantly negotiated between the interactants through the use of items (among other devices), which serve as DMs such as backchannels, lexical items for topic management and interpersonal relationships. The ways discourse is structured are influenced by socio-cultural values of the speech communities, and they should be taken into account. Obviously spoken interactions are not always smooth, as one may be tempted to think according to the analytical models as proposed by their founders. In addition, discourse structures vary according to the register and genre in which they occur, and therefore we can gain valuable insights into the relations between lexico-grammatical features and discourse functions by investigating them from the perspectives of register/genre analysis. Furthermore, narrative models of discourse analysis give us insights into our understanding of spoken discourse, as they are often an important component of social interaction.

Differences among the existing models reflect differences in approach, but no matter what approach is adopted, the analytical model for spoken discourse should take into account a single set of underlying principles of spoken discourse as outlined in Schiffrin (1994: 416):

- Analysis of discourse is empirical
- Discourse is not just a sequence of linguistic units: its coherence cannot be understood if attention is limited just to linguistic form and meaning at the utterance level

- Resources to coherence jointly contribute to participant achievement and understanding of what is said, meant, and done through everyday talk. Linguistic forms and meanings work together with social and cultural meanings and interpretive frameworks, to create discourse.
- The structures, meanings, and actions of everyday spoken discourse are interactively achieved.
- What is said, meant, and done is sequentially situated, i.e. utterances are produced and interpreted in the local contexts of other utterances.
- How something is said, meant, and done is guided by relationships among the following:
 - speaker intentions
 - conventionalised strategies for making intentions recognizable
 - the meanings and functions of linguistic forms within their emerging contexts
 - the sequential context of other utterances
 - properties of the discourse mode such as narratives, descriptive text, expository prose, etc.
 - the social context, e.g. participant identities and relationships, structure of the situation, the setting
 - a cultural framework of beliefs and actions

In analysing spoken discourse, it is now becoming accepted that the application of these models is considerably enhanced by integrating corpus-based analyses (McCarthy & Carter, 2004). A corpus is a collection of computer-readable texts that (in the case of spoken corpora) are transcriptions of language produced in actual contexts of use. The main advantage of corpus studies is that they make it possible to use quantitative data to look for the distribution of particular structures and

meanings in different text types across a wide range of users and situations. Corpus findings reveal recurrent patterns of language use through (semi) automatic processing of texts using computer software, and a sample of language use of many speakers, not of one individual's performance. They allow us to identify systematic differences in the functional features of each speech event, and offer adequate representations of naturally occurring discourse. Corpus analysis provides quantitative information that is lacking in CA, but quantitative findings produced by computer analysis through the use of frequency or concordancing software are to be interpreted using other analytical models, which have provided framework for analysis, such as those described in previous sections.

In short, findings from corpus-based studies contribute valuable insights into our understanding of the spoken discourse: they have confirmed many of the findings of CA, and verified widespread occurrences across many texts of features observed in single texts in CA. Corpus research has shown grammatical/structural regularities across a large number of speakers and varieties, which is leading towards the elaboration of an independent grammar for spoken interactions. (Carter & McCarthy 2006).

In applying these discourse analytical models to Burmese, a few language specific issues need to be addressed. To start with CA, its three major drawbacks, namely its lack of systematic analytical categories such as difficulty in recognising adjacency pairs and TCU boundaries, its fragmentary focus and its mechanistic interpretation of conversation, can

become more prominent for a language like Burmese for linguistic as well as socio-cultural reasons. For instance, subject pronouns are often omitted in spoken Burmese when they are judged by the speaker to be retrievable in the context, which may or may not be in the immediately preceding utterances. Similarly, particle 'ka' is traditionally known as a 'subject marker' [see further details in 5.3.3.1.3²²], but it is not always obligatory, and it may sometimes function as a topic marker, of which the topic NP may or may not be a subject of the sentence [see further details in 5.3.3.2.1²³], which makes the analytical models with fragmentary focus and mechanistic interpretation unsuitable for analysing Burmese discourse markers.

Along the same line, and has been observed by scholars (e.g. Coulthard & Brazil 1979, McCarthy & Slade 2002), the Exchange Structure Analytical model provides insights for understanding language organisation in typical exchanges in more institutional settings, but is less suitable for analysing spontaneous speech. If its major criticism lies in the fact that it does not take into account social aspects of conversation and matters of affect involved in human communication, this model is likely to be even more problematic for analysing discourse functions of Burmese particles in the present data.

The three types of meaning as proposed by the Systemic Functional Analytical model, namely ideational meanings, interpersonal

²² Title → KA as a subject marker, [under 5.3.3.1. KA with grammatical functions]

²³ Title → KA for topicalization, [under 5.3.3.2. KA as a DM]

meanings and textual meanings, shall be particularly useful for the analysis of Burmese discourse marking system through the use of particles. As has been explained in Chapter 2 and will be demonstrated with findings of the data in Chapters 5 & 6, some particles have grammatical meaning as a core meaning, as described in the existing literature, but only by including their interpersonal and textual meanings in the investigation will we be able to identify their discourse functions. For example, particle 'taw' has been found to serve grammatical functions as an obligatory particle for negative and interrogative structures (see further details in 5.3.4.1.2 and 5.3.4.1.3) but as the findings of this study illustrate, it also serves discourse functions (see further details in 5.3.4.2).

3.3. Discourse marking

In the current literature on spoken discourse and discourse analysis in general, much attention has been paid to a host of discourse marking elements, which are mostly lexical items that serve a variety of discourse functions such as discourse connectors, turn-takers, topic switchers, hesitation markers, hedges, fillers, intimacy signals, attitude markers, etc. Considered a property of spoken discourse²⁴, these items receive different terms in the discourse literature. Among them, the most common ones include discourse markers (Schiffrin, 1987), discourse operators (Redeker, 1990), pragmatic markers (Fraser 1996, Brinton 1996, Carter & McCarthy

²⁴ It should be noted however, as Schourup (1999) cautions, most of the existing studies on DMs are based on data from spoken discourse. McCarthy's (1993: 173) 'Spoken discourse markers in written text' is one of the few exceptions, but he considers them as "spoken-mode markers". Clause-relational analysts have also looked at signalling mechanisms in written texts which parallel functions of spoken discourse markers (e.g. Hoey 1983)

2006), discourse connectives (Blakemore 1987, 1988), discourse particles (Schourup, 1985), interactional particles (Maynard 1993), or particles of rapport (Uyeno 1971).

Although there has not been a consensus regarding the terminology, the term 'discourse marker' seems to be the one with the highest currency to date. As Jucker and Ziv (1998: 2) put it, it often serves as a convenient cover term with the least restricted range of application, "one that enables us to include a broad variety of elements under a single conceptual umbrella". In this study, I shall also use the term discourse marker (henceforth DM), but interchangeably with the term *discourse marking particles* which seems appropriate for the Burmese data, as the focus of this study is specifically on particles with discourse functions.

The diversity of the terminology reflects differences in research interests and goals, along with methods and approaches adopted by researchers in their effort to describe a class of lexical items in spoken discourse that often do not receive full attention in traditional reference grammars and linguistic studies. Moreover, the fuzziness of the definition is due to the fact that DMs do not belong to one single grammatical category, but they draw on different word classes including conjunctions, adverbs, interjections, lexical phrases, etc. However, also in this area there is a disagreement among researchers regarding which items should be included in the category of DMs. In the subsequent sections I shall discuss underlying principles and significant features of each of the variant term of DMs listed in the previous paragraph.

The term **discourse marker** is the most popular among a host of competing terms, which is commonly associated with the first and the most detailed work on the subject by Schiffrin (1987). Originally intended as a model of coherence in talk, Schiffrin's study seeks to investigate "local coherence that is constructed through relations between adjacent units in discourse" (ibid. 24). Her discourse model is based on her assumption concerning language as follows, in which context and communication are key elements:

- language always occurs in a context
- language is context sensitive
- language is always communicative
- language is designed for communication (ibid. 3)

According to Schiffrin's functional definition, DMs are "sequentially dependent elements, which bracket units of talk" (ibid. 31), and are used on five different planes of talk as described below:

- **exchange structures** concerned with turns – the notion of sequentially defined units (borrowed from CA and Exchange Structure Analysis)
- **action structures** concerned with speech acts, and involve speakers' relations to each other and to what is being said, meant, and done
- **ideational structures** consist of semantic units referred to as propositions or ideas. The overall configuration of idea structures is governed by three different relations between ideas, namely, *cohesive relations*, *topic relations*, and *functional relations*.
- **participation frameworks** concerned with different ways interactants can relate to one another, and include shifts in speaker attitude, orientation toward the

discourse, the relationship between speaker and hearer

- **information states** concerned with speaker knowledge and meta-knowledge about ideas, and their organization and management

She illustrates how these planes are related to one another to form a (coherent) discourse with Figure 5.

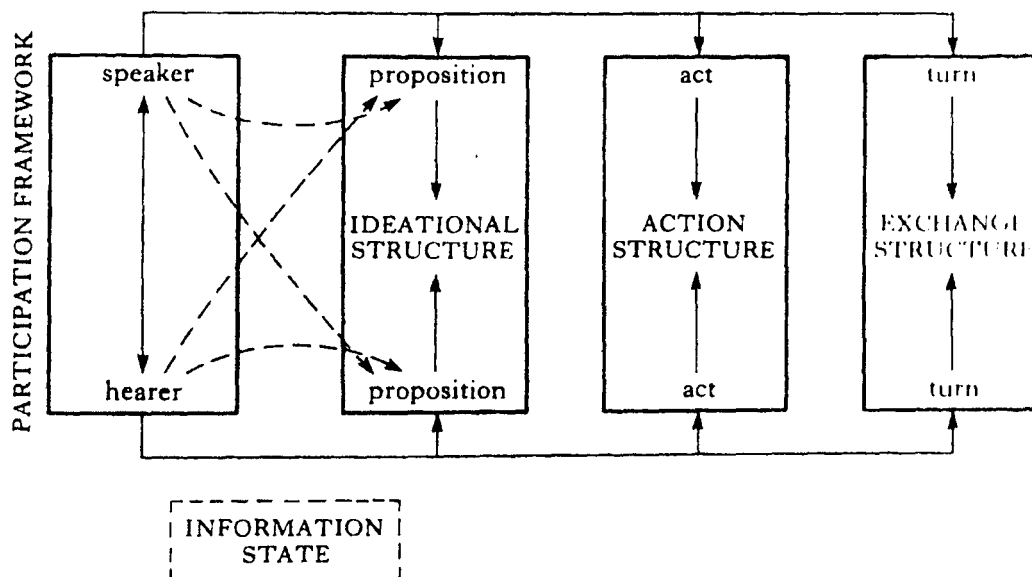


FIGURE 5: DISCOURE MODEL (SCHIFFRIN, 1987: 25)

In Schiffrin's model DMs may operate at local as well as global level and work on a single or multiple planes. For example, DMs like *because* can operate at local level subordinating small units (such as sentence subjects), or a larger unit (such as an entire sentence or longer stretch of text) at global level. Considering that DMs are generally used in more than one component of discourse, she differentiates *primary planes* from *secondary planes*. Using eleven English lexical items – *oh, well, and, but, or, so, because, now, then, y'know, and I mean* – she demonstrates that DMs can be placed in different slots of discourse as shown in Table 42, in which markers with primary planes are marked with an asterix.

Information state	Participation framework	Ideational structure	Action structure	Exchange structure
*oh	oh		oh	
well	*well	well	well	well
		*and	and	and
		*but	but	but
		*or		or
so	so	*so	so	so
because		*because	because	
	now	*now		
then		*then	then	
I mean	*I mean	I mean		
*y'know	y'know	y'know		y'know

Table 42. Planes of talk on which markers function (Schiffrin 1987: 316)

As can be seen in Table 42, Schiffrin (ibid. 316-317) explains that all of the conjunctions (*and, but, or, so, because*) are in ideational structure, but they all have additional functions on other planes. For instance, on the primary plane *because* and *so* work as complementary markers of motive and motivated action (e.g. grounds and claims); on the

secondary planes, they can both operate in information states as "complementary markers of warrants and inferences – both of which concern the organization and use of speaker/hearer knowledge and meta-knowledge" (ibid. 317); and *so* can operate as a turn-transition device in exchange structure, and so forth.

In addition, Schiffrin asserts that DMs also have *indexical functions* which signal the context that is typically made up of four dimensions – speaker, hearer, time, and space. On the interactional level, the marker may index participant coordinates involving speaker (proximal) or hearer (distal) or both: for instance, *oh* focuses on the speaker by marking the speaker's recognition or receipt of information; *well* focuses on both the speaker and hearer since it is a respondent in relation to the prior speaker's expectations. On the textual level, DMs index the utterance to what precedes or follows or both, pointing backward, forward or both directions (ibid. 323).

In terms of meaning, Schiffrin's model suggests that DMs have a core meaning – a notion shared by many researchers – which does not change from use to use, but rather they are situated in different discourse slots. It is the utterance within that discourse slot which is interpreted for social and/or expressive meanings. In line with Schiffrin, Norrick (2003) argues that items such as demonstratives, definite articles, pronouns, etc. are not describable without noting that their reference shifts each time with a change of speaker or setting. In other words, the discourse meaning of a marker is to be assessed in connection with the entire meaning of the utterance in which a DM appears. Nonetheless, Schiffrin emphasizes that

DMs do not 'create' meaning, but 'select' and 'display' a structural relation between discourse units. Schiffrin demonstrates the indexical functions of DMs with the following example:

- (3.3) A: Sue dislikes all linguists.
 B: (**But**) I like her.

(ibid. 318)

Without the DM *But*, the interpretation of B's utterance may represent two different relations: a contrastive relation for someone who likes linguists, or a resultative relation for those who dislike linguists. *But* as a DM signals that contrastive relation is the intended meaning of the utterance. To support this fact, she further explains how a marker that does or does not have linguistic meaning influences the discourse plane. Table 43 illustrates that markers with meaning have their primary functions on ideational planes of talk, and those without meaning manifest reverse tendency (ibid. 319).

Does the expression used as a marker have meaning?	
meaning	no meaning
conjunctions..time deitics..... lexicalisedclauses..particles	
ideational plane	non-ideational plane
What is the primary function of the marker?	

Table 43. Meaning of markers and their use in discourse (ibid 319)

With Table 43 she intends to make a point that if a lexical item used as DM has meaning, its primary use in discourse is likely to be in the organization of referential meanings at a textual level. Otherwise, i.e. if it does not have meaning, its primary use will be elsewhere (ibid 319). By "no meaning", it is implied that DMs contribute nothing to the truth-

conditionality of the proposition expressed by the utterance. Schiffrin's arguments regarding meaning seem well justified. However it is important to note that they are based on English, in which almost every lexical item has a referential or grammatical meaning. It would be interesting to see how the notion of core meaning holds for a language like Burmese in which, although some particles have a grammatical meaning as a primary function, many particles do not have referential nor grammatical meanings, and their semantic and pragmatic values are entirely dependent on the discourse context.

Schiffrin's model of DMs has been followed by many subsequent studies, and among them an important one is by Redeker (1991) who uses the term **discourse operator** (henceforth DO). Both Schiffrin and Redeker see DMs as items signalling coherence relations in adjacent discourse units, and according to Redeker's definition, DOs are "linguistic signals of textual coherence links" (ibid. 1139). The primary function of DO is that it brings to the listener's attention the link between upcoming utterances and immediately preceding discourse context, just like Schiffrin's DMs which bracket units of talk. On the other hand, Redeker finds three planes of discourse sufficient in her model (which replace Schiffrin's five planes of talk) as outlined below.

Ideational structure	represents structural relations between units of talk in terms of relations predicated of the world discourse describes
Rhetorical structure	conceived as a relation between illocutionary intentions conveyed by two discourse units

Sequential structure include topic and other transitions in both interactive and non-interactive discourse
(ibid. 1163)

Redeker's model shares many features of DMs as viewed by Schiffrin. She argues however that certain lexical items do not qualify to be DMs: for instance clausal indicators of discourse structure such as *let me tell you a story, as I said before*, deitic expressions that are not used anaphorically such as *now, here*, anaphoric pronouns and noun phrases, and any other "expressions whose scope does not exhaust the utterance" (ibid 1991: 1168).

Although not directly focusing on DMs, Halliday and Hasan's (1976) seminal work on cohesion in English investigates the use of lexical items in discourse such as *and, but, because, I mean* which are often considered DMs in the current literature. They model cohesion as involving non-structural relations above the sentence, and suggest that cohesive devices through the use of DMs help create a text by indicating semantic relations in an underlying structure of ideas. Martin (2003: 36) concurs with Halliday & Hasan, and proposes the organization of cohesive resources such as *reference* (for referring to a participant or circumstantial element whose identity is recoverable through the use of demonstratives, pronouns, adverbials such as *here, there, now, then, etc.*), *ellipsis* (for omitting a clause or a part of a clause in contexts where it can be assumed), *substitution* (place holders such as *so* for clauses as in *I think so*, or *do* for verbal groups as in *Yes, I do, etc.*), *conjunction*, and *lexical cohesion* (which includes repetition, synonymy, collocations, etc.)

From a pragmatic perspective, Fraser (1990, 1998) uses the term **pragmatic marker** (henceforth PM), of which DMs constitute a sub-category. Drawing primarily from the syntactic classes of conjunctions, adverbs and prepositional phrases, Fraser posits four types of PMs corresponding to four different message types. Besides DMs, the other three categories of PMs are *basic PM* (which signal illocutionary force – e.g. *please*), *commentary PM* (which offers comments on the basic message – e.g. *frankly*), and *parallel PM* (which encodes another message separate from basic/commentary message – e.g. *damn*, vocatives). Fraser justifies his distinction of DMs from PMs stating that DMs do not contribute to the representative sentence meaning, as his primary concern is to "locate DMs in relation to other linguistically encoded elements of sentence meaning" (Schourup, 1999: 238).

However, like DMs (as described by other scholars such as Schiffrin, Redeker), PMs convey procedural meaning – not conceptual meaning – and their focus is on sequential dependency between discourse units, as they signal a "relationship between the interpretation of the segment they introduce (S_2) and the prior segment of discourse (S_1)" (Fraser, 1999: 931). In his later work, Fraser (ibid) defines a DM as a linguistic expression which "(i) has a core meaning (like Schiffrin and Redeker) which can be enriched by the context; and (ii) signals the relationship that the speaker intends between the utterance the DM introduces and the foregoing utterance" (ibid. 936). In this framework, Fraser distinguishes two main classes of DMs as follows:

- DMs which relate messages and include contrastive markers, collateral (elaborative) markers, and inferential markers
- DMs which relate topics and involve propositional domain, epistemic domain (the speaker's beliefs), and speech act domain.

His inventory of DMs is considerably large, which Schourup (1999) suggests may be too inclusive, although many lexical items which are considered DMs in other studies are excluded from his list. For example, focus particles such as *even*, *only*, *just*, and pause markers such as *hmm*, *well*, *oh*, *ahh*, are excluded from the category of DMs, but rather considered commentary markers because they do not "signal a two-placed relationship between the adjacent discourse segments, but rather signal a comment, a separate message, that relates to the following segment" (ibid: 942). Vocatives are also excluded from Fraser's list as they "signal a message in addition to the primary message conveyed by the sentence" (ibid) rather than a relationship between segments – an opinion not shared universally. For instance, McCarthy & O'Keefe (2003) observe that in their corpus-based study, vocatives serve to maintain social relations between the speaker and the addressee, or for managing the interaction, and are therefore considered similar to DMs. If Fraser's model may be criticized for being too inclusive, it has an advantage for being less restrictive. Unlike Schiffrin who only considers utterance-initial items in her DM category, Fraser acknowledges that DMs may occur in medial or final position of the discourse. This is an important point in analysing

Burmese DMs, which are likely to occur with a high frequency at the utterance-final position.

Among other scholars who also prefer the term PM, Hölker (1991: 78-79 in Jucker & Ziv, 1998) identifies four characteristics of PMs as follow:

- they do not affect the truth conditions of an utterance
- they do not add anything to the propositional content of an utterance
- they are related to the speech situation and not to the situation talked about
- they have an emotive/expressive function rather than a referential, denotative, or cognitive function.

As can be seen from the list above, Hölker's model includes the emotive function, an important aspect that is neglected in Fraser's model (and also in Schiffrin's). Another important aspect that Fraser's model lacks is that, as Schiffrin (2003: 59) notes, "multiple function of DMs – including critically, social interactional functions – are downplayed and they are not open to linguistic explanations".

Another scholar who uses the term PM is Brinton (1996) who takes into account the following features in identifying discourse-marking elements:

-
- Phonological and lexical features
 - They are short and phonologically reduced
 - They form a separate tone group
 - They are marginal forms and hence difficult to place within a traditional word class
 - Syntactic features
 - They are restricted to sentence-initial position
 - They occur outside the syntactic structure or they are only loosely attached to it
 - They are optional
 - Semantic feature
 - They have little or no propositional meaning
 - Functional feature
 - They are multifunctional, operating on several linguistic levels simultaneously
 - Sociolinguistic and stylistic features
 - They are a feature of oral rather than written discourse and are associated with informality
 - They appear with high frequency
 - They are stylistically stigmatised
 - They are gender specific and more typical of woman's speech.
-

Table 44. List of basic features of DMs (based on Brinton 1996:33-35, in Jucker & Ziv, 1998)

One important weakness in coherence-based studies such as those of Schifffrin, Redeker and Fraser is that they focus on the type of relations holding between adjacent discourse units. Blakemore (1987) proposes a different model within the framework of Relevance Theory, which can account for the interpretation of DMs in single-utterances as well as inter-utterance discourses. For instance, she uses the following example to demonstrate how her model can better account for the use of a connective like *so* in discourse-initial (3.4) as well as discourse-internal (3.5) positions. She argues that both uses of *so* mark an implicated conclusion, and the interpretation is to be made in terms of relations between the

propositional content and the assumption that may or may not be expressed with a prior utterance.

(3.4) A: You take the first turning on the left.

B: **So** we don't go past the university (then).
(ibid. 85)

(3.5) [Seeing someone return home with parcels]
So you've spent all your money.

(ibid. 86)

In Blakemore's model, DMs are referred to as **discourse connectors** (henceforth DCs), which are "expressions that constrain the interpretation of the utterances that contain them by virtue of the inferential connections they express," (ibid. 105). Her focus is on the processes of utterance understanding rather than the structure of discourse, and her DCs are defined in terms of semantic constraint on relevance. Blakemore's study examines a small set of lexical items such as *and*, *after all*, *you see*, *but*, *so*, and demonstrates how the relevance of one discourse segment is dependent on another. She suggests four ways in which information conveyed by an utterance can be relevant (1992: 138-141):

- "It may allow the derivation of a contextual implication (e.g. *so*, *therefore*, *too*, *also*);
- It may strengthen an existing assumption, by providing better evidence for it (e.g. *after all*, *moreover*, *furthermore*);
- It may contradict an existing assumption (e.g. *however*, *still*, *nevertheless*, *but*);
- It may specify the role of the utterance in the discourse (e.g. *anyway*, *incidentally*, *by the way*, *finally*)."

There are two properties that DCs share with DMs as described in other studies: "connectivity and failure to contribute to the truth-conditions

of the utterances" (Schourup, 1999: 239). Procedural meaning, according to Blakemore (1987), consists of instructions on how to manipulate the conceptual representation of the utterance (ibid. in Fraser 1999). The advantage of her model is that it appeals to contextual effects rather than coherent relations alone, as is the case in other studies mentioned earlier. With this key feature, Blakemore's relevance theory is deemed to be useful for analysing Burmese, for which the discourse meaning of particles is not always retrievable in the immediate syntactic contexts. [For an illustration with the use of 'dii tau' *so* as a discourse connector, see E.g. 5.130 in 5.3.4.2.5].

The term **Discourse particles** (DP) is another variant for DM, used by Schourup (1985) who investigates a set of English lexical items from the perspectives of Speech Act Theory. For his study of DPs such as *I mean, now, you know, like, mind you, sort of, kind of oh, aha, uh*, etc. he proposes a tripartite model which distinguishes three worlds of the speaker, namely *private world, shared world, and the other world*. In Schourup's view, DPs express "private thoughts" in the communication process, which he refers to as 'evincives' which are "flags marking the presence of unspoken thought (ibid. 19). Schourup asserts that since speakers usually " . . . convey ongoing concerns for what they are not indicating on the discourse surface" (ibid. 3) DPs serve to mediate between the speaker's undisclosed thinking and what they are currently doing in the way of talk and other behaviour. Similar to the functions of Schourup's DPs in conveying information on the speaker's private world, McCarthy (1993:172) states that DMs " . . . signal to the receiver,

independently of content, what is happening, where the discourse is, where it is going . . .(and) are therefore a system of management of what is said or written".

Another researcher who has contributed valuable insights into the understanding of DMs is Wierzbicka (1986, 1991). Although she does not offer any particular theoretical model, her studies are significant in discourse studies as they mostly focus on cultural aspects, which are downplayed in other models mentioned earlier. For example, she observes that English cultural norms "favour 'indirectness' in acts aiming at bringing about an action from the addressee" (Wierzbicka, 1991: 63). On the other hand, she explains that Anglo-Saxon cultural norms encourage directness in seeking information from the addressee, as information is viewed as a "free and public good" in Anglo-Saxon culture (ibid.). Although DMs are usually not the main topics of Wierzbicka's studies, these findings are directly applicable to the interpretation and the use of DMs, and discourse structures in general. For instance, a culture that values indirectness is most likely to have linguistic devices that allow indirect ways of expressing ideas. In the case of Burmese, findings from my data indicate that it is through a skilful use of particles as DMs that speakers express their messages in culturally appropriate ways. The following section gives more examples of cultural influences as reflected in discourse marking practices.

3.4. Discourse marking across languages and in languages other than English

In this section I will discuss a few examples of literature on discourse marking in languages other than English. It goes without saying that the list cannot be exhaustive within the scope of this study: however, the samples selected are intended to be representative of languages from three different categories, namely **Asian languages**, **Germanic languages**, and **Romance languages**.

3.4.1. Asian languages

Maynard (1993, 1997), who is probably the most widely known for studies on DMs in Japanese, views DMs in a different light, and proposes the term *Interactional Particles* (henceforth IP) using her model of *Discourse Modality* which is defined as follows:

"Discourse Modality refers to information that does not or only minimally conveys objective propositional message content. Discourse Modality conveys the speaker's subjective, emotional, mental or psychological attitude toward the message content, the speech act itself or toward his or her interlocutor in discourse. Discourse Modality operates to define and to foreground certain ways of interpreting the propositional content in discourse; it directly expresses the speaking self's personal voice on the basis of which the utterance is intended to be meaningfully interpreted"
(Maynard, 1993: 38-39)

Maynard's framework is based on the view of language as social interaction, which is mainly borrowed from Russian psychology and Japanese philosophy. The Russian view comes from that of Vygotsky – a psychologist and semiotician – who emphasizes the dialogic nature of language. This view can be described as:

"...for language to be recognized and to function as such, it must be understood to possess its social and dialogic nature – that is to say, interactionality – as the most fundamental characteristic"

(Maynard, 1993:10)

Vygotsky's view is largely shared by his contemporary in Japanese philosophy – Watsuji Tetsuroo (1889-1960), who describes social human relationships as that of *aidagara* 'betweenness' (ibid 10) by which he posits that "...a person is realized as he or she closely interacts with *huudo* 'climate'... and this process of interaction and integration serves as the basis of human ontology" (ibid). In a nutshell, the focal point of these two views can be described as the "social origin of thought as it is mediated by language" (ibid: 8).

Under the framework of Discourse Modality, Maynard identifies *Discourse Modality indicators* (henceforth DMI)²⁵, which are "non-referential linguistic signs whose primary functions are to directly express personal attitude and feeling as characterized by the concept of Discourse Modality" (ibid. 47). She explicitly makes a point that her DMIs are similar to Schiffrin's DMs, but DMs are only a subset of DMI, which are a larger body of devices that include broader functions across many aspects of Discourse Modality such as Perspective, Informational Status, Personal Emotion and Sociolinguistic Style (ibid. 49).

Maynard describes Japanese as a relational oriented society, and observes that (unlike English and other western languages) Japanese is

²⁵ It is true that DMs are comparable to the whole category of DMI, but I am deliberately focusing on the IPs for two reasons: 1) they refer specifically to particles which are very similar to Burmese particles that are discussed in this study, and 2) I wish to make a point about the *interactional* aspect that has been neglected in other major DM models.

rich in language-explicit means for expressing the emotional aspects of communication (Maynard 1997). For instance there are a variety of attitudinal or emotional phrases, including equivalents of widely used English DMs such as *anyway*, *you know*, etc. Considering social interaction as a fundamental characteristic of language, Maynard's framework of Discourse Modality explicates the interactional nature of (Japanese) language as reflected in the use of DMIs, which share characteristics of DMs.

For instance, the following example demonstrates how *dakara*, which is usually described as a conjunction (equivalent of *so*, *therefore*) in traditional grammars, serves as a DM (discourse connective in Maynard's terms). Maynard points out that *dakara* at the turn-final position in E.g. 5. signals that B is willing to yield the turn – an interpretation, which is supported by the listener response by A in the subsequent turn.

- (3.6) **A:** [Soo na no./]
 so BE IP
Is that right?
- B:** [Zutto hora shigoto de kooyuu/kore/kore kurai no shisei
 always see work at this this about LK posture
 ja-nai?/
 BE-NEG
You know, at her work always, this kind of
- Dakara** uun/
 so/therefore uh
So, uh ...
- (**A:** Soo ka soo ka.)
 so Q so Q
I see, I see
- (**B:** Un huun/
 yeah uh
Yeah . . . well . . .
 [Maynard, 1993: 93]

Japanese DMs in Maynard's model can be described in two major categories: attitudinal adverbs and IPs. She distinguishes manner adverbs, which have a direct bearing on the referential meaning (e.g. *slowly* in *I walk slowly*) and attitudinal adverbs, and the latter mark the speaker's attitude toward the utterance as a whole. In other words, attitudinal adverbs are "linguistic mechanisms that comment on the speaker's attitude or feelings during the speech event, and they function extragrammatically" (ibid. 84). She demonstrates this with examples of the use of *doose*. Although often translated into English as *anyway*, which is often described as a DM in English, Maynard warns us that *doose* and *anyway* do not express the speaker attitude in the same way, which she elucidates with the following example:

- (3.7) ***Doose** Tookyoo e ikimasu ka ?
 anyway Tokyo to go Q
Are you going to Tokyo anyway?

(ibid. 142)

It is easy to note that there is nothing inappropriate about the English utterance with *anyway*, but *doose* is not possible in Japanese for this context, and this is Maynard's explanation: *anyway* in English discourse can express the attitude of either the speaker or the addressee, and *anyway* in E.g.6 is related to the attitude of the addressee. On the other hand, *doose* is impossible in Japanese because "*doose* cannot accompany utterances that straightforwardly ask the addressee's attitude". Maynard (1993, 1997) argues that generally speaking *doose* expresses different attitudes of the speaker – usually a fatalistic one – when faced with an undeniable and unavoidable fact that is predetermined, and the utterance in which *doose* occurs signals a distinctive evaluative and emotional tone as demonstrated in E.g. 7

- (3.8) **Doose** paatii wa taikutsu daroo.
 anyway party T boring BE
The party will be boring anyway.

(Maynard 1993: 146)

Other examples of attitudinal adverbs include *yabari/yappari* 'as expected, at any rate', *sasuga* 'as might be expected', *semete* 'at least, at most, at best', etc. She emphasizes the importance of shared knowledge in the interpretation of DMs: "(one) must position the adverb in relation to society's expectation" (Maynard 1997: 86). She also stresses that the difference is not the lack of such adverbs in English, but that Japanese is equipped with compact lexical items to express speaker's emotional

attitude, and which "offer easier access to encapsulate, express, and share feelings and attitudes" (ibid. 87).

As for IPs, they represent one of the two categories of particles in Japanese which express the speaker's judgment and attitude toward the message and the partner. Japanese IPs include short expressions such as *ne*, *sa*, *no*, *yo*, *na*, which can be attached phrase-, clause-, or sentence-finally. According to Maynard, this utterance-final position is probably an explanation for IPs in Japanese. For instance, Haruhiko Kindaichi (1977, 170 in Maynard 1997) has observed that a "Japanese speaker deplors letting a sentence end on a note of finality". Adding IPs at sentence final position allows the sentence to end with emotional effect. Slightly differently from Maynard's IPs, Uyeno (1971, 131-132, cited in Maynard ibid) proposes the term *particles of rapport* to refer to particles such as *ne* or *na*.

I shall present here Maynard's demonstration of two IPs, namely *yo* and *ne*, which represent two aspects of communication, namely, information oriented and interaction-oriented: *yo* signals interaction, and *ne* helps avoid or remedy a potential failure in interpersonal emotional involvement. She argues that there is a complimentary correlation between information and interaction. For instance, when one has an upperhand on information, one may want to de-emphasize the interaction process including concern for the feeling of the interactant. On the other hand, when one has little information, the speaker is more likely to focus on processor of information. As a result a casual conversation can be charged

with "emotional negotiation that forces the informationally weak to become interactionally dependent" (Maynard 1997: 90).

She illustrates different discourse meanings that *ne* and *yo* express with the following example, in which an utterance with the same propositional meaning is expressed with two different IPs *ne* and *yo*.

(3.9) Ojoosan wa Tookyoo no daigaku e
 daughter T Tokyo LK university to

ikitagatteimasu	a. yo	
want to go	IP	
	b. ne	
	IP	

Your daughter wants to go to a university in Tokyo.
 [A teacher speaking to the father of the student: *ibid.* 89]

As Maynard explains, the choice between *ne* and *yo* is based on the speaker's assumption of the level of addressee's knowledge, and therefore can communicate important interpersonal meaning. A teacher who assumes that the father has little or no knowledge about his daughter's wish is likely to select *yo* because it is the teacher who has more access to information than the addressee. In a reverse situation, *ne* is more likely to be selected (*ibid.*).

From a phonological perspective, at the clause level, Tao (1996) notes that Japanese disclosure does not seem to be centred around the clause. Instead, syntactic clauses are broken down into several intonation units in Japanese narrative discourse (Clancey 1980:222 in Tao). Tao's (1996) study actually focuses on intonation units (henceforth IUs) of Mandarin Chinese in which he gives a detailed account of prosodic units which he considers as discourse marking units. For instance, based on corpus data, Tao distinguishes three types of NP IUs. *Referential NP IUs*

have to do with the functions of referring, where "referents can be activated, introduced, anchored, predicated, listed, contrasted, framed, topicalized, reinforced, etc." (ibid. 83) *Interactional NP IUs* have to do with interaction between participants, and *Rhetorical NP IUs* serve to emphasize or highlight the referent and/or to dramatize an event. Tao, with his in-depth analysis of IU in Mandarin shows that speech units are prosodically based. In addition, he points out that what is considered a major type of speech unit in one language may not be true for another language.

Based on her studies on Japanese vocatives, Maynard (2001) argues that they convey the speaker's varying emotional expressivity toward participants and characters relevant in discourse. She maintains that they achieve expressivity by identifying the "target object/image of the speaker's attention and emotion which encourages shared perspectives of interpretation" (ibid. 680). In line with Maynard, Fujita (web source) analyses the use of demonstrative adjectives such as *ano*, and *sono* in discourse. Like many DMs, her findings suggest that they cannot be used interchangeably in a context, indicating the contextual constraint that is typical of DMs across languages.

Maynard's model of Discourse Modality Indicators, and in particular Japanese IPs seems particularly appealing for the investigation of Burmese particles, as there are similarities between the two languages, in terms of the linguistic structure (they are both verb-final languages, and use particles to express grammatical and discourse meanings) as well as language-explicit means for expressing emotional aspects of

communication (e.g. the use of different pronouns by the mother to child – 'May May' *Mommy* and 'nga' *I* – to express normal relationship and anger, respectively [cf. 2.5.2.1.2 for further details]; the use of 'kyi' *big* and 'lee' *small* to express positive and negative attitudes of the speaker respectively [cf. e.g. 8.1 in 8.2.4 for further details], etc.). Maynard's (1993) study on the use of Japanese *doose* and its English equivalent *anyway*, which is one of the most cited English DMs, cautions us against the interpretation of lexical equivalents without considering the entire discourse context. Such mismatch of the 'same' lexical items in two different languages is also commonly found in translation and comparative studies (see further details in 3.4.5). Just like Japanese IPs such as *ne*, *sa*, *no*, *yo*, *na*, Burmese particles that this study sets out to investigate are short (mostly monosyllabic) lexical items which can be attached phrase- clause- or sentence-finally. In fact, this very characteristic of Burmese particles (post-positionally attachable bound-morphemes) questions the universality of DM criteria as defined in Schiffrin's model, which is based on English.

3.4.2. Germanic languages

A study of DMs in German which it is apposite to describe here is by Möllering (2001) who examines a set of modal particles²⁶. She defines particles as "non-declinables" by which she means a group of words that do not belong to major word classes such as noun, adjective, verb, article, or pronoun. German particles in her definition are different from Burmese

²⁶ The term particles for German stems from a structural approach to categorizing the various parts of speech into word classes based on the inflexional properties of words.

particles as we shall understand them in the present study in that Möllering includes adverbs, conjunctions, prepositions and interjections in the category particles. She observes that in the previous literature, these particles have been studied in terms of management of interaction, as constituting consensus, as a guidance for the hearer, and as contributing to text coherence, which are all features of DMs. What these studies agree on is that the function of German modal particles is illocutionary and interpersonal rather than propositional, one of the main characteristics of DMs. Möllering's findings suggest that they may "indicate the speaker's attitude towards the utterance as well as the intended perception on the part of the hearer, . . . point to the interlocutor's common knowledge, to the speaker's or listener's suppositions and expectations, and . . . create cohesion with previous utterances or mark the speaker's evaluating of the importance of an utterance" (ibid. 131, citing Abraham 1991, Helbig 1994, Thurmair 1989). What is clear from these findings is that German modal particles serve as DMs since they share features of DMs as described in the current literature.

Discourse functions of German modal particles can be illustrated with the use of *ja* and *doch* in the following examples taken from Möllering's study:

(3.10) Es ist nicht einfach, dieses Problem zu lösen.
[It is not easy this problem to solve]
This problem is not easily solved.

(3.11) Es ist **ja** nicht einfach, dieses Problem zu lösen.
[It is **DM** not easy this problem to solve]
This problem is not easily solved (as you know).

- (3.12) Es ist **doch** nicht einfach, dieses Problem zu lösen.
[It is **DM** not easy this problem to solve]
(But you'll agree that) this problem is not easily solved.

As explained by Möllering, (3.10) as a turn in a discussion can be perceived as quite abrupt, but (3.11) and (3.12) involve the hearer's anticipated point of view: in (3.11) a shared opinion is assumed, whereas (3.12) expresses the speaker's desire to overcome a perceived difference of opinion (ibid. citing Weydt 1983).

In another study, Schilder (1998?) investigates temporal DMs in German such as *nachdem* which is equivalent to English *after*. Findings of his corpus-based study indicate that the DM *nachdem* does not only signal a rhetorical relation, but serves a crucial function in discourse organization. He observes that *nachdem* provides "the cue to return to a previously mentioned thread in the discourse", which he demonstrates with the following example.

- (3.13) Peter schoß seinen dreizehnten Spatz an diesem Nachmittag.
Peter shot his thirteenth sparrow at this afternoon.
- (3.14) Er war sehr zufrieden mit seiner Ausbeute.
He was quite happy with this result.
- (3.15) **Nachdem** er den dreizehnten zu den anderen Spatzen
gelegt hatte.
*After he had laid the thirteenth beside the other sparrows,
he went home.*

From a sequencing example like the one illustrated in (3.13 – 3.15), Schilder concludes that *nachdem* does not only signal temporal relation to the event structure, but the situation described in (3.15) refers back to a situation mentioned in (3.13), and therefore prior discourse unit has to be taken into account in interpreting DMs.

In her study of politeness in English and German from a pragmatic perspective, House (1989) discusses the use of *please* and its counterpart in German – *bitte* - in request situations. Findings from her studies suggest that in everyday request situations, the German marker *bitte* is used more frequently and differently than *please* in English discourse, and that the occurrence or non-occurrence of the DM *bitte* is not arbitrary. She observes that *bitte* is used for two preferred strategies: 1) requestive (for which imperative structure is the most common configuration; and 2) Query/Preparatory (in which conventionally indirect request strategy such as *Can/Could you ...* is commonly used). She explains that in the latter case, a preparatory condition is topicalized for the execution of the request in the form of the question. A similar study by Blum-Kulka (1985) examines the use of *please* and its equivalents in Hebrew to assess whether there is a correlation between the presence/absence of *please* and Query Preparatory requestive utterances, and if the Hebrew equivalent of *please* is interpreted as questions, requests, or both. The findings of House and Blum-Kulka are similar, indicating that without the DM *please*, utterances may be taken as request or question, but with the marker, utterances are almost always interpreted as requests only, as in *Can you please move your car, Madam/Können Sie bitte Ihren Wagen da wegfahren?* The significance of such study is that even simple lexical items like *please* serve important discourse functions, and their use is not arbitrary. Consequently accurate interpretation is related to the discourse context and speaker attitude, etc. Similarly in Burmese the use of politeness particles is a feature that deserves special attention in an investigation of DMs, and

the literature of other languages suggests we should be alert to the potential of items previously described only structurally to fulfil discourse-marking roles.

Similarly in Burmese the use of politeness particles is a feature that deserves special attention in an investigation of DMs, and the literature of other languages suggests we should be alert to the potential of items previously described only structurally to fulfil discourse-marking roles.

3.4.3. Romance languages

Schwenter's (2002) study on Spanish DMs focuses on two different types of *adversativity*, which are realized with *pero* and *sino* (both translated as *but* in English). As Schwenter notes, it is well known that some languages have two (or more) adversative conjunctions, but others do not. He gives Spanish as an example of the former type and English and French for the latter. Schwenter argues that the choice between *pero* and *sino* is not arbitrary: "their main difference resides in the contrast imposed by the semantic content of the two forms" (ibid. 44), which he demonstrates with the following example.

(3.16) Juan es bajo **pero** fuerte.
Juan is short but strong.

(3.17) Juan no es bajo **sino** alto.
Juan isn't short but (rather) tall.

According to Schwenter, in (3.16) *pero* reflects the speaker's viewpoint that there is some kind of a contrast or contradiction in the two propositions 'being short' and 'being strong'. The contrast conveyed by *pero* is semantic and uncancellable, and it "contributes to pragmatic

interpretation by constraining the inferential content drawn from the first conjunct" (ibid. 44). In (3.17) on the other hand, *sino* "introduces a 'correction' to an explicitly-denied viewpoint ('Juan isn't short') in the obligatorily negated first conjunct" (ibid). Schwenter extends this notion of PA/SN²⁷ distinction from a monological level of sentence conjunction to their use as DMs in dialogal discourse. He reports that the findings are almost identical for the case of *pero*, but for *sino* however, he observes that it cannot be used as a DM in dialogue, which seems to be linked to the use of connective form *si* 'if' which carries out SN functions in dialogic discourse.

In French, Hansen (1998) investigated six different DMs, namely *bon*, *ben*, *eh bien*, *puis*, *donc*, and *alors*. Without taking into account their discourse meaning, they are often translated into English as *good*, *well*, *well*, *then*, *therefore/so*, and *then/so* (Harper, Collins & Robert. 1998 – *French College Dictionary*). Her in-depth study yields identifications of their discourse functions, of which I will mention a few here. For instance, *bon* can be used as an adjective, interjection or DM whereas the use of *ben* is more restrictive. *Ben* is usually a marker of irrelevance (in terms of Relevance Theory). *Eh bien* is often seen as a marker of result or conclusion, but her findings suggest that *eh bien* also functions as a marker of comparison and contrast. Similarly, other lexical items which are traditionally considered a marker of result or conclusion such as *donec* and

²⁷ This term PA/SN stems from a now classic paper by Anscombe & Ducrot (1977) who examine the syntactic, semantic and pragmatic characteristics of the two adversative conjunction types such as *pero* and *sino* (PA for *pero*, SN for *sino*). (Schwenter, 2002)

alors signal a shift in perspective. *Puis*, which is usually considered a time adjunct, demonstrates characteristics of conjuncts, and so forth.

Siepmann's (2005) study is a little different from the majority of other studies on DMs, which usually focus on one-word or short expressions. Siepmann's contrastive study includes three languages – English, French and German – and examines secondary level discourse markers (SLDMs) which are multi-word units which function as DMs, such as *strictly speaking*, *in other words*, *as far as I know* in English; *c'est-à-dire*, *il est admis que*, *autant dire que*, in French. Based on his multi-approach study, including corpus analysis, Siepmann identifies their discourse functions such as *exemplifiers*, *reformulators and resumers*, or *inferreds*. Siepmann's study is an important reminder that in investigating DMs, it is important to include SLDMs as they play a significant role in the discourse structure, which is likely to differ from culture to culture. His findings also indicate that French SLDMs outnumber those available in English and German, which Siepmann seems to suggest as attributing to the greater stylistic variability and elegance of French (ibid. 239).

Following Hansen's model, Burmese particles such as 'pyiii taw' can be analysed as a conjunction *when*, *after* or a grammatical expression *after having V-*, or a discourse connector equivalent to *and then* [see further details in 5.3.4.2.1]. Siepmann's model alerts us to the importance of multi-word units which serve as discourse markers. For example, although particle 'ka' is described as subject/topic marker and 'leeh' is defined as an equivalent of *also* in traditional reference materials, findings

of my previous corpus-based study (Hnin Tun, 2005) indicate that 'ka leeh' together is used to express reproach or self-defence.

3.5. Corpus-based translation studies

Corpus-based translation studies have shed light on methodologies of comparative and contrastive analyses. Among them, Loken's (2004) corpus-based contrastive study on expressions of modal possibility in English and Norwegian demonstrates that various types of expressions of modality are distributed differently in English and Norwegian. She focuses her study on the use of *can*, *could*, *may* and *might* and their Norwegian equivalents, namely *kan*, *kunne* (preterite), *kunne* (infinitive), and *kunnt*, and an investigation of each form in the parallel corpus supports her claim. For example, her findings indicate that there are differences between *may* and *kan* expressing probability, that they behave differently with respect to negation and therefore do not correspond in negated sentences, etc.

Similarly, in a corpus-based comparative study of the Swedish modal verb *få* and its equivalents in French (including *pouvoir*, *falloir*, *devoir*, and *avoir le droit de*) Ramnäs (2004) points out that realisations of modal meanings differ in the two languages, and that in order to find the French equivalents of *få* it is necessary to study the different uses of *få* separately. His study points out that the uses of *få* are distinguished by means of syntactic, semantic and pragmatic criteria, and the findings demonstrate that the meaning of *få* seems to be dependent on the syntactic frame in which it occurs. In the same vein, in another corpus-based

comparative study, Johansson (2004) demonstrates with examples from his findings on the use of *person* and its lexical equivalent in Norwegian *menneske*, that the two words are used differently in spite of the similarity in form and origin. Johansson's study emphasizes the risk of comparing lexical items without taking into account the contextual and socio-cultural aspects, which are language specific.

What these studies illustrate in common is that they are based on parallel corpora of translated texts and their source texts, which are usually translated by well-known authors who are presumably proficient in both languages. The use of such parallel corpora was originally considered for this study, but finally discarded for the main reason that there are not enough available and reliable²⁸ data of translated texts from Burmese to English. Moreover, a comparative analysis of lexical items that serve discourse marking functions through different morpho-syntactic realisations in two different languages such as Burmese and English (see further details in 6.2 and 7.1) entails further complexities involving a comparative methodology. What these studies attest, however, is that even when there are lexical equivalents in the two languages involved, their distributions – syntactic, semantic or pragmatic – are likely to be different, even in the same context, a phenomenon that is most likely to be prominent in comparing discourse marking systems of Burmese and English, which are syntactically-oriented and lexically-oriented ones respectively.

²⁸ By 'reliable', I mean texts translated by someone who has a high level of proficiency in both languages.

In terms of corpus-based comparative methodologies, a study by Tognini-Bonelli & Manca (2004) is considerably different in the sense that it is based on corpora of two comparable sets of texts from different languages, rather than the translations, as has been done traditionally. In their study, they compare the use of typical expressions of concepts and functions used in English and Italian 'farmhouse holidays' on the Web. Furthermore, in carrying out this comparative analysis, they propose three steps as shown below:

(1) identify(ing) a specific function together with its formal realisations in L1

(2) compar(ing) it with another set (function + formal realisation), or other sets, in L2 and finally in the light of previous stage

(3) attempt(ing) to encode the given function into a chosen formal realisation in the target language

(ibid. p. 371)

Proceeding through several stages of contextualisation of items in such a way is an interesting methodology that seems suitable, or even necessary, in comparing Burmese and English, two languages that differ in terms of linguistic as well as socio-cultural rules.

Their study focuses on the use of *welcome* and its Italian equivalent *benvenuto*, which have "similar grammatical, lexical and even morphological realizations" (ibid. 382) in both languages, and which are both a central concept in the field of eco-tourism and farm-house accommodation. Yet there is a "radical mismatch in frequency of

occurrence between the two words"²⁹ (ibid. 383). By examining the recurrent patterns of co-selection of a word, and taking into account the contextual circumstances which go beyond the word level, their study shows that "...*welcome* should be translated with some form of the verb *accettare* [my note: English *accept*] when it applies to 'pets', and with some form of *potere* [my note: English *can*] when it applies to 'guests' in the specific restricted language of Farmhouse Holidays in the UK." (ibid. 384).

Given that parallel corpora of Burmese and English are not feasible for this study as mentioned earlier in this section, the model proposed by Tognini-Bonelli & Manca is not exactly replicable for the present comparative study. Nonetheless the valuable insight from this study is that functional equivalence can be established at the level of wider (discourse) units, which is in line with discourse analytical models which investigate the language use beyond the sentence level. For example, the topic marking function can be analysed on its own terms in Burmese and English, and its realisations can be compared (see further details in 5.3.3.2.1 and 7.2.1.1 for Burmese and English respectively).

3.6. Summary of Chapter 3

In this chapter, I have presented a review of relevant literature on spoken language and discourse marking in English as well as other languages. Although there are certain features that are typically associated

²⁹ 324 instances of *welcome* vs. 4 instances of *benvenuto a/te* out of 203,000 words in British 'Farmhouse corpus' and 115,000 words in Italian 'Agriturismo' corpus

with written or spoken language, it is impossible to distinguish the two modes with absolute certainty. However, spoken (colloquial) and written (literary) Burmese are more distinctly marked (cf. Ch. 2.2), especially in their use of particles – the focus of this study – which obviates the issue of establishing criteria for spoken Burmese. Along the same line, it has been found that variation between different genres and registers may be as great as variation between the two modes. Generally speaking, DMs are considered a property of speech, and there is an abundance of studies on linguistic elements which serve as DMs, but there has not been a consensus regarding their terminology, definition, nor classification, which is probably due to the differences in research interests, goals, and approaches among the existing studies.

However, there is a sufficient amount of overlap among the frameworks that have been proposed, and their underlying principles and findings of the studies, which allow us to formulate generalizations about discourse marking elements to a certain degree. The generalizability seems reduced when it concerns Asian languages, especially those less commonly studied such as Burmese – because most of the literature on discourse marking and discourse theories in general is based on models of widely studied languages such as English. In studies involving comparative analyses of two languages, it is important to keep in mind that differences between languages lie not only in the linguistic features, but also in the entire discourse structure, which is closely governed by socio-cultural norms of the respective speech communities. Comparative analytical models that are based on parallel corpora of translated texts are

not applicable to the present study. On the other hand those that compare expressions of concepts and functions in the same situation, and that examines their meaning in terms of patterns of co-occurrence in larger discourse units in their comparative analysis (such as the study by Tognini-Bonelli & Manca, 2004) serve as a framework for comparing Burmese and English (cf. 3.4.5 for further details). In sum, existing theories provide frameworks, but findings must be interpreted with care to justify or question the validity of the theories.

In the next chapter, the main research questions, the data selection, and the analytical framework adopted for this study are explained in detail.

Chapter 4

Outline of the present study

4.1. Research questions

This study concerns a comparative analysis of discourse marking elements (DMs) in naturally occurring spoken language in Burmese and in English, two languages with different linguistic as well as historical and socio-cultural backgrounds. As explained in Chapter 2, Burmese and English belong to two different major language families. Consequently their differences manifest not only in their morphosyntactic features including word classes, word order, and the like but they are also associated with the cultural values of the east and the west respectively. Without over generalizing stereotypical prejudices of the two cultures, it is safe to say that their cultural differences are reflected in the role of hierarchy, the degree of directness in expressing opinions or requests, etc. which are closely associated with various aspects of the discourse structure.

This study is different from the bulk of corpus-based scholarship in discourse studies that use a comparative approach involving English. Such studies tend to start out with widely studied discourse features of English, and use the findings in English as a basis for identifying DMs in their language. This study starts out instead with an investigation of Burmese data, and aims to find out how the same or similar discourse functions of the selected Burmese particles are realized in English. My preliminary analyses of spoken Burmese data suggest that Burmese particles share many characteristics of DMs, as described in the literature to date. For

example, they do not belong to one particular word class (as defined in the traditional grammars), they do not affect the propositional meaning of the utterance but their meaning is to be interpreted above and beyond the sentence level based on the surrounding discourse contexts, and they are often used to express interpersonal meanings. On the other hand, some linguistic features of Burmese particles are different from those of English. While items widely accepted as DMs are typically free-standing morphemes in English, Burmese particles are bound morphemes, and they often lack one-to-one equivalents in English. If the Burmese particles are validated as DMs (i.e. they serve discourse-marking functions), it is a valid question to ask how these functions are realized in English, which lacks exact counterparts in its linguistic system. This is in fact the main research question that this study aims to answer.

Given that there is hardly any literature on DMs of spoken Burmese, nor a systematic analysis of particles in terms of their functions in spoken discourse³⁰, the first major task of this study is to identify DMs in the Burmese corpora, which involves identifying discourse features/functions associated with a selected set of particles in order to determine whether they can be considered DMs. Existing theoretical frameworks are used as a point of departure, but they are mostly based on western languages such as English, and therefore found to be not entirely suitable

³⁰ Some reference materials include discourse functions of some particles in their definitions [for example *Dictionary of Grammatical Forms* by Okell & Allott 2001], but they are mostly mentioned somewhat vaguely. There is only a partial attention paid to their discourse functions in the definitions, since the priority is usually given to their grammatical functions. Few particles have been studied in terms of features of discourse such as topic marking [cf. Hopple 2003. *The Structure of nominalization in Burmese*] but they are not presented as DMs, i.e. within the widely referenced frameworks of DMs.

for defining Burmese DMs. For instance, according to the existing frameworks, DMs are typically used utterance initially and they are detachable from the syntactic structure without affecting the truth conditionality of the utterance (Schiffrin, 1987). However, in Burmese, a verb-final language, particles are typically attached to other lexical items post-positionally [cf. Ch 2.5.2.2], and consequently many particles are most likely to occur in utterance-final position. Unlike English, some Burmese particles are considered an essential part of the syntactic structure, but it is the choice between different particles that is indicative of the discourse meaning of the utterance. This study therefore intends to locate shortcomings of the current frameworks and propose new/additional dimensions for the definition of DMs.

In cases where the discourse functions identified in Burmese are absent altogether in English, this study will try to investigate if and how the need for certain discourse functions is associated with specific socio-cultural rules of the language community. It is also an objective of this study to attempt to formulate an overall discourse structure of spoken Burmese, based on the repeated patterns of discourse features in association with discourse contexts, including genres, text types, speaker roles and the like. Furthermore, since current definitions of DMs that are based on western languages such as English may be too restrictive for the definition of Burmese DMs, this study will seek to answer what the findings of the present study suggest about current discourse theories. Last but not least, corpus-based approaches use "word" as their unit of analysis, but the notion of word is problematic for Burmese, which uses a

syllable system. Therefore the data for this study also questions the notion of word as a unit of analysis for a corpus-based approach, especially cross-linguistic comparisons.

To recapitulate, the main research question that this corpus-based study attempts to answer is:

- **Do the particles in Burmese serve discourse functions, and if so, what are the discourse functions typically associated with specific particles?**

Furthermore, this study also intends to answer the following sub-questions:

- **Once the prime discourse functions of particles are identified in the Burmese corpora, what are their equivalent realisations in English, if any?**
- **How can we justify the validity of the existing models of discourse marking systems, which tend to involve prejudgments based on western languages such as English?**

4.2 The corpus

4.2.1. Overview of the data

The selection of Burmese data includes a variety of texts that are representative of natural spoken language – spontaneous as well as pre-scripted speech delivered in both spoken and written media. By natural, I mean that language use in the data has not been elicited for the purposes of subsequent linguistic analysis. Special care has been taken in selecting data that are likely to yield an adequate number of instances of the relevant markers for the analysis. All texts manifest characteristics of spokenness in the use of linguistic items, in particular particles, that are traditionally

associated with colloquial Burmese [cf. Ch. 2.2], and therefore considered representative of spoken Burmese.

I recognize that the use of pre-scripted speech in the corpus is open to criticism, and its inclusion in my data calls for a few comments. Originally motivated by practical reasons, the use of pre-scripted speech in the corpus turns out to be advantageous for the present study, as it contributes to the investigation of variation, and additionally, it shares many characteristics of natural spoken genres [cf. Ch. 3.1, 3.1.1, 3.1.2]. In other words, variety is given priority over spontaneity in the data selection for Burmese. Sinclair (1991:16) labels pre-scripted speech (such as film scripts and drama texts) 'quasi-speech' and argues that they represent speech in artificial setting, and therefore have only a very limited value in a general corpus. We should note that Sinclair's criticism specifies the disadvantage in terms of its usefulness for "a general corpus", in which case it can be argued that the purpose of this study is to investigate the meaning of particles in discourse and is therefore more specific than building a general corpus. Furthermore, findings indicate that Burmese seems to place a stronger emphasis on interpersonal meanings in discourse, such as respecting hierarchical roles, saving face, etc., which are reflected in the use of particles as DMs. Subsequently I will argue that Burmese DMs share many characteristics of Interactional Particles [IPs], a term used by Maynard (1993, 1997) to describe discourse-marking elements in Japanese [cf. Ch. 3.4.1]. Preliminary findings suggest that this phenomenon is likely to hold true in pre-scripted speech.

In terms of variety, the corpus represents not only different genres of spoken Burmese, but also different speaker categories. They do not come from one homogenous speech community but represent different sexes, age groups and social backgrounds, and different relationships between the interactants. Therefore there is a higher possibility to ensure that the patterns found do not merely reflect the idiosyncrasies of one individual, or one speech community, a favourable situation for the generalization of interpretations. The English data also reflect a variety of speaker categories such as sexes, age groups and social backgrounds

It is undeniable that in an ideal situation, identical corpora in two languages should be used for a comparative analysis, which is in practice almost impossible without a considerable amount of planning in corpus design, which is beyond the scope of this study. The English data are thus drawn from existing available corpora, mainly from conversational narratives and spontaneous conversations for spontaneous speech, and radio drama from BBC for pre-scripted speech.

It is worth making a few remarks on issues regarding the comparability of the corpora. Although there are personal interviews in the Burmese corpus, they are not included in the English corpus because the Burmese interviews selected in this study are more like casual conversations with a hidden agenda on the part of the 'interviewer', rather than formal interviews conducted by news reporters and talk show hosts. Moreover, the Burmese interviews in the data demonstrate interpersonal aspects typical of spoken discourse such as the way speakers present their opinions, make requests, manage turns or solicit information using

particles, in accordance with the cultural norms. My interest here is not so much how the speakers construct personal interviews but rather how they manipulate the use of particles when they want to express specific discourse functions that are present in other types of spoken Burmese in the corpora. In this respect, I consider the Burmese interviews in the present data as a type of casual conversation and a parallel corpus of English interviews not necessary for the purpose of this study³¹ (see further in 4.3.1.1 and 4.3.2.1).

In the same vein, film scripts are included in the pre-scripted speech category for Burmese, but the English pre-scripted speech is made up of radio dramas only. BBC TV scripts were initially considered but upon a close examination of the data, it was found that they contain a large amount of directives and (rather technical/theatrical) description of scenes for actors. They are therefore not exactly comparable to the Burmese film scripts, of which the language is not much different from the radio plays as they consist mainly of dialogues among protagonists. Moreover given the extreme difficulty of obtaining natural spoken Burmese data, as mentioned earlier, variety and spokenness is given a priority for the data collection for Burmese in this study, and film scripts and dialogues in fiction are included to maximize the corpus size and variety of natural spoken Burmese (see further details in 4.3.1.2.3 and 4.3.2.2).

³¹ One segment of the Saarbrücken corpus is labeled 'interviews' but they also appear to be more like casual conversations. It is true that this situation is similar to that of the Burmese interviews, which are classified as a separate sub category in this study, but my intention here is to provide a more thorough description of the Burmese corpora for a general audience who is likely to be unfamiliar with Burmese. Nevertheless I do not find significant differences between the interviews and the rest of the casual conversations in the Burmese nor the English corpus.

4.2.2. Comparing corpora: normalization process

In comparing Burmese and English corpora, which use two different systems of measuring corpus size, it is necessary to devise a normalization process. On average, there are approximately 2,500 syllables produced in ten minutes of audio recordings in Burmese, yielding 15,000 syllables per hour. Based on the existing corpus size and their transcripts, it can be calculated that in English, speech is produced at approximately 10,000 words per hour (figure verified by McCarthy, personal communication, in relation to the CANCODE corpus; see McCarthy 1998). Therefore we will assume that the [syllable:word] ratio is approximately [1.5:1]. In other words, every 15 syllables in Burmese are considered equal to 10 words in English for comparative analyses in this study.

4.2.3. Particularities of the Burmese corpus

In doing corpus analysis of Burmese, it is important to note that there is no concordancing software available for Burmese, nor any word-processing program that does "word counts" for Burmese. In fact, the notion of "word", as perceived for languages that use an alphabetic script cannot be applied to Burmese, which uses a syllabic script. I am therefore using "syllables" as a measuring system for the Burmese corpus. Consequently, 'word count' in the *Wordsmith Tools* program (Scott 1998) has to be interpreted as syllable count for Burmese.

After frequency lists are mechanically generated with *WordSmith Tools*, particles to be examined have to be isolated manually because many

particles are either homonyms or polysemous. For example 'paa' can be a polite particle or a main verb meaning *to be included*; and 'teeh' can be a sentence final particle or an adverbial intensifier, and so forth, depending on the context. Moreover, some syllables may be monosyllabic particles or a part of a 'word'. For instance, 'ka' may be the subject marker or a part of the noun 'kA lee' meaning *child* or the verb 'kA saaa' meaning *to play*.

From the early stages of analysing the Burmese corpus data it has come to my attention that while the computer programs and concordancing tools have facilitated corpus-analysis for English and other western languages alike, possibilities of machine generated analysis for Burmese are highly limited. As it has not been a straightforward matter to define the notion of 'word' in Burmese, Wordsmith tools can take us only as far as generating frequency lists (mostly for mono-syllabic lexical items³²), and concordance files, from which extracting relevant information requires several steps of going through concordance lines one by one, and manually isolating the relevant instances. For instance, steps necessary to identify discourse functions of particle 'taw' among the 3.540 instances include:

- eliminating 'taw' tokens which do not fit into the category under investigation such as 'taw' in poly-syllabic words (e.g. 'kaan taw' *to pay homage to Buddha, elders*), 'taw' as an object pronoun *you* or a possessive adjective *your*,

³² It is possible to generate a frequency list in clusters, but my preliminary analyses suggest that this method also involves a considerable amount of manual selection in order to extract relevant data, the clusters yielded on the frequency list are mostly incomprehensible and therefore do not deem useful for the present study.

- eliminating 'taw' with mainly grammatical functions (e.g. 'taw' expressing an English equivalent of *when*)

- distinguishing the meanings of 'ssoo taw' among 'NP/utterance + ssoo taw' meaning *since+Np is/utterance*, 'baa ppyiq lo leech ssoo taw' meaning *because*, and an utterance-initial 'ssoo taw' which functions as a discourse connector such as *so*, etc.

In sum, analysing corpus in Burmese involves a labour intensive task of manual selection and extraction of relevant data.

4.2.4. Transcription of the Burmese data

All data were first transcribed in Burmese³³. In order to ensure a maximum consistency, the texts are transcribed based on their standardized written form because most items in Burmese undergo sound change (mutations) according to their phonetic environment (Ch.2.4, 2.5.1). For example, according to their neighbouring phonemes, the polite particle ပါ 'paa' can be pronounced /pa/ or /ba/, sentence final particle တေ တေ 'teeh' may be pronounced /teh/ or /deh/, and so forth. On the other hand, as explained in Chapter 2, Burmese orthography is more stable, and therefore used as a preferred tool for transcription.

The Burmese transcription is then converted manually into Roman characters. To my knowledge there is no concordancing software program available for texts in Burmese script. In addition, Burmese being a tonal

³³ It is arguable that this step may be skipped, but it is my preference to keep the original transcript in Burmese as it serves as a (stable) reference throughout the study, for transcription as well as for the analyses.

language, it was a challenge to find an appropriate transcription system given that the roman script is not exactly equipped to represent the phonemic nature of Burmese tones. Preliminary explorations with diacritics did not render satisfactory results, particularly because accent marks are not properly recognized in my chosen concordancing programs. I opted therefore to create a transliteration system that allows me to transcribe Burmese texts in roman characters that are compatible for use with my chosen software suite, *WordSmith Tools* (Scott, 1998). In the current transcription system, I use one to three vowels to represent the three tones in Burmese³⁴, [cf. Ch. 2.5.1 for further details], which can be described as follows:

- one vowel (e.g. /a/ /e/ or /ou/) represents a *short tone*,
- two vowels (e.g. /aa/ /ee/ or /ouu/) represent a *middle tone*, and
- three vowels (e.g. /aaa/ /eee/ or /ouuu/) represent a *long tone*

Table 45 illustrates examples of transcription for Burmese linguistic items representing the three tones [See Appendix B for a detailed description of transcription codes].

³⁴ The number of tones and their labels are disputable as they have not yet received a consensus [cf. Ch. 2.5.1]. The three-tone system that I have chosen here represents the three tones that are typically reflected in the standardized Burmese orthography. Since prosodic features are not included in the analyses for this study, labels are also simplified as *short*, *medium*, and *long tones*.

	Short tone	Mid tone	High tone
Bse orthography	တဲ	တယ်	တဲ
Transcription	teh	teeh	teeeh
Meaning	<i>It is said that</i>	Verb Sentence Marker	<i>a hut</i>

Table 45. Illustration of transcription system for three tones in Burmese

For the rest of the transcription, the notation system used in this study is relatively simple, but it is one which has been adequate for my needs. For instance, the prosodic and paralinguistic features are not directly relevant to this study and are therefore excluded. On the other hand, I have found it useful to consider the turn positions in relation to the discourse functions, and accordingly they are marked with <\$#> in the transcript, in which # represents a speaker number such as speaker 1, speaker 2, etc. Laughter and pauses are also indicated where I find it potentially relevant for the analyses. When examples are presented throughout the thesis, only a partial phonemic transcription is included, mainly for the items that are under consideration, which are marked in bold.

4.3. Description of the corpora

4.3.1. Burmese data

The Burmese corpus consists of texts from four different genres, namely spontaneous narratives, dialogues in fiction in spoken medium as well as in written medium, and personal interviews. Narratives and personal interviews represent spontaneous speech and dialogues in fiction represent pre-scripted speech, but they all represent, to a greater or lesser

extent, naturally occurring spoken discourse in Burmese. Narratives and casual interviews were recorded by various individuals in Myanmar for their research purposes mostly in the field of history, political sciences, or linguistics³⁵. Pre-scripted spoken dialogues are drawn from radio plays broadcast in Burma, from commercially produced and available audio plays, and scripts of feature films. Dialogues in fiction in written mode are drawn from short stories based on their large portion of dialogues (as opposed to descriptions) and lexical expressions of colloquial Burmese [cf. Ch. 2.2]. One added advantage of dialogues in fiction is that there is a parallel corpus available: these stories have been translated into English by a native speaker of American English, who has an advanced level language proficiency in Burmese. Analyses of this partial parallel corpus can give us valuable information about how Burmese DMs are transferred into English discourse. Although the findings are by no means sufficient for a language-wide generalization, they can reveal a great deal about tendencies. Table 46 gives a summary of the Burmese corpus, with a total number of 249,343 syllables.

³⁵ One of the film narratives is provided by a researcher in linguistics, (who is also a learner of Burmese living in Myanmar and engaged in language immersion). However nowhere in the recording can we find any indication of artificial speech, or the topic as a subject of linguistic research where the researcher is attempting to obtain specific information of particular features of language. In this sense this particular recording is not different from the other film narratives.

Description of texts	Total # of texts/category	Total # of syllables*
1. Spontaneous speech:	11	127, 266
• interview	5	73, 670
• film narratives	6	53, 596
2. Pre-scripted speech	16	122, 077
• audio plays	10	66, 237
• short stories (written medium)	4	14, 810
• film scripts	2	41, 030
Total		249, 343

Table 46: Overall description of Burmese corpus

4.3.1.1. Burmese data: spontaneous speech

Under this category, there are altogether 10 different texts, which consist of **personal interviews** and **film narratives**. A brief description of the context for each text is given below³⁶.

4.3.1.1.1. Interviews

All interviews are recorded in a private place such as a house of someone, and each interview lasts approximately 60 to 90 minutes. The interviewees are informed about the recording prior to the interview, but are not aware of the actual purpose of the interview.

Inter 1.

The interviewer is a young woman who is conducting research in history. The interviewee is an old lady who lives in a home for the aged in the countryside, who recounts her life under the Japanese occupation during the 1940s in Myanmar. Having been orphaned at a young age, she

³⁶ For titles of the stories (plays and films), a rough translation is given, but it only represents my tentative suggestion, and modifications may be made later. For short stories (in written medium) on the other hand, the titles in translation represent a part of a thorough translation of the entire stories, and therefore shall be retained.

lived with some relatives, and they had to move around a lot during the Japanese occupation. Later she worked in a small restaurant catering to the Burmese military and married with a military officer, but subsequently separated and was left with six children. After her children became adults and left home, she finally decided to live in a home for the aged.

Inter 2.

The interviewer is a young man conducting a survey to evaluate a radio program broadcast abroad but in Burmese. The interviewee is a man (probably middle-aged) living outside of Myanmar, and a regular listener of the radio program in question.

Inter 3.

The interviewer is a young man who seems to be conducting a survey on how people keep themselves informed about current affairs in and outside of Myanmar. The interviewee is a young woman who is living abroad at the time of the interview, and talking about her experiences and opinions regarding various radio programs in Myanmar and abroad.

Interview 4: AT

During this 90-minute interview, there are one or two other people present besides the interviewer and the interviewee. The interviewee is a middle-aged widow with seven children, who is talking about her life, particularly how she met her husband, who came from a different religious background (she is Buddhist, and he was Hindu). Consequently her father did not approve of the marriage in the beginning but finally gave consent. Later the husband was involved in a fight with his sister who died in the fight, though accidentally. As a result he spent some time in prison. Since

his release after acquittal, life has begun to change for her family, leading to hardship.

Interview 5: SJ

The interviewee who is the main speaker in this recording is a young man, a native speaker of Burmese, being interviewed by a graduate student from an American film institute. This interview was conducted as part of a film project, focusing on people in Myanmar. The interviewer asks questions in English (there are eight altogether) that were prepared in advance, and the interviewee is requested to answer in Burmese, which usually makes the interview more like a monologue. However, the interviewee's speech throughout the entire recording sounds natural, as if he were really communicating with the interviewer who in reality does not understand a word of what he is saying. I assume that it is perhaps because there is enough non-verbal feedback from the interviewer, such as a look of interest, nodding and smiling, etc. or there are also other Burmese speakers present, although I cannot hear any backchannels on the tape.

4.3.1.1.2. Film narratives

This section includes recounts of six different films, which were done in various informal settings, with one or more people present. Recordings of each text last approximately from 15 to 30 minutes, in which the main narrators are recounting films they have seen to researchers such as myself.

FN 1 (title unknown)

In this film the main protagonist is a rich young man who hates money. After realizing that the girl he wants to marry also comes from a rich family, he decides to leave her. Coincidentally he is robbed on the road while he is walking alone, and subsequently is left unconscious on a bus that takes him to the countryside where he is looked after by a kind family. He then falls in love with the daughter. While he is enjoying his life there, the ex-fiancée finds him after a determined search, but he finally decides to choose a simple life in the countryside.

FN 2: Loo taiiin ta ta taiiin ya see (*May all your wishes be fulfilled*)

This film is a love story between two young people from rich families. The girl is the only daughter, arrogant and spoilt. The boy's interest in her starts as an object of a challenging bet with a group of friends who have been annoyed by her arrogance and unjust behaviour towards boys. The boy starts pursuing her under the guise of various characters such as a postman, electrician, night watch, etc., which allows him access to her house, and to befriend the mother. Both the girl and the boy ended up falling for each other, but soon she finds out about the bet, which sets off quarrels and squabbles. In the end however they are reconciled.

FN 3: Kkuun nA siin A luuun (*Never-ending longing*)

In this film a couple – a young woman from a rich family and a modest writer – married against the wishes of the woman's father. After leading a modest, happy life together with a young daughter, the wife inherits a significant sum of money from the father, who passed away.

The wife begins to use the inheritance to have a better lifestyle whereas the husband is against material comfort, a situation that leads them to disputes and unpleasantness in the family. One day the husband is injured and handicapped during a trip to the countryside, which keeps him from an immediate return home. Since he leaves for the journey while they are on bad terms, the wife does not bother to look for him, but the daughter does. After finding the father in a small village, the daughter acts as an intermediary between the parents, a persevering effort that leads to a happy ending.

FN 4: Yiin tteeh mhaa baa nyaa baa nyaa (*Unsettled feeling*)

This film tells a story of four main protagonists, who end up as two couples. At the beginning a young male composer falls in love with a young singer. Given that the girl's parents disapprove of their love affair as well as her career as a singer, they plan to elope. Unfortunately the boy has a motorcycle accident on the way to the rendezvous. When they meet again by chance much later in a different city, the girl is already married to another man, whose sister is in love with the young composer. Believing that the composer has decided to pursue the sister as revenge, the ex-fiancée tries to prevent them from getting involved. After various incidents of misunderstandings when their past is revealed and attempts to resolve them, the two couples arrive at a happy ending.

FN 5: Moo theq lee koo kkywee teh ssauun (*Winter that brings storm*)

This film is known to be intended as a piece of propaganda to promote Burmese culture, in particular the "proper" behaviour of young women. The main protagonist is a young rich girl who appreciates

western culture. She is in love with a boy who has his heart set on another girl with traditional Burmese values. When the rich girl finds this out, she plots against the love affair of the couple, which leads to a break-up. Yet the boy does not change his mind, neither in terms of his love for the girlfriend nor for the friendship he has with the rich girl. Being upset and heartbroken, the rich girl decides to go abroad, where she encounters problems and dies at the end.

FN 6: A Mee mA pyaaaw loo teh nya eiq yaa wiin pouun pyiin (*Bed time story that Mother doesn't want to tell*)

Similar to Text N° 5, this film is intended to promote proper behaviour among young women in Myanmar. The main protagonist is a young girl from a poor family who works in a private company where she falls in love with the company president. Against the warnings of a friend, she accompanies the man to his apartment, and subsequently gets pregnant. The man, although being a decent individual, has a young possessive sister who also happens to be very sick, a situation which makes the love affair difficult to continue smoothly. In the end, the poor girl dies during her attempt to have an abortion.

4.3.1.2. Burmese data: pre-scripted speech

Under this category, a total of 16 texts are included, of which four are in written medium. The data is drawn from three different genres, namely **audio plays, short stories and film scripts.**

4.3.1.2.1. Audio Plays

The data is drawn from recordings of eight radio broadcast plays, which last approximately 15 minutes each, and two commercially produced audio plays, which last about 45 minutes each³⁷.

AP 1. KA byiii mA ttooo thaaaw A lhuu (*Uninscribed/ unpublicised charity?*)

A young woman is caught between the mother who expects contributions from her children to different merit-making activities she organizes, and the husband, a young doctor, who believes in simple life and humility. Consequently she is often obliged to witness and participate in her husband's own humanitarian work such as looking after a street vendor and his blind granddaughter. After frustrating experiences – alternating between reproaching and yielding to the husband's generosity with the underprivileged, which prevents her from making contributions, expected by the mother – she finally comes to understand the value of selfless acts of kindness.

AP 2. Kkyiq gA ti leee peee ttaaa ouuun mha (*Promise of love*)

On his way to meet his fiancée, a young man is approached by a beautiful young woman at a bus stop, asking him to protect her against a man who is allegedly following her. He reluctantly agrees to come to her rescue, and plays the part of a temporary boyfriend. As they take a bus together, and as he sees the potential threat for the girl, he plays his part convincingly. By coincidence, the fiancée's sister sees them getting cosy on the bus. The next day, he is told off by the fiancée but being persistent

³⁷ The entire tapes last about an hour, but they include sections of music and announcement of credits that usually add up to approximately 15 minutes.

in explaining the unfortunate incident, the fiancée finally agrees to read the letter that the girl has left him, in which they find out that the girl seduced him only to take money from him. In the end, the fiancée forgives him but warns him that it should teach him a lesson not to be unfaithful in the future, and she keeps the letter as a reminder for him.

AP 3. Ka kyiii yeee ka (*Letter 'Ka' for /ka/, the first letter of the alphabet*)

A young spoilt girl moves next door to a school teacher, an old bachelor. After initial stormy encounters, the relationship improves. Since the young girl does not know how to read or write in Burmese, the mother asks the teacher to give the daughter private lessons, a situation that leads to a love affair between the teacher and the girl. When the teacher's mother and fiancée show up when he gets sick, complications set in, especially that the girl also gets pregnant. However in the end, the teacher decides to do what is necessary and stay with the girl.

AP 4. Kye leq zaq laaan myaaa (*Stories from the country side*)

These stories portray life in the countryside, revolving around a group of young people working in paddy fields and vegetable orchards, and their families. Since these series are meant to be educational, they include a depiction of the daily life of the farmers, their community, information for their well-being such as information on proper health care, nutritional values of agricultural products, etc.

AP 5. Lee lhaiiin kyaaa mhaa pyaaw paa pyii (*Happy now on the air waves*)

This story is essentially a dialogue between a young girl who joins the Burma Broadcasting Services as a radio announcer, and her mother.

At the beginning, she is disappointed for not having any important role in her job (unlike TV announcers), but eventually comes to appreciate her work that requires acting skills for radio plays, travelling to interesting government owned industries such as a paper factory, and responding to fans.

AP 6. Miiin gA daaw (*Wife of an honourable government officer*)

The main protagonists in this story are an old widow and her daughter. The mother works hard as a street vendor and a maid to support the daughter who is successful in her studies and finally becomes the wife of a government officer. The daughter is embarrassed that her mother comes from a modest background, and therefore does not want her husband to know anything about her. When she realizes her mistake, she explains everything to the husband and they set out to search for the mother. She finally finds the mother, but only to see her die in front of her.

AP 7. Myiq taa i A neq A deiq peeh (*Meaning of love*)

This play tells the story of a young university tutor and a graduate student who end up getting married but later are separated on bad terms. They first know each other when she is forced by her mother to break up a relationship with her then boyfriend. The tutor helps her get her thesis finished, falls in love, get married to her, and they have a daughter. After the death of the wife's mother who leaves her a considerable inheritance, the wife starts seeing another man under the pretext of looking for a house to buy as an investment. Finally the husband explodes and everything ends badly.

AP 8. MA paan thin thi paaan (*Poisonous flower*)

This story involves two families, a patriotic one with deep appreciation for traditional cultural values and the other with pro-western values. The former has two children who become a teacher and a military officer, and they all lead a happy life together. The latter has three children, of which the two daughters are married to foreigners and the son lives abroad, a situation considered by the mother as a major achievement in the society. They all get disillusioned at the end as they realize that western husbands are unfaithful and mistreat them, and the son died of AIDS.

AP 9. Ppee Ppee eiin ttauun pyu tau meeh (*Dad is planning to get married*)

In this story, an old widower with three adult children is increasingly becoming discontent, as the children do not look after him properly. They all come and live in his house for various reasons, yet he continues to live a lonely life, as the children are busy with their respective families. Consequently he announces one day that he is going to find a wife. As the children protest at the idea, saying that it is a ridiculous plan for his age, his feelings are revealed. In the end, the children realize their mistakes, and promise to look after him. He then admits that his announcement to get (re)married is only a trick to make them understand the unhappy situation in which he had to live.

AP 10. Pyii twiinn ppyiq Ko Ko (*Ko Ko made locally*)

This story revolves around two young women with two different cultural values who work in a private company run by a foreigner: one is

simple and modest, but the other favours modernity and western culture. When the former warns the latter of the risks of going out with foreigners, and also encourages her to pay more attention to *Ko Ko*, a young Burmese man who is in love with her, they have a serious falling-out. At the end, the latter realizes that there are aspects of foreign cultures that she cannot appreciate (for example the boss kissing another woman in front of her), and decides to invest in a meaningful relationship with *Ko Ko*, a Burmese man, "made in Myanmar" (which explains the title *Ko Ko made locally*)

4.3.1.2.2. Fiction in written medium

The four texts in this section are selected from magazines published in Burmese, based on the criterion that they contain a large portion of dialogues. Original Burmese script is converted to Roman characters, using the same transcription system as for the audio recordings. As mentioned in previous sections, there exists a parallel corpus of these stories, which have been translated by a native speaker of American English who has an advanced level of fluency in Burmese.

DF³⁸ 1. Pyii thuu luu ttu koo kooy neh ttaq tuu (*One like the rest*)

This story takes place in a market where the two protagonists are a female vendor of medicines and a young female doctor buying medicines from her. As the doctor is scrupulously trying to make sure that the medicines are genuine (there is no quality control for medicines in Myanmar), the vendor's admiration grows, thinking that this doctor really cares for her patients (unlike those who are commercially oriented in their

³⁸ DF = Dialogue in fiction

medical practice). When she verbalizes this opinion, she is left speechless by the doctor's reply: "If it were for my patients, it wouldn't matter that much. But now it is for my son..."

DF 2. Thaan thA yaa (*Samsara: cycle of rebirths*)

Depicting the common practice of gift giving, especially to one's superiors for personal favours, this story includes short dialogues between individuals in different families discussing the choice of gift and their justifications. At the end it turns out to be the same jar of Nescafe which has been circulating from family to family as a gift and now comes back to the first family, who in turns intends to give it as a gift (again) to their son's teacher.

DF 3. Thu beq koy beq (*Their side our side*)

The main protagonist in this story is a mother who practices double standards in regard to how her son and daughter should behave with their in-laws and their own parents. Most of the dialogues are between the mother and the daughter, or the mother and the son.

DF 4. Yee kyii yee than (*Clear water, clean water*)

This story is alleged to be a parody of a dictator in Myanmar, who is portrayed as the authoritative head of a large family, and nobody dares to contradict him. One day he decides to execute an extraordinary scientific experiment: to produce clean water from the water that has passed through multi layers of a toilet system that he has invented. At the end he has a famous chemistry professor in front of everybody to carry out a test and certify in that such water is indeed pure and drinkable. The professor does as he is ordered, but nobody agrees to drink the water, and

finally someone suggests that the main protagonist himself should try first...

4.3.1.2.3. Film scripts

The two film scripts in this section are selected from a collection of film scripts (probably intended as a corpus) available on the web [<http://www.angelfire.com/linux/jfernquest/bcinema.html>]. The original script is in Burmese, which has been converted to Roman characters using the same transcription system as the one for audio recordings. In this sense, these texts are similar to those under dialogue in fiction in the written medium, but the main difference is that there are no narratives in these film scripts. Moreover, given the nature of the feature films, which can accommodate a larger number of interlocutors at the same time, some speech segments take place among several speakers. However, for practicality, only the main protagonists are identified with specific speaker number, following the same convention used for all Burmese data in this study. Nonetheless, all speaker turns are indicated, and the symbol <X> is used where X represents an unspecified speaker.

FS 1. Beeh bA gyii yee lo mA mhii (*No painting can portray such "beauty"*)

This story depicts the admirable love of a son for his father by making sacrifices for his father who has unintentionally committed an indecent act. The story takes place in a village where there is a strong sense of community. One day a young girl who is mentally ill gets pregnant, which evokes anger and concern among the villagers. The head

of the village promises to find the man who is responsible for such a despicable inhuman act. Based on certain evidence, he is convinced that the culprit is the son. When the baby is born with a strong physical resemblance to the young man, his suspicion is "confirmed" and consequently the village head decides to condemn the son. In reality, it is the old father who is the culprit, who also decides to admit his mistake. However, the son refuses the father's plan since his father is a well-respected man in the village. Consequently, he sacrifices his life as a proof of his love for his dear father.

FS 2. Miiin louq thA myha kyee naq teeh (*I'll accept whatever you want*)

This story is about a middle-aged playboy who falls in love with a young woman who turns out to be a daughter of his friend for whom he has done a favour of considerable significance. The girl has a boyfriend but knowing the difficult situation that the father puts himself in because of a mistake he made in the past, she agrees to marry the playboy. Problems arise inevitably in a marriage without love, which gets worse as the story continues and ends in tragedy when the sister of the wife kills the playboy during a heated dispute between him and her sister.

4.3.2. English data

The English data for this study is drawn from three different sources, namely **BBC radio drama scripts** (available online, reference given with the synopsis), the **SCoSE: Saarbrücken Corpus of Spoken**

English (available online at <http://www.uni-saarland.de/fak4/norrick/scose.htm>), and **CANCODE: Cambridge and Nottingham Corpus of Discourse in English**. This corpus is a 5,000,000-word collection of informal spoken data created at the School of English Studies, University of Nottingham, UK, with generous funding from Cambridge University Press, with whom the sole copyright resides. The corpus contains a number of texts which have proved very useful for cross-linguistic comparisons with the Burmese data (see below). The English corpus for the present study is created to match the Burmese corpus as closely as possible, in terms of category, genre, and size. Table 47 summarizes the English corpus: it includes two main categories of spoken English, namely **pre-scripted** and **spontaneous speech**, like the Burmese corpus (cf. Table 46).

	Corpus	No. of texts	No. of tokens
Spontaneous speech	CANCODE conversation	8	47,536
	SCoSE narrative	14	39,559
Pre-scripted speech	BBC	3	91,658
	Total	25	178,753

Table 47: Overall description of English corpus

In terms of corpus size, the Burmese and English corpora are not exactly of the same size (See also 4.2.2), but they are considered comparable for the purpose of this study for the following reasons: (1) the numerical difference between the tokens which comprise the two corpora is insignificant (less than 5%), and (2) this study focuses on qualitative comparison (i.e. how discourse functions are realized in similar genres of spoken Burmese and English) rather than quantitative comparison (such as

comparing the top twenty words on the frequency lists of 200,000 tokens) of the two corpora. Moreover, it must simply be acknowledged that when we do discourse analysis of natural spoken language, it is impossible to collect an exactly equal amount of data in two different corpora, as speakers do not habitually count their words when they speak, and therefore reducing the corpus size for quantitative purposes would often mean disrupting the integrity of the discourse structure, which is a key feature of interest in this study.

In short, great care has been taken to create an English corpus that matches the Burmese corpus as closely as possible, and as can be seen in Table 48, the two corpora are comparable for purposes of this study, as the ratio of Burmese: English falls within the range of 1.5:1 (cf. Normalizing process in 4.2.2)

Burmese	Tokens 100%	English	Approximately 66% of Burmese
Spontaneous speech Recount films Personal talk Interviews	122,077	Spontaneous speech Saarbrucken narr CANCODE convs	87,095 39,559 47,536
Pre-scripted speech Radio plays Film script Fictional dialogue	127,266	Pre-scripted speech BBC radio dramas	91,658
Total Burmese	249,343	Total English	178,753

Table 48. Matrix of Burmese and English corpora

4.3.2.1. English data: spontaneous speech

The data in CANCODE and SCoSE represent spontaneous speech. A sub-corpus of CANCODE conversational speech was created, using a selection of data (8 texts and 47,536 words) drawn from two different

context types, namely 'socializing' and 'intimate' conversations (McCarthy, 1998). The SCoSE sub-corpus includes 14 different texts of conversational narratives which yielded a total of 39,559 words. The SCoSE sub-corpus was drawn from 'Stories', which involve excerpts from real conversations among family members and friends, students and colleagues; and from the category labelled 'Indianapolis Interviews', in which various interviewees talk about their experiences from the past. The interviews were conducted in a retirement community in Indianapolis [cf. further details in SCoSE: <http://www.uni-saarland.de/fak4/norrick/scose.htm>].

4.3.2.2. English data: pre-scripted speech

The BBC radio drama scripts represent pre-scripted speech of 91,658 words, which make up a little over 66% of the Burmese corpora. A brief description of each story is explained in the following section.

4.3.2.2.1. Radio drama

RD 1. *Far from home* (by Michael Butt)

http://www.bbc.co.uk/writersroom/insight/downloads/far_from_home.pdf

Participants: Jane, Terry, Beth 16, Fiona, Marie, Derek, and Michael

The story mainly evolves around a family of three: after witnessing a murder in the neighbourhood, the mother, Jane, is worried about the teenage daughter Beth. When the culprit is arrested, Jane is called to testify, but Fiona from the Witness Protection Programme tries to explain the possible consequences, and when the question of moving to a new neighbourhood arises for safety, Terry, the husband and Beth are against

the idea of starting a new life. The dialogues are mostly about problems among the family members, Fiona who "tries to help", and a few friends from the new neighbourhood.

RD 2. *Man with travel hairdryer* (by Katie Hims)

http://www.bbc.co.uk/writersroom/insight/downloads/scripts/travel_hairdryer.pdf

Participants: Carmen 45, Derek 47, Sandra 24, Zoë 16, Dean 32, Boy at school

This story also evolves around a family: Derek and Carmen are parents of Zoë. One day Bodie, the son is shot by a policeman while he is out to find a hairdresser's travelling hairdryer for his fiancé, who is a hairdresser. Her name is Sandra. The dialogues mainly take place between the family members, and there are occasional monologues by Dean, the policeman who killed Bodie, and dialogues between Dean and Sandra who find themselves attracted to each other, until Sandra finds out that Dean shot Bodie.

RD 3. *The sound barrier* (by Sarah Daniels)

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/writersroom/insight/downloads/scripts/thesoundbarrier.pdf>

Participants: Audrey, Ian, Jenny, and Mel

This story evolves around four neighbours: Mel has a baby who cries a lot, which bothers Audrey. Mel has been seeing Ian, who is deaf. Jenny thinks that Mel gets pregnant without a steady boyfriend, but seeing Ian around in her flat she ends up thinking that Ian is the father. The

drama is mainly spoken by the four characters who recount their daily experience and thoughts.

4.4. Concluding note on Chapter 4

This chapter has described the Burmese and English corpora used in the present study, along with the rationale for their use in relation to the broad research questions for the present study. It has also raised issues connected with transcription and the counting of tokens in a Burmese corpus and suggested solutions for the purpose of the present investigation.

Given that this study is Burmese originated rather than English, the Burmese corpus was determined first and the English corpus was created to match it in terms of size and variety. Since Burmese is a syllabic language in which the notion of word has not been clearly defined, a syllable count system is used for Burmese, whereas the standard word count system is used for English. As a result, a normalizing process is adopted to ensure the comparability of the corpus size; the total corpus is composed of 249,343 tokens and 178,753 tokens in the Burmese and English corpora respectively. Although the two corpora are not entirely identical, both datasets represent natural spoken language in two main categories: pre-scripted speech and spontaneous speech, and they both reflect a variety of speaker categories such as sex, age group and social background. In sum, care has been taken in creating the two corpora so that they are of comparable size and reflect variety and spokenness of natural language use in Burmese and in English. The next chapter presents the first part of the detailed analyses of the data.

Chapter 5

Analysis of Burmese data 1

5.1. Descriptive framework: Identification of discourse markers criteria

As has been attested by the survey of existing literature on DMs in Chapter 3, various studies have contributed diverse theoretical frameworks and shed light on our understanding of DMs, but no consensus has emerged from the existing studies regarding their terminology, definition or classification. One of the main problems is that not only do DMs not belong to one particular linguistic class, their extent also varies from semi-words such as 'oh', 'um', to lexical phrases such as 'you know', 'I mean', and so forth. Depending on the framework adopted, DMs may include conjunctions such as 'and', 'but', 'so'; adverbials such as 'anyway', 'please'; prepositions such as 'like', vocatives, and so on. In other languages, modal particles such as 'ja', 'doch' in German [cf. Ch.3.4.2] or other particles such as 'ne', 'yo' in Japanese, which have no exact counterpart in English [cf. Ch. 3.4.1] demonstrate characteristics of DMs. Within each word class, which particular items are considered DMs is also diverse among researchers. Prosodic features, which are relatively less studied (than lexical items) and not included within the scope of this study, have also been found to function as DMs (e.g. different types of NP Intonation Units in Mandarin Chinese – cf. Ch.3.4.1., Tao, 1996).

In this study however, the issue is slightly different since the word class from which the DMs are to be drawn is pre-determined. They are lexical items often known as 'particles' in traditional grammars of

Burmese. They are bound or semi-bound morphemes with no one-to-one equivalent in English. Some particles serve grammatical functions such as subject/object marker, question particle, sentence-final particle, etc. Many others do not have any syntactic function, but it is my assumption (based on intuition and initial analyses) that a large majority of particles, if not all, serve discourse functions in actual language use. The main task of this study therefore is to identify discourse functions associated with the selected particles in the data, and then to justify their status as DMs within the current theoretical frameworks. For particles with grammatical functions, it is likely that their grammatical meaning is the core meaning (Schiffrin 1987), and discourse meanings of the particles can be located on one or more of the five planes of talk proposed by Schiffrin (*ibid.*), namely exchange structure, action structure, ideational structure, participation framework, and information state [cf. Ch 3.3].

While there are varying views/theories regarding the terms and features associated with DMs, almost all terms are used with overlapping reference, and certain features occur consistently across frameworks and across languages. As Schourup (1999: 230) observes, regardless of the variation in terminology and classification, "it is possible to identify a small set of characteristics on which nearly all variant uses of the term DM draw selectively and with varying emphasis". Schourup (*ibid.*: 232) maintains that, "connectivity, optionality, and non-truth conditionality are all taken together to be necessary attributes of DMs" (*ibid.* 232).

Taking Schourup's observation in reverse order, it was found in the review of the existing literature that non-truth conditionality is the most

prominent characteristic of DMs. Truth conditionality has to do with conceptual or referential meaning, but DMs are associated with non-referential or procedural meaning, which refers to their capacity to guide the hearer to explore possible interpretations expressed by the propositional content of the utterance. Examples of non truth-conditional characteristic of DMs are abundant, but the following may serve as illustrations:

(5.1) It's **like** not moral

(5.2) Cos I need some friends around just to **like**, to protect me
[Andersen, 2000: 30]

(5.3) John is very ill, **alas**.
[Rouchota, 1998: 120]

In (5.1) and (5.2) with *like* as a DM before the propositions *not moral* and *protect me*, the speaker implicitly suggests that there are other alternative expressions that can convey his/her message more efficiently. In (5.3) the DM *alas* encodes procedural meaning by signalling to the hearer what the speaker thinks regarding the proposition – that 'it is sad that John is very ill'. The DMs in (5.1)-(5.3) – *like* and *alas* – do not have truth-conditional meaning: they do not contribute to the content meaning of the utterance, nor change its meaning if they are deleted. However, there may be an overlap between conceptual and procedural meaning (e.g. *I know, I mean*). In Burmese on the other hand, almost all particles do not have a content meaning, (although some particles may express a grammatical meaning as a core meaning) and their semantic value is context-dependent. In addition, DMs express affective or emotive

meanings, as demonstrated in Maynard's (1993, 1997) studies with DMs and IPs in Japanese (cf. Ch. 3.4.1), for example.

Just as DMs have no bearing on the truth-conditionality, they are also considered optional in the syntactic structure of the utterance, according to the existing discourse models. For instance, in her definition of DMs, which is now the most cited reference, Schiffrin (1987) asserts that DMs are "syntactically detachable". It should be noted however that their distribution is neither random nor interchangeable without affecting their discourse meaning. For example, sometimes there is more than one possible interpretation of the propositional meaning and the presence of a DM indicates which meaning is likely to be intended by the speaker as illustrated in (5.4)-(5.6).

- (5.4) a. Tom can open Bill's safe.
b. He knows the combination.

- (5.5) a. Tom can open Bill's safe.
b. So he knows the combination.

- (5.6) a. Tom can open Bill's safe.
b. After all, he knows the combination.

[from Schourup, 1999: 244-245]

In (5.4), the utterance (a) can be taken as the context in which (b) is to be interpreted. Without any DMs, there are two possible interpretations of the proposition expressed by (5.4b) – (b) is relevant as evidence for (a); or (b) achieves relevance as an implication of (a). On the other hand, in (5.5) DM *so* signals (5.5b) as an implicated conclusion, and in (5.6b) the DM *after all* suggests that the speaker expects that the proposition expressed is already accessible to the hearer (ibid. & cf. Blakemore, 1987: 81).

At this point, it is important to call attention to an important characteristic of Burmese that requires a different consideration of this criterion for the Burmese data. The optional status of particles in the syntactic structure is true for Burmese as the following examples in Table 49 illustrate.

Phonetic transcription	English equivalent (provisional translations) & possible discourse functions
1. /di-go la- ba /	<i>Please come here.</i>
2. /di-go la- naw /	<i>(Please) come, OK?</i> [Softening a request.]
3. /di la- kwa /	<i>Come</i> [compelling attention. cf. English "boy! man! my dear!" etc.]
4. /di-go la- kwe /	<i>Come</i> [compelling attention, but more sympathetic and less peremptory than the previous one]
5. /di-go la- le /	<i>Please come.</i> [Used in intimate friendly conversation, means more like "Come along." Implying something like "you should have come here already and now I have to insist"].
6. /di la- zàn /	<i>Please come,</i> [but it is more like a command, and conveys urgency].
7. /di-go la- s'o /	<i>(Please) come.</i> [Implying "I'm telling you to come, so please do come", or ". . . so just come!"]
8. /la/!	<i>Come!</i> [More of a command, can sound harsh]

Table 49: Imperative statement *come*+various particles expressing different discourse meanings [also mentioned in Ch. 1]

All utterances in Table 49 represent variations of an English imperative statement (*Please*) *come!* using different particles (marked in bold) as DMs. The absence of particle in utterance 8 also indicates a discourse meaning, which renders the utterance as a bald (and quite imposing) directive. However, there are some particles such as question particles, negative particles and sentence-final particles, which are traditionally considered obligatory in the Burmese syntactic structure [cf. Ch. 2.5.2.2 & 2.5.3]. I shall argue in this study that the obligatory-optional dichotomy of Burmese particles has different bearings on the

identification of DM criteria, as the presence, absence, or the choice of particle signals a discourse meaning that accompanies the utterance, be it related to functional, semantic, or interpersonal aspects of the discourse. In other words, in spoken Burmese discourse, although discourse marking particles are most often syntactically detachable as defined in the existing discourse models, the choice between different obligatory particles in the same syntactic structure, or their absence, also signals important discourse meanings, which will be discussed in detail later.

Along the same line, a slightly different criterion is called for in identifying Burmese DMs in terms of their distributional properties. In the studies based on western languages such as English, which are known as SVO languages, DMs often occur at utterance-initial position. Unlike English, Burmese is an SOV language. Accordingly given the syntactic structure of Burmese that is verb-final in principle, discourse marking particles are more likely to appear at utterance- or clause-final positions in Burmese. In addition, I mentioned in earlier chapters that the notion of word as perceived from the western perspective is not entirely suitable for investigation of a syllable-based language like Burmese. Given this syllabic nature of Burmese morphology, individual DMs may be represented by one or more syllables (i.e. interpreted as equivalents of words in English), as indicated by my initial analyses. It is therefore important 1) to make a distinction between true particles and monosyllabic items that are a part of other 'words'; and 2) to take into consideration not only monosyllabic particles but different combinations of particles that may serve as different DMs. For example, particle /ka/ is known as a

subject marker, has a topic marking discourse function, and particle /leeh/ is defined as an equivalent of English *also*. Findings from the data suggest that the combination /ka-leeh/ serves as a DM, expressing self-defence or reproach.

In terms of connectivity, it is well known that many models of DMs originated as studies on coherence/cohesion in discourse, and many focus on discourse coherence. The crucial implication of the connectivity criterion of the DMs is as follows: DMs operate above and beyond the sentence level, and their meaning is related to other units – linguistic or semantic – of discourse. From the beginning, emphasis has been placed on the sequential dependency of DMs. For instance as Schiffrin (1987) posits, DMs are "sequentially dependent elements that brackets units of talk". In line with Schiffrin's definition, Fraser (1999) observes that DMs signal relationship between the two sequentially connected segments in discourse. However, other scholars argue that the source of interpretation of a DM may be located in an utterance previously mentioned, but it may or may not immediately precede the segment in which the DM appears [cf. Schilder's (1998) study with a German DM *nachdem* - (3.15) in 3.4.2]. In addition, Blakemore's (1987) model from the perspective of Relevance Theory suggests that even when there is no linguistically encoded prior segment, the discourse meaning of the marker can be interpreted by making inferential connections at the cognitive level (cf. Ch 3.3). Maynard's (1993, 1997) examples with Japanese DMs also suggest that connectivity is a prominent characteristic of DMs, and she includes not only sequential connectivity at the linguistic level, but also discourse

connectivity at cognitive and interactional levels. All these points about discourse connectivity situated at different levels of discourse are in line with Schiffrin's (1987) observation that DMs work at local or global level. In short, DMs pertain primarily to language use, rather than to language structure, and thus cannot be studied in the absence of context³⁹.

Another related criterion of DMs (to connectivity) is their function in discourse management that has to do with organising and monitoring discourse. As McCarthy (1993:172) points out, DMs "...signal to the receiver, independently of content, what is happening, where the discourse is, where it is going...(and) are therefore a system of management of what is said or written". Lexical items used as turn signals (for a smooth transition), hedges (for buying time without compromising face), back channels (for a good listenership) are significant DMs that guide the discourse direction and management for the speaker as well as for the hearer. To quote Maynard (1993: 55) DMs contribute to "the structure in which participants identify the unit of the speaker turns, signal their boundaries, take and yield turns".

To recapitulate, the main criteria used in this study for the identification of DMs are as follows:

³⁹ In other words DMs serve as items that 1) connect different linguistically coded units (obvious), 2) connect ideas that are not linguistically coded but exist in the context (e.g. of Blakemore's RT) 3) connect discourse units such as question-answer, turn-yielding-turn-taking/turn-refusing 4) connect participants at the interactional level – for communication harmony, social bonding – and otherwise, i.e. if the discourse is not connected by DMs, there will be a communication breakdown.

- They have no bearing on truth-conditionality
- They convey procedural meaning, not conceptual meaning: they signal pragmatic, interactional, affective or emotive meanings
- They are in most cases syntactically detachable, but when they are not (in the case of Burmese), the choice between different alternatives may signal discourse meaning
- They often occur at utterance-initial position in English, but are likely to occupy utterance- or clause-final position in Burmese
- They may be represented with one or more syllable lexical items in Burmese (i.e. to be interpreted as equivalent of 'word' in English)
- They are sequentially dependent elements that select and display backward or forward relationship between segments of discourse
- They operate above and beyond sentence level, and their meaning is to be interpreted in terms of the discourse context which may or may not be linguistically encoded in the prior utterance
- They pertain primarily to language use, not language structure: they serve as signals for organising and monitoring discourse.

5.2. Analytical framework: data and methodology

The Burmese corpus is constructed with the data collected as described in Chapter 4: it contains 249,343 lexical tokens, which is made up of 27 texts in Spoken Burmese in two main categories, namely, **spontaneous** and **pre-scripted** speech. The English corpus consists of 178,753 lexical items, which are drawn from three main existing corpora, namely **BBC Radio drama scripts**, **SCoSE: Saarbrücken corpus** (Norrick, <http://www.uni-saarland.de/fak4/norrick/scose.html>) and a sub-corpus of **CANCODE** (McCarthy, 1998). Given the high frequency of the items examined, the current corpora are considered capable of yielding a sufficient number of instances of the items for robust generalisations to be made.

After the Burmese data were transcribed [cf. Ch 4], frequency lists were generated mechanically using the software suite *Wordsmith Tools* (Scott, 1998). However, given that many particles are polysemous, and that some tokens are not considered particles, i.e. they may be a part of a polysyllabic content word, it is necessary to examine the particles in light of both semantic and discourse features in order to determine which tokens are to be included or excluded in the analysis. For example, out of 3,433 tokens of the particle /teeh/ on the wordlist generated by Wordsmith in the total corpus, it is important to distinguish sentence-final particles from adverb intensifiers such as 'so' as in 'teeh kauun taa koo' (*It is so good*); out of 3,492 tokens of particle /taa/, some may function as another sentence final particle, but some /taa/ tokens may be a part of a polysyllabic content word /taa-wuun/ meaning *responsibility*. Therefore

particles for analysis are manually selected based on the DM criteria as summarised in 5.1.

Once the Burmese DMs are defined and classified according to their functions and meanings in discourse, they are compared to the English data in terms of their distributional properties as well as their discourse functions in similar contexts. For instance, in the actual comparative segment of the analysis, this study seeks to find out what kinds of items appear at the same position in the turn, in the utterance, in discourse, etc., which will give us an idea of how discourse structures operate in the two languages. The other question this study seeks to answer in the second part of the analysis is how discourse functions that the selected Burmese DMs represent are realised in English.

5.3. Analyses of the data

Table 50 shows the first 50 tokens on the frequency list generated by WordSmith in three categories, namely **pre-scripted speech**, **spontaneous speech**, and **total corpus**, in descending order of frequency. Tokens that occur in all three categories among the first 30 are highlighted in green. It was found with consistency across genres and text types that the tokens with the highest frequency are mostly those that are considered "particles" in the Burmese grammar, i.e. they are all bound morphemes [cf. 2.5.2.2] and they may be used as an obligatory or non-obligatory part of the syntactic structure.

N°	Pre-scripted			Spontaneous			Total corpus		
	Token	Freq	%	Token	Freq	%	Token	Freq.	%
	122, 077			127, 266			249, 343	27 files	
1	A	3,422	2.80	A	3,884	3.05	A	7,306	2.93
2	MA	2,877	2.32	KA	3,350	2.63	MA	5,523	2.22
3	KA	1,777	1.46	MA	2,696	2.12	KA	5,127	2.06
4	PAA	1,642	1.35	TAW	2,347	1.84	TAW	3,540	1.42
5	TAA	1,625	1.33	TEEH	2,043	1.61	TAA	3,492	1.40
6	KOO	1,551	1.27	TAA	1,867	1.47	TEEH	3,433	1.38
7	TEEH	1,390	1.14	EEEH	1,860	1.46	KOO	2,938	1.18
8	TAW	1,193	0.98	KYA	1,771	1.39	LEEEH	2,786	1.12
9	NEE	1,125	0.92	LEEEH	1,665	1.31	KYA	2,615	1.05
10	YA	1,124	0.92	TWEE	1,501	1.18	EEEH	2,269	0.91
11	LEEEH	1,121	0.92	KOO	1,387	1.09	TWEE	2,253	0.90
12	THA	1,087	0.89	DII	1,339	1.05	MHAA	2,217	0.89
13	MHAA	994	0.81	TEH	1,328	1.04	PAA	2,149	0.86
14	NEH	990	0.81	PAW	1,298	1.02	TEH	2,072	0.83
15	BUUU	931	0.76	MHAA	1,223	0.96	DII	2,030	0.81
16	TA	850	0.70	HOO	1,180	0.93	YA	2,029	0.81
17	KYA	844	0.69	SSOO	1,165	0.92	NEE	2,021	0.81
18	TWEE	752	0.62	THUU	1,092	0.86	NEH	1,952	0.78
19	TEH	744	0.61	PYIII	1,033	0.81	BUUU	1,925	0.77
20	LO	711	0.58	BUUU	994	0.78	THA	1,775	0.71
21	PEEEH	694	0.57	TO	966	0.76	SSOO	1,705	0.68
22	DII	691	0.57	NEH	962	0.76	TA	1,701	0.68
23	MIII	617	0.51	DAA	922	0.73	PYIII	1,616	0.65
24	LAAA	608	0.50	YA	907	0.72	PAW	1,590	0.64
25	LAA	604	0.49	NEE	896	0.71	LO	1,497	0.60
26	PYAAAW	604	0.49	NAAW	865	0.68	TO	1,473	0.59
27	LEEE	583	0.48	TA	854	0.67	THUU	1,463	0.59
28	PYIII	583	0.48	THWAAA	807	0.64	HOO	1,437	0.58
29	MEE	578	0.47	LOO	805	0.64	DAA	1,375	0.55
30	LAIQ	574	0.47	LO	785	0.62	THWAAA	1,368	0.55
31	MEEH	569	0.47	PYAAAW	755	0.59	PYAAAW	1,359	0.55
32	PPYIQ	556	0.46	LEE	705	0.55	LOO	1,307	0.52
33	THWAAA	555	0.45	THA	688	0.54	PEEEH	1,262	0.51
34	HOUQ	551	0.45	LEEE	660	0.52	LEEE	1,243	0.50
35	SSOO	540	0.44	BAA	656	0.52	NAAW	1,238	0.50
36	YAA	521	0.43	SHI	643	0.51	LAAA	1,187	0.48
37	POUN	513	0.42	HOUQ	620	0.49	HOUQ	1,171	0.47
38	BAA	509	0.42	YIIN	582	0.46	BAA	1,165	0.47
39	TO	507	0.42	LAAA	579	0.45	LAA	1,156	0.46
40	LOUQ	505	0.41	PEEEH	568	0.45	LEE	1,108	0.44
41	LOO	504	0.41	LOUQ	555	0.44	LAIQ	1,105	0.44
42	KO	488	0.40	LAA	552	0.43	SHI	1,085	0.44
43	MHA	469	0.38	LAIQ	531	0.42	LOUQ	1,060	0.43
44	YIIN	465	0.38	PAA	507	0.40	YIIN	1,047	0.42
45	YEH	457	0.37	IIN	483	0.38	PPYIQ	1,027	0.41
46	DAA	453	0.37	PPYIQ	471	0.37	MEEH	965	0.39
47	PYII	445	0.36	NAUQ	419	0.33	HAA	821	0.33
48	KYIII	442	0.36	YAUQ	414	0.33	KYIII	818	0.33
49	SHI	442	0.36	THU	411	0.32	MIII	790	0.32
50	HAA	425	0.35	THI	408	0.32	MHA	777	0.31

Table 50. First 50 tokens on the frequency list of Burmese corpora

Table 51 summarises the 19 particles that are highlighted in Table 50, arranged in descending order of appearance in the total corpus, but their ranks in the sub-categories are given in separate columns on the far right. As can be seen in the table, all 19 items are particles, and they can serve grammatical functions.

	Token	Particle or not	Gramm. function	Rank in the corpus	
				Pre-Scrp	Spont.
1.	A	√	√	1	1
2.	MA	√	√	2	3
3.	KA	√	√	3	2
4.	TAW	√	√	7	4
5.	TAA	√	√	4	6
6.	TEEH	√	√	6	5
7.	KOO	√	√	5	10
8.	LEEEH	√	√	10	8
9.	KYA	√	√	14	7
10.	TWEE	√	√	15	9
11.	MHAA	√	√	11	13
12.	TEH	√	√	16	12
13.	DII	√	√	18	11
14.	YA	√	√	9	17
15.	NEE	√	√	8	18
16.	NEH	√	√	12	16
17.	BUUU	√	√	13	15
18.	PYIII	√	√	19	14
19.	LO	√	√	17	19

Table 51. 19 tokens that occur in all 3 categories among the first 30

In this study, the first six items on the list (marked in green) are analysed in detail, and findings are discussed with supporting examples from the corpus. The analyses of the particles are divided into two chapters: chapter five deals with the first four items, namely A, MA, KA, and TAW; and the two remaining particles TAA and TAW are examined in Chapter 6. Among these six particles, it is obviously impossible to identify all of their discourse functions within the scope of this study.

Certain functions of the particles are not presented in detail either, because they have been described in the existing literature (e.g. 'ka' with grammatical functions in 5.3.3.1), or because they are not directly relevant to the main focus in this study (e.g. the use of MA with grammatical functions in 5.3.2). For some other particles with discourse functions (e.g. the use of 'houq' with VSM 'taa' in the negative structure to express shock or disapproval, as opposed to a simple negative structure 'mA+houq+buuu' without any particular discourse meaning – cf. (6.43)-(6.44) in 6.1.4.2.2.2), the examples given are for illustrative purposes only. In such cases, I will use the adverbs 'usually' or 'typically' in lieu of the exact frequency counts, which is an extremely time consuming process for Burmese. Nevertheless, using such imprecise quantifiers does not interfere with the interpretations of the findings, since the importance of this study relies on the evidence of discourse functions associated with particles in non-isolated cases, and my principal focus is on the methodology rather than the results. The maximum number of examples given for each feature discussed is limited to five, for reasons of space and readability, but additional examples can be found in the Appendices. The examples have been chosen to reflect representativeness of the point under discussion, and whenever possible, to include a variety of genres.

In most cases, only a broad translation of utterances is given, with possible English equivalents of the particles (according to their discourse functions as identified in the corpus) in bold type. It should also be noted that the translations provided are provisional: as mentioned throughout the study, most of the particles do not have one-to-one equivalent in English.

and consequently the choice of one English equivalent over another is subject to discussions/debates. It is also a reason why no word-to-word translation is given except when it is considered indispensable for the explanation of a point being discussed, in which case English equivalents are given for relevant parts of the utterance. In sum, the broad translation provided should suffice for the purposes of this study, namely, to demonstrate that the particles under investigation serve discourse functions, (for example, through words in bold type, it can be seen that they do not express conceptual meanings but procedural meanings) rather than to provide a perfect translation of the utterances. On the other hand, the words in parentheses (---) represent those that are not present in the original Burmese examples, but considered necessary to render the English translation syntactically acceptable or comprehensible for non-Burmese speakers, and words in brackets [---] provide contextual information to maximise the comprehensibility of the utterance. For example, it is a common practice to leave out subject pronouns in Burmese sentences, but subject pronouns are necessary in the English syntactic structure, and are therefore filled in as in:

(5.7) Kyaiq taw...
like when
*When **(they)** fell in love...* [FN: Alice]

Note: The following codes are used for references to the Burmese corpora throughout the analyses: **AP:** audio play; **DF:** dialogue in fiction; **Inter:** interview; **FN** = film narrative; **FS:** film script.

5.3.1. 'A'

Corpus findings show that 'A' has the following functions:

- 1) as a part of a polysyllabic free morpheme [cf. Ch. 2.5.2.1] such as 'A mee' *mother*, 'A kkyeiin' *time*, 'A louq A kaiin' *occupation, job*, 'A di ka' *main, principle*, 'A kku' *now*.
- 2) as a part of proper names such as 'A Maa', 'A Loun'. or kinship terms which may also be used as pronouns [cf. Ch. 2.5.2.1.2] as in 'A daaw' *Auntie* in place of a second person pronoun *you*.
- 3) as a part of English equivalent prepositions such as *on, near, outside* as in 'A paaw mhaa', 'A naaa mhaa' 'A pyiin mhaa' respectively.
- 4) It may also function as a grammaticalized particle as shown in following examples.

- 'A' prefixed to a V → **derived N**.

ssouuun- *to end* → A + ssouuun *end, ending*

(5.8) **A ssouuun** ka nauq ssouuun . . .
The end at the end/last

[FN.SS1]

- 'A' attached to a V (non-stative or stative). [cf. Ch. 2.5.2.1.3.] →

derived adverbs or attributes

thee kkyaa- *to be sure* → A+ thee + A kkyaa *surely, thoroughly*

(5.9) KyA ma **A thee A kkyaa** eeh daa ssoo yiin leeh. . .
I carefully if that's the case
I, carefully, if that's the case [fragmented incomplete speech]
[Inter3]

mhaan- *to be true* → A+mhaan+mhaan *Truly*

(5.10) **A mhaan mhaan** ka taw thuu ka tA keeh kyaiq thwaaa teeh.

Truly he really like
In reality, he really fell in love.

[FN:TT2]

In all cases above, omission of 'A' or a replacement of 'A' with another particle changes the semantic or syntactic value of the word. It is either syntactically undetachable or its presence or absence affects the truth conditionality, and 'A' does not express any particular discourse meaning.

5.3.2. 'MA'

First of all, we need to make a distinction between 'ma' (with a small 'a') and 'mA' (with a capital 'A'). The former has its own semantic value: it can be a part of a proper name such as 'Myan Ma' *Myanmar*, 'Ka Yin Ma' (name for girl); or standing for 'female' as in:

Bse word	Eng equivalent
'ssA yaa ma'	<i>female teacher</i>
'yauq kkA ma'	<i>mother-in-law</i>
'kauun ma leee'	<i>young girl</i>
'kyA ma'	<i>first person pronoun for female</i>

Table 52. 'ma' expressing female N

It may also be a part of a polysyllabic free morpheme [cf. Ch.2.5.2.1] such as:

Bse word	Eng equivalent
'pA ttA ma'	<i>first</i>
'pA naa ma'	<i>main</i>
'pouq ma'	<i>article (of law)</i>
'sauun ma-'	<i>to look after</i>
'ssouun ma-'	<i>to admonish</i>

Table 53. Polysyllabic free-morphemes with 'ma'

'MA' with a capital 'A' on the other hand typically serves as a bound particle (cf. 2.5.2.2) with two main grammatical functions:

1) an obligatory⁴⁰ part of a negative structure: 'mA' is described as a prefix used to negate verbs (Okell & Allott, 2001), which may or may not be followed by other particles depending on the syntactic structure or the semantic value of the utterance.

- followed by V+'buuu' in simple negative statements

(5.11) Thauq lo **mA** ppyiq **buuu**.
drink to be
(It is) not possible to drink.

[FS:Beeh]

- when 'buuu' is preceded by another post-verbal particle [cf. 2.5.2.2.1], it serves as an auxiliary verb as shown in (5.12)-(5.13)

(5.12) ...**mA** thi **kkeh** **buuu**.
know ['kkeh' expresses displacement of time/space]
... (I) did not know...

[Inter:SJ]

(5.13) A sheq koo **mA** shi **kya** **buuu**.
shame have [post-positional 'kya' is used with plural subjects]
(You guys) are shameless.

[AP:KyeLeq]

- 'mA+V' may be followed by other particles for different types of syntactic structures as in e.g. (5.14)-(5.17)

(5.14) **MA** loo kkyiin **lo** kwa.
want ['lo' because]
Because I don't want (it).

[FS:MiiinL]

(5.15) ...yeh thA meq **mA** houq **laaa**.
to be ['mA'... 'laaa' → yes/no question]
... isn't (he) the son-in-law of ...

[AP:Chit Gati]

⁴⁰ It can be argued that 'mA' can be left out in the negative structure, as in 'thi buuu' instead of a full structure 'mA thi buuu' for *I don't know*, as in French where the 'ne' can be left out from the negative structure 'ne...pas' as in 'Je sais pas' *I don't know* instead of *Je ne sais pas*. However, such an utterance is usually associated with child speech in Burmese.

(5.16) Seiq daq **mA** kya **neh**.
heart fall ['mA'...'neh' → negative imperative]
Don't lose heart.
 [FS:MiiinL]

(5.17) ...A louq **mA** ssiin **touuun ka**
work go to ['touuun ka' when in the past ...]
...when (I) didn't go to work
 [Inter:AT]

Other negative structures of 'mA' can be seen in following utterances:

(5.18) ...miii ka laa laiq **mA** laa laiq
 ['miii laa' =to have electricity]
...electricity sometimes comes, sometimes doesn't come
 [Inter3]

(5.19) ...seiq **mA** kkyaaan **mA** thaa ppyiq nee ya paa peeh
 [' seiq kkyaaan thaa'= to be happy]
...(he) had to be unhappy.
 [AP:PePe]

2) as a weakened post-sentential particle 'meeh' for irrealis (future) statements [cf. 2.5.2.2.3], and before the question particles 'laaa' and 'leeeh' for yes-no questions and information questions, respectively.

(5.20) Ppee Ppee to neh A tuu tuu nee **mA lo**.
live
(We) are going to live together with Dad.
 [AP:PePe]

(5.21) She tooo thin teeh pyaaaw **mA laaa**.
say
(Shall we) say (it) should be moved earlier?
 [Inter2]

(5.22) ...baa A kuu A nyii peee ya **mA leeeh**...
give (V ya mA leeeh → Shall... I)
...how shall (I) help (you)...
 [AP:Ahlu]

In addition, 'mA' serves as a part of various syntactic structures such as an equivalent of *before* with the structure 'mA+V+kkiin', as in 'mA

kyaa kkiin' *before long*, 'mA laa kkiin' *before (she) comes*, 'Ja Pan kkiq mA yauq kkiin' *before (we got to) Japanese occupation time*, etc.

'MA' with a capital 'A' may also be a part of a free morpheme such as:

Bse word	Eng equivalent
'mA neq'	<i>morning</i> ,
'mA neq ppaan'	<i>tomorrow</i>
'taq mA taaw'	<i>army</i>
'A mA lee'	exclamative expression <i>Geez!</i>

Table 54. Polysyllabic free-morphemes with 'mA'

It can be concluded from the examples above that 'mA' typically expresses prominent grammatical functions, and it is not syntactically detachable, its meaning is typically interpreted at the sentence level, and its presence or absence does not affect the truth-conditionality. Particles 'ma' and 'mA' are therefore excluded from the list of DMs in this study.

5.3.3. 'KA'

'KA' has been one of the most frequently discussed lexical items in Burmese. Given its high frequency in the corpus data of this study, I will discuss this particle in detail, with special attention to its possible discourse functions.

As with 'ma', we can make a distinction between two different types of 'ka': one with a capital 'A' and the other with a small 'a'. The former typically represents a part of a lexical item that can stand as a free morpheme [cf. 2.5.2.1] such as:

Bse word	Eng equivalent
'theq kA yiq'	<i>year</i>
'kA leee'	<i>children</i>
'kA byaa'	<i>poem</i>
'teq kA thoo'	<i>university</i>
'kA laaa ttaiin'	<i>chair,</i>
'kA baa'	<i>world,</i>
'kA laaa'	<i>Indian</i>

Table 55. Polysyllabic free-morphemes with 'kA'

- as a part of proper nouns such as:

Bse word	Eng equivalent
'KA Kkyiin	<i>name of an ethnic group in Myanmar: 'Kachin'</i>
'Neq kA leeh'	<i>name of a town</i>

Table 56. Proper nouns with 'kA'

- as a part of idiomatic expressions such as:

Bse word	Eng equivalent
'tA kA teeeh'	<i>expression of exasperation or reproof (MLC⁴¹).</i>
'byouun kA neeh'	<i>suddenly,</i>
'kA laan kA ssaan'	<i>in a rebellious manner (MLC)</i>
'kA tauq kA ssa (ppyiq-)'	<i>enter into a heated argument (MLC)</i>
'pauq kA ya'	<i>aimlessly, at random</i>
'kA touun kA yii'	<i>in a doddering manner</i>
'tteiq kA neeh'	<i>by a sudden shock</i>

Table 57. Idiomatic adverbial expressions with 'kA'

KA may also be a part of polysyllabic particles expressing equivalents of

English prepositions such as:

Bse word	Eng equivalent
'N/V kA teeeh ka'	<i>since (conjunction, MLC).</i>
V+youun ka lweeh lo/pyiii	<i>except (for)</i>
'...mA ka'	<i>not only...not so little as, more than</i>

Table 58. Particles containing 'kA'/'ka' expressing English prepositions/conjunctions

There are also a few occurrences of 'ka' as a part of a polysyllabic expression such as those shown in Table 59:

⁴¹ MLC – Myanmar Language Commission (1994) [cf. References]

Bse word	Eng equivalent
'A di ka'	<i>important, significant, basic</i>
'laaaw ka'	<i>cosmic world,</i>
'thaaaw ka'	<i>worry</i>
'mA ya mA ka'	<i>by hook or by crook</i>

Table 59. Polysyllabic expressions containing 'ka'

However, most occurrences of 'ka' with small 'a' are used as a bound particle [Cf. 2.5.2.2] with grammatical or discourse meaning. First let us consider the 'ka' with its three main grammatical functions:

5.3.3.1. 'Ka' with grammatical functions

5.3.3.1.1. As an equivalent of *from, by, through*

Following N or NPs, 'ka' expresses the equivalent of *from, by, through*, when N or NP is a place or starting point, or as attribute to a N as in N^1 *from* N^2 (Okell & Allott, 2001).

(5.23) Za Gain **ka** peeeh laaa.
From Za Gain (place) ? [Inter1]

(5.24) Hoo she naaa **ka** yee kaan koo kyaaw yiin
After you passed the pond in front (from the front)... [AP:Ahlu]

(5.25) ...nauq **ka** nee laiq laiq laa teeh.
...(he) used to follow from behind. [Inter:AT]

(5.26) ...Taiq Maun ppeq **ka** laiq pyiii taw...
...taking Taiq Maun's side... [FS: Bech]

5.3.3.1.2. With time expressions in the past

'Ka' may also follow a time expression, and indicate a point of time in the past.

(5.27) Luun kkeh teh 1 nhiq 2 nhiq lauq **ka** kaaaw
What about 1-2 years ago?

[Inter3]

(5.28) ...eeeh dii ne **ka** pyaaaw taw...
*...when he said **the other day**...*

[FN:SSS2]

(5.29) Eeeh dii touuun **ka** baa mha mha mA thi thee taa koo.
*I didn't know anything **then**.*

[DF:Thubeq]

5.3.3.1.3. As a subject marker

'Ka' is often considered a subject marker in the traditional grammars: it marks N as a subject of sentence, "usually for emphasis or contrast, or to distinguish the agent from the patient" (Okell & Allott, 2001. p.1)

(5.30) Aaa louuun **ka** tA thaan teeoh peeoh.
Everybody voiced the same opinion.

[DF:YeKyi]

(5.31) ...kauun ma lee **ka** eeh dii mhaa thee thwaaa taa.
*...**the girl** died there..*

[FN:TT2]

5.3.3.2. 'Ka' as a DM

After manually eliminating 'ka' tokens which are syntactically obligatory as those mentioned in 5.3.3.1, the remaining 3.994 tokens were examined closely, and the findings are discussed in the subsequent sections.

5.3.3.2.1. 'Ka' for topicalization:

Okell & Allot (2001) state that 'ka' may also follow a phrase, emphasising the phrase as a topic of discourse, whether it is a subject or not, and that in such usage, 'ka' is often followed by other "phrase particles" namely, 'leeoh' *also* or 'taw' *but* (ibid. p.2). They further note

that when 'ka' is suffixed to the subject, it is difficult to distinguish its function as a topic marker from a subject marker. This study attempts to identify the specific conditions associated with the use of 'ka' as a topic marker. Corpus findings in this study indicate that, as Okell & Allott (ibid.) observe, when 'ka' is used as a topic marker, it is typically followed by one or more other particles such as 'taw', 'yaaaw', 'nee (pyiii) (taw)'⁴² as shown in the examples (5.32)-(5.34).

(5.32) ...A louq **ka** baa twee louq ya taa leeh.
 ...(*as for work*) *what kind of work do you have to do?*
 [AP:LeHlain]

(5.33) Kyaan teh A kkyeiin **ka** A louq twee louq nee ya teeh...
For the rest of the time, (I) had to work
 [Inter3]

(5.34) ZYMM yaiq teh kaaa **ka** baa ppyiq lo leeh.
Movies that ZYMM made, what's the problem?
 [FN:SSS2]

In the following sections I will attempt to identify in further details possible discourse functions of 'ka' in the data. First, occurrences of 'ka' are examined in association with their most frequent left collocates, and the findings are explicated in sections 5.3.3.2.2 to 5.3.3.2.6.

5.3.3.2.2. 'Ka' for introducing new information

- 'Ka' introduces new information to the interlocutor, which may concern a person, an object, or an idea, in which cases 'ka' is usually preceded by 'daa' or 'haaaw daa' meaning *this is* and 'eeeh daa' *that is*:

⁴² I am not providing the meanings of these particles because they are context-dependent, and as can be seen from these examples, their presence or absence does not impact on the meaning of the topic NP with 'ka'.

- (5.35) Eeē daa **ka** A kkaaan beee ka miii kkaan thiq taa thaw...
 Daa **ka** eiin yeh wiiin tA kkaaa thaw naaw. Daa **ka** eiq
 kkaaan thaw. Daa **ka** eiq yaa tteeē ka bii doo tteeē
 mhaa...Daa **ka** miii kkaan thiq taa thaw. Daa **ka** miii
 kkaan thiq taa.

*That's the key to the safe next to the room... This is the key
 to the gate. This is the key to the bedroom. This is the key
 to the armoire near the bed... This is the key to the safe.
 This is the safe.*

[FS:MiiinL]

- (5.36) Eeē daa **ka** 2. Zaq laaan **ka** too too leeē koo 1 2 kkweēē
 ttaaā taa.

*That's (part) 2. The story is short, (but) is divided into
 (part) 1 and 2.*

[FN:TT2]

5.3.3.2.3. 'Ka' for emphasis or contrast

'Ka' may also put emphasis on the subject of the sentence as the topic of the discourse, regardless of the position of the 'NP +ka' in the utterance – whether it is initial, medial or final. This function is usually expressed in English through phonological stress or a lexico-grammatical equivalent such as *it is X that* or *(as) for X*⁴³, which usually occurs in an utterance-initial position. Examples with [*] indicate NP+'ka' that are not in an utterance initial position or that are not a subject of the sentence.

- (5.37) *Khyaun Tha ka* kyaaw nyaa taa lee.
***Khyaun Tha** (name of a beach resort in Myanmar), that's
 for advertising.
 (=They show Khyaun Tha in the film as a commercial for
 the beach resort)*

[FN:SSS2]

⁴³ It should be noted however that these expressions are more typically associated with written register in English.

(5.38) **Khyaun Tha ka* taw taaw taaw kyaiq teeh.
As for Khyaun Tha, (they) like it quite a lot.
 [FN:SSS2]

(5.39) Ttouq lwhin mhu A paiiin **ka** BBC lauq mA myaaa buuu.
(For) the production, it's not as much as BBC.
 [Inter3]

(5.40) [*Talking about her husband in prison*]
 *Paiq ssaan **ka** kkoou pyiii po ya taa.
For money, (I) had to send it sneakily.
 [Inter:AT]

(5.41) [*Talking about radio listening habits*]
 *Eeeh dii A kkyeiin ssoo yiin nya saa **ka** taw saaa teeh.
At that time, for dinner, I eat.
 [Inter 3]

'NP+ka' may also be used for emphasis on the contrast, that is, on the NP in comparison to something else, which may or may not be stated explicitly:

(5.42) [*Mother to daughter talking about how she should give priority to the sister, rather than the in-law in giving gifts*]
 Daa **ka** nyii ma hoo haa ka yauq ma peeh.
This is the sister, that's the sister-in-law.
 [DF:ThuBeq]

(5.43) [*Talking about favourite radio programs*]
 Eeh daa **ka** A kyaiq ssouun lo A koo pyaaaw taa...
That's, when you said (that's) what you like best... [among other programs]
 (= *You said that was what you like best, ...*)
 [Note: if the speaker was not interrupted, this utterance may continue with a discourse connector such as *so*, or *but*]
 [Inter]

(5.44) Yaa thii u tu **ka** mA thaa yaa teh tteeeh yiii zaaa saa paa peee ouuun meeh.
While the situation is not too favourable, (you can still think of) presenting her your love letter (letter declaring your love)!
 [Note: compared to a better situation to pass a love letter – when she is in a better mood]
 [AP: Kyeleq]

When used as a topic marking discourse marker, 'ka' may be preceded by NPs ending with other post-positional particles. For instance, utterances (5.45)-(5.47) show the use of 'ka' following 'NP+mhaa' which marks time or space to express English equivalents of *in, at, on, per,* or a personal referent in the structure 'N¹ mhaa N² shi' meaning *N¹ has an N² or there is an N² at/with N¹*; or which converts a VP with future reference to a nominalized clause (Okell & Allott, 2001: 170-171):

(5.45) Kyaiq taw ho step **mhaa ka** hoo daq lhee seq lhee kaaa neh teq teq kkyiin mhaa..
*When (they) fell in love, **on that step** (of a pagoda), as soon as they get on that elevator, escalator...*

[FN:alice]

(5.46) MyA maa pyii **mhaa ka** mA luq thee kkiin ka thwaa pyiii taw pyaan nee lo ya taa laaa.
In Myanmar, before (you were) released, you could go back and live there?

[Inter1]

(5.47) Thu **mhaa ka** leeh kooy wuun ka **shi** laa pyii...
...she has now become pregnant

[FN:TT2]

Similarly, 'ka' may occur after NPs ending with 'neh' *with, and;* or

'A nee neh' *as, in the role of;* or 'ppo' or 'a tweq' *for,* etc.

(5.48) ...A ppee neh thu mi ttweee **neh ka** zA kaaa myaaa kya thee teeh.
*...(her) father **and her stepmother** had a dispute.*

[FN: SSS2]

(5.49) ...eeh daa twee thi **ppo ka** beeh haa koo A di ka ttaa pyiii naa tauun yiin...
...to know all that, what should be listened to most?

[Inter3]

(5.50) A le A kyin mA shi teh luu twee **A tweq ka** taw taaw taaw kkeq kkeeh teeh.
It's quite difficult for those who are not used to (meditation).

[Inter:SJ]

In short, the above findings suggest that 'ka' following NPs with or without post-positionally attached particles, serves as a DM, marking the topic of discourse as new information, for emphasis or for contrast. With 'ka' as a DM, the topic NP can occur in utterance-initial, -medial, or -final positions. This is also a common discourse function in other languages, and its equivalents in English will be discussed in Chapter 7.

5.3.3.2.4. 'Ka' with plural NPs

It is striking to find that 'ka' follows, with a high frequency, NPs ending with plural particles 'twee' and 'to' which are post-positionally attached to nouns, NPs or plural pronouns [cf. Table 60], and pronouns or proper nouns [cf. Table 61] respectively.

Singular N	Eng equivalent		Eng equivalent
youq shiin youun	<i>movie theatre</i>	+ twee	<i>movie theatres</i>
thA tiin	<i>news</i>		<i>news⁴⁴</i>
thi kkyiin taa	<i>what (I) want to know</i>		<i>things (I) want to know</i>
luu	<i>person</i>		<i>people</i>
thuu to	<i>they, them</i>		<i>they, them</i>

Table 60. Nouns, NPs and plural pronouns + 'twee'

Singular N	Eng equivalent		Eng equivalent
kyA ma	<i>I (female)</i>	+ to	<i>we (female)</i>
thuu	<i>s/he</i>		<i>they</i>
nga tuu	<i>my nephew</i>		<i>my nephew & group</i>
miiin	<i>you</i>		<i>you all</i>
Ppee Ppee	<i>Dad</i>		<i>Dad & group</i>
BBC	<i>BBC (radio programme)</i>		<i>BBC & others as such</i>

Table 61. Nouns / plural pronouns + 'to'

There are over 200 occurrences each⁴⁵ of 'twee ka' and 'to ka' that are identified in the corpus. In addition, when the collocates of 'twee' are

⁴⁴ Note: singular mass nouns such as *news*, *water*, *gratitude* can be pluralized in Burmese.

⁴⁵ To be precise there are 293 occurrences of 'twee ka' and 216 occurrences of 'to ka' but I have opted for an approximate number here because of the nature of Burmese data and

examined in the concordance, out of 2,249 occurrences of 'twee' the two particles that follow 'twee' with the highest frequency are 'ka' (293 occurrences) and 'koo'⁴⁶(216 occurrences) which are commonly known as 'subject' and 'object' particles respectively. Table 62 shows the particles that follow 'twee' in a descending order of frequency.

	Particle	Frequency
- twee+	ka	293
	koo	216
	baa twee	152
	neh	105

Table 62. Particles that follow 'twee' with a frequency higher than 100

From these findings, it can be concluded perhaps that 'ka' is likely to co-occur with plural NPs that are marked by 'twee', when the plural NP is not the object NP, in which case 'twee' is likely to be followed by 'koo', an object marker (instead of 'ka').

Similarly, the concordance for 'to' shows that 'ka' is by far the particle that follows plural particle 'to' with the highest frequency (229 occurrences) [cf. Table 63].

	Particle	Frequency
- to+	ka	229
	A	95
	koo	45

Table 63. Particles that follow 'to' with the highest frequency

⁴⁵ To be precise there are 293 occurrences of 'twee ka' and 216 occurrences of 'to ka' but I have opted for an approximate number here because of the nature of Burmese data and the machine generated concordancing files for a language that is not recognizable by Wordsmith tools which are originally created for western languages such as English: for example there might be another occurrence of 'twee' hidden somewhere else because the letters 't w e e' got split up in the concordancing process.

⁴⁶ E.g. *Gyaa neeh twee koo yaaaw beeh loo myiin thA leech.*

How do you see the journals?

(= What about the journals, what do you think of them?)

[Inter 3]

On the other hand, as can be seen in Table 63, the frequency of 'koo' with 'to' is not as high (45 instances of 'to koo'⁴⁷ compared to 216 instances of 'twee koo'), nor the frequency of the rest of the collocates of 'to' (compared to 'baa twee' 152, 'twee neh' 105). In any case, a conclusion we can draw here is that 'ka' is likely to co-occur with plural nouns and pronouns that are marked by 'twee' or 'to' as shown in (5.51) and (5.52) respectively.

(5.51) KyA ma yauuun ma twee **ka** A thaaa ppyuu teeh lee.
My sister-in-law plural
My sister-in-laws have fair skin, you know.
 [Inter:AT]

(5.52) ...kyA ma to **ka** youq shiin A kyi A yaaan neeh teeh.
... I plu. movie seeing very little
...we rarely go to the movies.
 [FN:SSS1]

5.3.3.2.5. 'Ka' with phrasal verbs and idiomatic expressions

As a topic marking discourse marker, 'ka' also occurs with phrasal verbs [i.e. verb phrases that are formed with a combination NP+V] or idiomatic expressions. In such cases, 'ka' is inserted in the middle of the expression, typically right after the noun as shown in (5.53)-(5.56).

(5.53) Aaa **ka** mA shi buuu.
 ['aaa shi-' to be strong; 'aaa' strength]
(He is) not strong
 [Inter3]

(5.54) Seiq **ka** theiq seiq shee taa mA houq...
 ['seiq shee' to be patient; 'seiq' mind, heart]
(I'm) not quite patient...
 [AP:Kyeleq]

⁴⁷ Of which some instances of 'koo' are a part of a poly-syllabic word (i.e. has a discourse connection with the clause following 'NP to' rather than the 'NP to' itself) such as 'koo yiin' novice monk as in:

KyA naaw to **koo** yiin ppyiq teeh A kkaa kya taw...
We novice monk be when
When we became novice monk ...

- (5.55) Khin Than Nu A nee neh leech seiq **ka** naa taa.
 ['seiq naa' *harbour a grievance*; 'seiq' *mind, heart*]
For Khin Than Nu, she was feeling hurt.
 [FN:SSS1]

- (5.56) ...yiin A tweeeh **ka** beeh nyii taw mhaa leech.
 ['A tweeeh nyii' *to be a good match*; 'A tweeeh couple']
if...(we) won't be a good match any more.
 [AP: Kyeleq]

5.3.3.2.6. 'Ka' in rhetorical questions

'Ka', when attached to a question particle 'beeh', the collocation 'beeh ka' *from where* serves as a rhetorical question expressing *Of course not, How (on earth) could that be* (literally *From where did that idea come?*). Note here that 'ka' is syntactically detachable in this structure, i.e. the question particle 'beeh' can co-occur with other particles (for example, with 'mhaa' as in 'beeh mhaa' *where*), but 'beeh ka' together functions as a DM that expresses a discourse meaning beyond its original syntactical meaning.

- (5.57) **Beeh ka** saaa ya ouuun mhaa leech thA miii yeeh.
Of course I haven't had dinner, my daughter [I was waiting for you]
 [AP: PePe]

'Beeh ka' may be followed by 'beeh loo' *how*, and together 'beeh ka beeh loo' expresses *not to have any clue about something*.

- (5.58) Hoo **beeh ka** beeh loo thA youq ssauun ya mhaaa koo mA
 thi buuu.
Um, I had no idea how to perform that act (on the radio)
 [AP:LeLhain]

- (5.59) ...hoo leee kkyooo to baa to pouun saan myooo leech hoo
beeh ka nee beeh loo ssiin theq laa thA leech ...
Um I had no clue regarding the origin of that kind of poetry.
 [Inter:SJ]

The use of 'beeh ka' as a DM in (5.57)-(5.59) can be distinguished from that of (5.60) in which 'ka' is used for a grammatical meaning *from*:

- (5.60) A yiin touuun ka kuuun waaa kkyiin dA le ka **beeh ka** ssiin theq laa mhaan mA thi buuu.
Before, I didn't know where that betel chewing custom came from.

[Inter:SJ]

In the next section, I will discuss the findings based on the right collocates of 'ka', i.e. lexical items (particles) following 'ka', to demonstrate the use of 'ka' in terms of its functions in the discourse. Among these particles, those that occur with a frequency higher than 100 are listed in Table 64.

Particle	Frequency
leeh	410
taw	288
nee	181
eeh	125
hoo	104

Table 64. Particles that follow 'kA' with a frequency higher than 100

Among the five particles in Table 64, the two particles at the bottom of the list, namely 'eeh' and 'hoo', are either equivalents of an English demonstrative adjective 'that' as in 'eeh dii ein mhaa' *in that house*, 'eeh dii A kkaa' *at that time*, 'eeh daa' *that*, 'hoo kauun ma leeh' *that girl*, 'hoo tA ne nya ka' *the other night (that night in the past)*; or they may be used as a hesitation marker or a hedge. Among the top two particles on the list, 'taw' and 'nee' are described as frequent collocations of 'ka' when it is used as a topic marker for emphasis or contrast (Okell & Allott, 2001:2). The first collocate on the list, i.e. the use of 'leeh' after 'ka', reveals interesting discourse features that have not been given much

attention to in the existing literature on Burmese particles and on Burmese language in general, and I shall discuss 'ka leeh' as a separate DM in detail in the next section.

5.3.3.2.7. 'Ka leeh' as a DM

'Leeh' by itself is described in the current reference grammars as follows:

- as a particle: 1. "word affixed to a noun or verb to mean 'also' 2. word replicated and prefixed to a pair of verbs to denote simultaneous action (equivalent in usage to adverb 'at the same time'), or a conjunction "not only ... but also (in replicated form)" (MLC, 1994:453).
- as equivalents of *also*, *as well*, *too*, *in addition*, or in parallel clauses such as *both Phr¹ and Phr²*, or *neither Phr¹ nor Phr²* (Okell & Allot, 2001:219).

Occurrences of NP followed by 'ka leeh' expressing one of the meanings mentioned above are present in the current corpus as shown in (5.61)-(5.62).

- (5.61) Iiin kooy wuun **ka leeh** A taaw yin thaaa. Ka lee **ka leeh** niiii. Mweee mhaa **ka leeh** 7 yauq myauq ssoo taw thweee aaa neeh taw taa paw.

Hmm your pregnancy is quite advanced. Besides, your children are too close to each other in age, and it's the 7th child now, so it's normal that you're anaemic.

[AP: Kyeleq]

- (5.62) [Quoting a dialogue]
Niin to ssii **ka leeh** laa tauuun taa mA houq buuu. Nga ssii **ka leeh** laa tauuun taa mA houq buuu. *1st & 2nd person usage

(He) didn't ask for (money) neither from you nor from us.

[Inter:AT]

As shown in the examples above, in some contexts 'NP ka leeh' carries the original meaning of 'leeh' as *also*, rendering the 'NP ka' as an additional factor, etc. but the present corpus suggests that 'ka leeh' also seems to do something more in other discourse contexts. For instance, especially when the predicate containing 'NP ka leeh' ends with 'ssoo' or 'ssoo taw' meaning *since*, or 'taw' meaning *when*, 'ka leeh' seems to express the idea 'naturally', or lack of reason for a surprise. [cf. (5.63)-(5.65)]

(5.63) [*Talking about the female protagonist who works in a company*]

A louq louq teh A kkaa kya taw thuu ka thu pouun saan kA lee **ka leeh** ssA piin shee shee lee neh ssoo taw hoo yauq kyaaa lee twee kya lauq teh myeq nhaa lee paw naaw.

*When she works there, her look is **with long hair**, so **naturally**, it's the kind of look that guys like, you know.*

[FN:TT2]

(5.64) [*Talking about his ordination ceremony*]

...ssaiin waiin neh ppyaaw ppyee ttaaaw taw tA ywaa louuun **ka leeh** ssuu nyaan nee kya taa paw.

*...since there was the orchestra entertaining, **naturally**, the **whole village** was quite noisy.*

[Inter:SJ]

(5.65) [*When the old fiancée from the city found the male protagonist in the village...*]

Yauq laa taw miin thA miii **ka leeh** shiin pya taa paw naaw. Hoo myo ka miin thA miii **ka leeh** shiin pya teeh.

*When she arrived, the girl **also** explained to him. That **girl from the city, naturally**, explained [that she really loves him].*

[FN:Alice]

Furthermore, it is found that in such cases, most of the instances of 'ka leeh' are used in narratives, when the interlocutor is talking about the third person or an inanimate N, with few exceptions such as (5.62) and (5.66), where it is used with a first or second person. A manual extraction

of 'ka leeh' with first and second person pronouns yields 20 instances altogether. In some cases, 'ka leeh' seems to serve more than one discourse function, as illustrated in (5.67) below.

(5.66) [*Man talking to the parents of a young girl who has young men visiting her at home: the speaker is trying to warn the parents that such situation calls for trouble...*]

Kooy **ka leeh** douq kki ta mA suuun mA than neh Ma Ohn May **ka leeh** saaa yeee thauq leee luu mhu yeee keiq sa twee neh mA aaa mA laq... [first and second person usage]

You yourself are handicapped, (and) Ma Ohn May also (your wife) is too busy with housework, social obligations...[so anything can happen between your daughter and the young men while you are not paying attention]

[FS:MiiinL]

(5.67) [*Father explaining to the daughter about a serious mistake he made in the past, for which he has to involve his daughter now in paying back by marrying one of his colleagues*]

Ppee Ppe keiq sa koo baa mha mA thi kya buuu. Ppee Ppee **ka leeh** beeh thu koo mha mA pyaaaw yeeeh peeh ...

You all didn't know anything about my case. Nor did I dare talk about it...

[FS:MiiinL]

In (5.67), the discourse functions of 'ka leeh' can perhaps be explained in terms of Schiffrin's planes of talk on the 'ideational structure' level, the second utterance containing 'ka leeh' represents an additive meaning (i.e. *nobody knows and I did not dare talking about it*), but on the plane of action structures, 'ka leeh' suggests that he is expressing self-defence or self-justification, which seems to be one of the main discourse functions of 'ka leeh' which will be discussed further in the following section.

It is found that out of the 406 occurrences of 'ka leech', 81 of them (i.e. approximately 20% of the total), are used when the speaker is expressing either a reproach, a complaint, or self-defence. It is also found that most of these instances occur with second person pronouns, including proper nouns used as pronouns [cf. 2.5.2.1.2] as illustrated in (5.68)-(5.71).

- (5.68) [*In response to the wife's question if he was afraid of MHT and if that's the reason why he wants the daughter to marry him*]

Oo miin **ka leech** mA houq taa twee pyaaaw mA nee saaan paa neh kwaa. Ngaa ka Maun Hla Tan koo baa ppyiq lo kyauq nee ya mhaa leech.

Oh you, don't be talking nonsense. Why should I be afraid of MHT?

[FS:MiiinL]

- (5.69) [*To a younger sister after the father complains that nobody takes care of him*]

Houq taw leeh houq taa peeh. Nyii ma leee **ka leech** theiq nee naiin taa peeh. Ppee Ppee eiin mhaa nee pyiii taw Ppee Ppee koo baa mha leech louq mA peee buuu.

(Dad) is right. You (my little sister) are really inconsiderate. You live at Dad's house, but you don't do anything for him.

[AP:PePe]

- (5.70) [*Mother checking if the daughter's husband gives her the paycheque. Upon the response 'yes' she wants to be sure that he does not keep a penny for himself*]

20 myooo a seiq myooo taw thuu thouuun teh A kkaa thouuun laa taa paw. Mee Mee **ka leech** baa ppyiq lo kaq thiii kaq thaq meee nee ya taa leech.

– Hiin daa kaq thiii kaq thaq laaa. Nyiii to lauq a taa nyiii to peeh shi teeh. Ngaa **ka leech** A sa sa A yaa yaa lai q mA pyaaaw kkyiin buuu. Ma pyaaaw kkyiin lo leech mA nee ya buuu.

(Well) he may spend 20, 25 sometimes. Mum why are you picking on such details.

-What, this is picking on details? You are so dumb. I don't want to get involved in everything but I cannot not do this.

[DF:Thubeq]

(5.71) [*Servant to master upon his order to bring him female clothing*]

SsA yaa **ka leeh** yauq kyaaa twee peeh shi teh eiin mhaa beeh loo louq ttA meiin shi ya mhaa leeh ssA yaa.

– Miiin **ka leeh** paq wuuun kyiiin le laa mhu iin aaa neeh lha kkyii laaa kwaa. Hoo tA ne nya ka Da Li ttA meiin tA tteeh kyaan kkeh teeh.

Oh Sir, how could we have female clothing in a house where there are only men?

-You are so unobservant. There was a 'longyi' that Dali forgot here the other night.

[FS:MinL]

However, there are a few occurrences of 'ka leeh' (10 in total) with a third person or an inanimate NP, in which case the speaker is expressing a reproach or a complaint, as shown in (5.72)-(5.74).

(5.72) [*A woman waiting for a bus, speaks to her 'boyfriend'*]

...kaaa twee **ka leeh** kyaq lai q taa Maun yeeh. Dii kaaa saun ya teh A louq haa theiq sei q nyiq ppo kauuun taa peeh naaw.

The buses are so crowded, isn't it darling. It's annoying to have to wait for a bus, isn't it?

[AP:Chitgati]

(5.73) [*A woman looking at a Nescafe tin she just received as a gift*]

Hiin dii kaaw pii mhoun pA liiin twee **ka leeh** laa lai q yiin dii naaa mhaa pee nee taa kkyiii peeh.

Hmm these coffee tins, when they come, they are all stained.

[DF:Samsara]

(5.74) [*Talking about the dog who bit him*]

NgA Phyu **ka leeh** lee thA kkiin mhaaan thuu seiiin mhaaan mA thi buuu laaa.

That dog NgPahyu, doesn't he know his master from strangers.

[FS:Beeh]

In (5.75), however, it should be noted that although the NP in the 'NP ka leeh' is inanimate, the complaint or the reproach is addressed at the person associated with the inanimate noun in question. I would argue

therefore that 'ka leeh' in this context also serves to express a reproach to the second person. For example, in (5.75) 'ka leeh' is attached to 'iin gyii' meaning *clothes*, and it can perhaps be argued that the speaker is addressing the reproach at the person (his wife) who was associated with clothes (i.e. *they were late for dinner because of her*).

- (5.75) [*A man explaining why they got late to the dinner, blaming the wife*] A mA leee laa kkaa nii 3 kkaa lauq iin gyii **ka leeh** leeh teeh byaa. Hoo haa mA kyaiq buuu dii haa mA kyaiq buuu neh.
Geez, before we came (she) had to change clothes about 3 times. Saying she didn't like this she didn't like that...
 [FS:MinL]

Similarly in (5.76), 'ka leeh' is attached to 'kooy puu' meaning *fever*. Obviously the speaker is complaining about the fever, but a further investigation of a larger context suggests that she is reproaching the person who has the fever: "for neglecting his illness and going to work which makes the situation worse (the fever not going down)".

- (5.76) [*A woman, taking care of a man who is sick*]
Oo kooy puu **ka leeh** neeh neeh mha mA kya paa laaa. Shaa puq ssee leee neh shaa auq koo neeh neeh taw nheiq lai ouuun mha peeh.
Oh the fever doesn't go down at all. I'd better give (him) some medicine to rub on his tongue (Bse traditional medicine)
 [AP:KaGyi]

In many examples, 'NP ka leeh' is found to co-occur with utterance-initial exclamative expressions (34 in total) such as 'A mA leee' *Geez* (5.75), 'Aaw' 'Auun meeh' 'Haa' 'Heh' 'Hiin' 'Hiiin' 'Hoo' 'Iiin' 'Oo' *Oh* (5.76) which have equivalents varying from *oh*, *Hmm*, to *Geez*, *what*, etc. which also express reproach or a hedge in self-defence. Although

most of the 'NP ka leeh' occur in utterance-initial position, there are a few that occur in utterance-final position [cf. (5.77)-(5.80)].

- (5.77) Oo byaa Mee Mee **ka leeh**.
Oh, Mum! [DF:Thubeq]
- (5.78) Aaw eee paa Shwe Yi yeeh, nyiii **ka leeh**.
OK OK Shwe Yi. You! [AP:Kyeleq]
- (5.79) Iiin paa ssoo Ma Ma Loun **ka leeh**.
I told you 'yes' Ma Ma Loun! [AP:Kyeleq]
- (5.80) MA louq paa neh kkiin byaaa **ka leeh**.
Stop it. You! [FS:MinL]

5.3.3.2.8. 'Ka taw' as a DM

'Ka taw' indicates the preceding NP as a topic of discourse, often in contrast to something else previously mentioned, and findings of the present corpus suggest the following. 'Ka taw' following NP is used:

- for contrast or emphasis, as stated by Okell & Allott (2001:2), which can be illustrated with (5.81)-(5.83).

- (5.81) [*Daughter talking to mother about the new job she just learnt about*]

Hoo daa pee meh lee A thaan lhwin kyuuun kyiin louq meh
 thuu twee **ka taw** A thaan aaaw zaa neh pye souun ya meeh
 lo paa teeh Mee Mee.

*Umm but for the broadcasting expert, s he must have a
 good powerful voice, it says Mum. [Compared to other jobs,
 e.g. for a TV show]*

[AP:Lehlain]

- (5.82) [*Girl talking to a friend who said the boss thinks she is too quiet*]

Aaw houq taw leech houq taa peeh Thwe yeh. To **ka taw**
Thwe lauq taw thweq thweq leq leq mA pyaaaw naiin taa.

That's quite right Thwe. I can't speak (English) as fast as you can. [Compared to you, Thwe]

[AP:KoKo]

- (5.83) [*Child replying to mother's question as she was wondering what gift they shall give the teacher*]

MA ne touuun ka Me Than Aye yeh A mee **ka taw** tii chaa
koo ttaaaw paq tA buuu peee nee taa twe teeh.

Yesterday I saw MTA's mother giving a tin of butter to the teacher. [I don't know about others or us but...]

[DF:Samsara]

- In such usage, some occurrences of 'NP ka taw' express the English equivalent of *as for*, which we may note, is not of such high frequency in spoken English.

- (5.84) [*In response to the interviewer's question about the radio program*]

KyA naw A myiin **ka taw** hoo ouq saa paw. Hoo pouun
mhaan...pouun mhaa paw.

- Iiin Iiin.

- Pouun mhaan A taiiin paa peeh.

As for my opinion, umm that thing. Umm something regular, yeah as usual.

- Yes yes.

- Just as usual.

[Inter2]

- (5.85) [*A girl was caught crying, after she denied that she was upset, and her response to "what's the matter with you?"*]

Oo daa **ka taw** koy A puu neh kooy paa.

Oh, as for that (my crying), I have my own worries [i.e. not because of you planning to get married with someone else]

[AP:Kagyi]

- 'Ka taw' used for contrast or emphasis may be post-positionally attached to the clause ending with equivalents of English prepositions such as *for* 'ppo' 'A tweq' or conjunctions such as *if* 'lo', which is a shortened form of 'V lo shi yiin' etc. as shown in (5.86)-(587).

(5.86) Di ne **A ppo ka taw** Nanda neh taw louuun wa twe mhaa
mA houq paa buuu kwaa.

*For today, I don't think I have any chance at all to see
Nanda (girlfriend).*

[AP: Chitgati]

(5.87) [During the discussion regarding an unidentified man who
got a mentally-ill girl pregnant]

...tA yaaa kkaan paaw **lo ka taw**...

...*only if the culprit is found*...

[FS: Beeh]

- In expressing emphasis or contrast, 'ka taw' often co-occurs with the expression 'A mhaan (mhaan)' meaning *in reality* as shown in (5.88).

(5.88) [*A girl came to the house of a young male teacher who is
also neighbour for private lessons in Burmese*]

Maan Mii ka A tiin lhuq lo thaa. **A mhaan ka taw** mA laa
kkyiin buuu.

*It's only because Mum forced me. In reality, (I) didn't want
to come.*

[AP:Kagyi]

- 'ka taw' is used in clauses with a superlative structure, typically expressed with a pattern 'A...V ssouuun', or 'nauq ssouuun' meaning *at last*.

(5.89) [*Man talking about his experience with Buddhist
ordination*]

Ko Yiin ttweq ya teh ne **ka taw A pyaaw ssouuun** peechee.
*The day I finished living like a novice monk was the
happiest.*

[Inter:SJ]

(5.90) [*A village nurse talking about nutrition for children*]

Hoo A kauuun **ssouuun ka taw** lee yaa thii laiq paaw teh
hiin thiii hiin yweq A thiii A nhaan twee koo louun louun
lauq lauq kyweee kyiiin peeeh.

*The best thing is to feed (them) a sufficient amount of
seasonal fruits and vegetables.*

[AP:Kyeleq]

- 'ka taw' is also used when a speaker is trying to offer a definition or an explanation, which is typically expressed with the lexical items 'ssoo taa', literally (*the thing*) *that is called*...post-positionally attached to the clause.

(5.91) Beeh haa kauuun teeh beeh haa ssooo teeh **ssoo taa ka taw**
leeeh daa koy yeh eeeh hoo A thi A myiin paaw mhaa leeh
muu tii taa koo.

*What is good and what is bad, it depends on your own
thinking and experience.*

[Inter2]

- Furthermore, it was found that 'ka taw' is used at the end of narration or recounting something, a function of 'coda' in Labov's term, which signals that "the narrative is finished" (Labov, 1972: 365).

(5.92) [*After recounting why she has been ignoring her mother:
she was ashamed of letting her husband know that she
doesn't come from an upper-class*]

A ppyiq **ka taw** dii A taiiin paa peeeh Ko Ko.

*That's the story Ko Ko. [literally **What happened** is like
that]*

[AP:MinG]

- (5.93) [*Discussing if there is a true censorship of radio programs broadcast from abroad: the response was that there was no clear declaration of laws, and that they have not seen anyone being sent to prison for listening to such programs, etc. To which the interviewer responds;*]

KyA naaw KyA naaw thi thA lauq **ka taw** eeh dii looo peeh. A sooo ya ka dii lauq pyaaaw taa mA houq buuu.

I, I, as far as I know, it's like that. It's not the government who is making that much fuss.

[Inter3]

In (5.93) 'ka taw' appears in the utterance that serves as a coda (*it's like that*) but it also serves a discourse function on the plane of 'information state' (Schiffrin, 1987: 31) as it expresses the speaker's knowledge and meta-knowledge about the proposition that has just been stated.

5.3.3.2.9. 'Ka nee' as a DM

Another frequent collocate of 'ka' is 'ka nee'. Out of 181 occurrences of 'ka nee', most of the 'NP ka nee' tokens serve the same function as 'NP ka' indicating the NP as a locational starting point, or expressing English equivalents of *from, by, through*, etc. (Okell & Allott, 2001:2):

- (5.94) [*Woman thinking to herself when the mother talks to her from the kitchen while the fiancé is present in the house because she wants to hide the mother's existence which may reveal her poor family background*]

Nauq ppee **ka nee** A lai q mA thi A thaan pee nee pyaan pyii.

She is inconsiderately making noises from the kitchen.

[AP:MinG]

(5.95) [*Talking about how he quit chewing betel nuts thanks to his wife*]

Eeh loo pyaaaw yiiin **ka nee** kyA naw koo kyooo saaa
ppyaaq kkaiiin teeh.

*From*⁴⁸ *saying like that (how I'd look better without bad red teeth from chewing betel nuts) she asked me to try quitting.*

[Inter:SJ]

- or as a subject/topic marker:

(5.96) [*upon learning about the wife's pregnancy*] ...Dwe **ka nee**
A yaaan pyaaw pyiii taw thuu to 2 yauq ppeq thwaaa kya
taw paw.

...*(so) Dwe got so happy and the two of them hugged.*

[FN:TT1]

Quantitatively, it is striking that 53 tokens of 'ka nee' are followed by 'pyiii' of which 30 of 'ka nee pyiii' are in turn followed by 'taw'. However, upon a close examination of all 53 occurrences of 'NP ka nee pyiii (taw)', they do not seem to serve any different discourse function from those expressed with 'ka nee' alone, other than for (more) emphasis [cf. (5.97)-(5.98)].

(5.97) [*Talking about his ordination ceremony*] Nauq ne mA neq
10 naa yii lauq mhaa ppouun daaw kyiii **ka nee** ppouun
kyiii **ka nee pyiii taw** zA biin twee yeiq teeh.

The next day, the head monk, the monk, shaved my head.

[Inter:SJ]

(5.98) [*Talking about the mail protagonist who's been going to the girl's house under various kinds of disguise*] Aaaw tA ne
kya leeh kya yaaaw kauun ma leee ka eiin **ka nee pyiii**
taw hoo yee kkeeeh thiq taa ka pyeq kaaaw.

Oh, one day, at the girl's house, um the fridge stopped functioning.

[FN:MitThu]

⁴⁸ This may also be translated as "She asked me to try quitting by saying that". The idea is that "she started saying that, and slowly that's how she asked me to try quitting"

This is also another good example of topic marking with 'ka nee pyiii taw', which can be distinguished from a subject NP marked with a subject marker 'ka'.

On the other hand, while 'taw' may co-occur with 'ka' as in 'ka taw' as a topic marking DM, which also marks the associated NP as a subject, or with 'koo' as in 'koo taw' marking the NP as an object, there is no occurrence of 'koo nee (pyiii taw)' in the present corpus. It can be concluded perhaps that 'nee pyiii taw' puts an emphasis on the subject NP as the topic of discourse, but unlike 'taw', 'nee pyiii taw' does not co-occur with object NP of the sentence to mark it as the topic of discourse. However, 'ka nee (pyiii taw)' can follow NPs ending with other particles such as those stating the place and time, or starting point, etc.

5.3.4. 'TAW'

'Taw' is described as a "particle suffixed to verbs to indicate finality", or "a particle suffixed to verb as an emphasis (equivalent in usage to the adverb *when*)" (MLC, 1994: 170). In Okell & Allott (2001), 'taw' is defined as a grammatical form with three main uses:

- V taw → *V at last, after all, inevitably, nearly, merely*; with negative verbs *V (no) longer, (no) more*.
- V taw yiin → *however, but; as for, at least*
- V taw (kkaa) → *when V; because, since, as V*

In the following sections, I will discuss the occurrences of 'taw' in two parts: first, 'taw' tokens that are syntactically or morphologically undetachable are identified, and are then excluded from the current study. The remaining 'taw' tokens are considered potential DMs, and their functions in the discourse will be examined in detail in order to determine their status as DMs.

5.3.4.1. Undetachable 'TAW' tokens

5.3.4.1.1. 'TAW' in polysyllabic lexical items

Like many lexical items in Burmese, out of the total of 3,420 tokens of 'taw' on the frequency list, some represent a part of a polysyllabic 'word' such as 'kaan taw' *to pay homage*, a proper name such as *Ppauun Taw Oo* (name of a pagoda), a part of an adverb 'taaw taw' or 'A taw koo' meaning *quite* (5.99), or a second person pronoun, used by female speakers, especially older women or women from the countryside.

- (5.99) ...eiin pyaan laa kA teeh ka yeee laiq ppaq lai neh **A taw**
 koo kyooo saaa nee taa peeeh Maun Tun Myin yee.
...since she came back home, she's been studying quite
hard, writing and reading.

[AP:Kagyi]

5.3.4.1.2. 'TAW' in the negative structure

In terms of its grammatical functions, 'taw' is an obligatory particle for a negative statement with the structure '**mA V taw (buuu)**', expressing English equivalents of *no longer*, *not any more* as shown in (5.100)-(5.101).

- (5.100) Eeeh daa aaa pyii ppyin, nwee ssoo lo shi yiin, TV she ka
 koo **mA** kkwaa **taw buuu**.
So if I have free time, in the summer, I don't go away from
the TV any more.

[Inter3]

- (5.101) Twe teh A kkyeiin kya taw A shiin **mA** kkaan **taw buuu**
 lee.
When (they) met, (she) didn't let (him) explain any more.

[FN: SSS 2]

Similarly, '**mA V neh taw**' expresses equivalents of *no longer*, *not any more* in negative imperatives as in (5.102)

- (5.102) Sheq **mA** nee paa **neh taw**.
Don't be shy any longer. [Or Stop being shy now]

[AP:Kyeleq]

An examination of negative statements throughout the present corpus suggests that the primary function of 'taw' in the negative structures mentioned above is grammatical, and they are excluded from further analyses.

In positive imperative statements, however, 'taw' which is post-positionally attached to a verb in a sentence-final position expresses

There are not enough occurrences of this structure in the present corpus to draw any sound conclusion, and this question is not within the scope of this study. Nonetheless, this is a good example of important information about language use that a corpus study can reveal that is contrary to what has been described in traditional reference grammars.

(5.107) [*Talking about when she found out that he was a Hindu, i.e. he eats pork*]

Thi mA thi thee buuu. Thee kkyaa taw mA thi buuu mA
thi buuu paw.

– Beeh **beeh taw** mha thi taa leeh.

(I) didn't know (at that time). (I) didn't know for sure yet.
– **(Only) when did** you find out ?

[Inter:AT]

(5.108) [*Interviewer trying to probe for suggestions for improvement: if there should be more news in the radio program, such as...*]

Hoo Mya Wa Di koo ppyin hoo **beeh taw** bouuun thwaaa
bouuun kkya lai q pyii leeh...

Umm when they went to bombed Mya Wa Di...

[Inter2]

It is clear that 'taw' tokens described in section 5.3.4.1.1 to 5.3.4.1.3 either express a conceptual meaning, or they are not syntactically detachable. In other words, they pertain primarily to language structure. Therefore they do not qualify as DMs, and are discarded from the list of DMs.

5.3.4.2. 'Taw' as potential DMs

In this section, the remaining 3,225 tokens of 'taw' are examined in detail. First, the most frequent collocations of 'taw' are manually identified in the Concordance, and those that occur with a notable

frequency⁴⁹ are listed in Table 65 and Table 69 in descending order of frequency. Table 65 lists the first 11 lexical items immediately preceding 'taw':

-with lexical items preceding 'taw'	Frequency
1. 'pyiii taw'	701
2. 'kya taw'	385
3. 'ssoo taw'	346
4. 'ka taw'	290
5. demonstratives + taw: (eeeh) dii taw, eeh taw	126
6. 'thwaaa taw'	84
7. 'yiin taw'	83
8. 'paa taw'	77
9. 'mhaa taw'	71
10. 'ya taw'	66
11. 'laiq taw'	53

Table 65. Distribution of lexical items preceding 'TAW'

5.3.4.2.1. 'pyiii taw' (701 occurrences)

In the collocation 'Pyiii taw', 'pyiii' means *to finish* and 'taw' represents *when*. Therefore 'pyiii taw' literally means *when (something) is finished*. In MLC (1994), 'pyiii' is defined 1) as a particle "to indicate the completion of an act, etc." and 2) as a conjunction "subsequent to the time *when, after*" (p. 285), but there is no separate entry for 'pyiii taw'. Okell & Allott (2001) describe 'pyiii taw' as a grammatical form expressing *after V-ing, having V-ed, V¹ and (then) V²* (p. 132). A close examination of 'pyiii taw' in the corpus reveals that it is often used as a discourse connector, like English (*and*) *then*. Upon examination of its left collocates, it is found that lexical items preceding 'pyiii taw' may be a

⁴⁹ i.e. collocates that occur more than 50 times

particle or a free standing morpheme, and those with a high frequency are listed in Table 66 below:

collocates	Freq	Meaning
nee pyiii taw	85	<i>to live, to stay</i>
ssoo pyiii taw	64	<i>to say</i>
nauq pyiii taw	55	N. <i>back, past</i> , Adj. <i>next, future</i> or <i>past, previous, last</i> (MLC, 1994)
thwaaa pyiii taw	30	<i>to go</i>
poo pyiii taw	18	<i>to be in excess, more than what is necessary, over & above the norm</i> (MLC)
pyaan pyiii taw	18	<i>to return to, resume V-ing, V over again, re V, V back, V in return</i> (O &A)
theiq pyiii taw	16	Adv. <i>so, very</i>

Table 66. Most frequent left collocates of 'pyiii taw'

What these lexical items preceding 'pyiii taw' have in common is, except for 'nauq' and 'theiq'⁵⁰, they can all function as verbs. Given their original meanings, it makes sense that 'V pyiii taw' expresses the idea *when V is finished*, but the findings of the present corpus suggest that 'pyiii taw' tokens serve more than straightforward grammatical functions, and their meaning is to be interpreted in connection to a larger context, and to other particles. I shall examine in detail the top two collocates on the frequency list in Table 66.

a) 'Nee pyii taw': Its usage can be divided into 3 main categories: 1) with the original semantic value of 'nee' as *to stay, to live* as in (5.109)-(5.110), 2) after the subject N/NPs, in which case it serves the same function as 'ka', namely marking the subject, agent or the topic of the discourse [cf. 5.3.3.2.1]; and 3) after 'ka' representing a point of origin or equivalent of *from*. [cf. 5.3.3.1.1].

⁵⁰ 'Nauq' → *behind N; after, later than V*. 'Theiq' → *very much, a lot* (Okell & Allot, 2001:108, 247)

(5.109)[*In response to the interviewer's question (about experience during the Japanese occupation): "what did you do when you were staying at the monastery?"*]

Bouuun kyiii kyauuun mhaa baa mha mA louq buuu. KkA na thwaaa **nee pyiii taw** pyaan laa kya taa lee.
[*nee to stay*]

(We) didn't do anything at the monastery. Stayed there for a while and came back (to our place).

[Inter1]

(5.110)[*Taking about childhood: she has to take care of her little brother while she was studying*]

Eeh loo **nee pyiii taw** pyaaw teeh ssoo paa taw.
[*nee to live*]

Let's say (I) was happy living like that. [no lexical equivalent in English]

[Inter1]

When used with the conceptual meaning of 'nee', as shown in (5.109) and (5.110) 'nee pyiii taw' primarily serves as a temporal conjunct (Quirk. 8.137. p 635-6), saying that the action stated by 'pyaan laa' *to come back* takes place after the first one 'nee' *to stay* [cf. (5.109)]. This function can be realised in English with 'and', or 'and then'⁵¹, which are also considered among the most commonly used discourse connectors. In (5.110), 'nee pyiii taw' serves as a discourse connector, but it suggests that the two verbs 'nee' *to live* and 'pyaaw' *to be happy* take place simultaneously, which seems more appropriately interpreted in English without a lexical discourse connector 'and' or 'and then', as shown in English translation of the example. Let us now look at other examples

⁵¹It could be argued further perhaps that 'and then' does not work as nicely in this context, which is a response to the interviewer's question "what they did at the monastery", as opposed to a narration, in which the speaker is more likely to indicate the chronological sequence of events with 'and then'.

with 'nee pyiii taw' in which 'nee' does not express its original semantic value.

- (5.111) Thuu to twee ka **nee pyiii taw** eeh dii thA kkyiin yee ssA yaa neh hoo dii ka Tun Eiin Dra Bo ka hoo A ssoo taaw eeh A ssoo taaw ssoo taw thuu to 2 yauq ka **nee pyiii taw** hoo A kkyiin kkyiin kyaiq kya teeh paw naaw Ma San Yeeh. Kyaiq leeh kyaiq kaaaw mi ba twee ka **nee pyiii taw** thA baaaw mA tuu buuu. → NP as subject/agent

They, the songwriter and TEDB, um, the singer, um as she's the singer, those two, um, fell in love with each other, you know Ma San. As they fell in love, the parents were not happy about it/did not give their consent.

[FN:TT1]

In (5.111) above, occurrences of 'nee pyiii taw' along with 'ka' are used to mark the subject/agent *they*, *those 2*, and *parents*. It should be noted here that the presence or absence of 'ka' or 'ka nee pyiii taw', or the choice of one or the other, does not have any effect on the truth conditionality.

- (5.112) [*Talking about the itinerary of the protagonist*] Eeh dii ka **nee pyiii taw** thuu ka Kyaiq Hka Mi yee leeh ppA yaaa twee baa twee thwaaa kya teeh.
[1st NP ka → *from*, a starting point]

From there, he (continued to) visit Kyaiq Hka Mi, the pagoda in the middle of water etc.

[FN:MiThu]

- (5.113) ...eeh dii loo ma yeq twee mhaa **nee pyiii taw** koo yiin wuq ya teeh.
['mhaa' → equivalent of English preposition *in, on, at* for place or time]

(We) have to have the ordination ceremony on odd days (as opposed to even days)

[Inter:SJ]

In (5.112)-(5.113), 'nee pyiii taw', immediately following 'ka' or 'mhaa' expressing *from, on*, marks the NP as a topic of discourse [cf. 5.3.3.2.1].

b) 'ssoo pyiii taw': 'ssoo' means *to say*, therefore 'ssoo pyiii taw' literally means *saying X*, or *having said X*. The corpus findings indicate that the preceding clause before 'ssoo pyiii taw' does not always express the meaning 'said' as 'said out loud', but it may represent a thought, an intention, etc., an observation which is consistent with Okell & Allott's definition of 'ssoo pyiii taw': *after saying Stc*⁵², *thinking stc*, *on the grounds that Stc* (p. 65).

(5.114)[*Interviewer explaining the difference between news and news commentary*]

Nauq mha thA tiin wee ppaan kkyeq **ssoo pyiii taw** ppyiq
taa koo thuu to A myiin twee koo pyaaaw taa lee.

*Only later,(it's) saying their points of view (as) news
commentary, you know.*

[Inter3]

(5.115)[*After the boy made a bet that he will win the girl's love: he
is so confident that he bets a beer for his victory against a
feast in a fancy restaurant for all his friends*]

Thu thuu ngeeh kkyiin twee koo pyaaaw taw eeh daa neh
thu thuu ngeeh kkyiin twee ka houq pa mA laaa ppyiq pa
mA laaa **ssoo pyiii taw** nee yaaaw.

*When (he) said that to his friends, so, his friends remained
sceptical.*

*(literally: friends staying, thinking **particle** if that is
possible)*

[FN:Mithu]

⁵² Stc = sentence

The use of 'ssoo pyiii taw' as a marker introducing a thought rather than reported speech can be illustrated further with (5.116)-(5.117), in which 'pyaaaw' *to say* or *to tell* can be distinguished from 'ssoo' in 'ssoo pyiii taw'

(5.116) Thuu ka dii loo dii loo pee^h **ssoo pyiii taw** pyaaaw pya lai^q taa.

*He told (her) **that** (it's) like this and this.*

[compared to an awkward literal translation: *He told (her) **saying that** (it's) like this and this.*]

[FN:MiThu]

(5.117) [Upon seeing the wife coming home with things she inherited from the father who just died...]

Ee^h daa twee yuu laa ya kauun mA laaa soo pyiii ee^h daa twee ngaa neh mA ssaiin buuu **ssoo pyiii taw** pyaaaw teeh.

***Thinking** "(how could she) bring these things", he said "I want nothing to do with these"*

[compared to an awkward literal translation: *Thinking "(how could she) bring these things", he said **saying that** "I want nothing to do with these"*]

[FN:SSS1]

5.3.4.2.2. 'Kya taw'

'Kya taw' is not included in the entries in the MLC dictionary, but is defined in Okell & Allott (2001) as "*when we get to N*, where N is a time or place; *when you consider N, in the case of N*". Upon a close examination of its collocates, those as shown in Table 67, the findings in this study are in tune with their definition: 'A kkaa kya taw' *when [time] is reached*, 'mhaa kya taw' *when we get to N* (time/place), 'nauq kya taw' *later*, and as for 'twee kya taw' following a NP, it expresses the idea *in the case of NPs (plural NP)*.

collocates	Frequency
A kkaa kya taw	128
twee kya taw	25
paiiin kya taw	14
mhaa kya taw	10
nauq kya taw	10

Table 67. Significant left collocates of 'kya taw'

Findings of the corpus suggest that following an NP, 'kya taw' serves the same function as 'ka taw' [cf. 5.3.3.2.8], i.e. as a topic marker expressing the idea *as for* (in contrast to something else mentioned elsewhere in the discourse), as shown in (5.118)-(5.119). It should be noted here also that *as for* is not found in spoken English with a great frequency, although its equivalent 'kya taw' is commonly used in spoken Burmese.

(5.118)[*Talking about radio programs: how long she's been listening*]

BBC/VOA **kya taw** kyA ma to 10 nhiq kyaaw pyii. 10 nhiq lauq taw shi pyii.

- Iiin.
- RFA neh DVB **kya taw** pyiii kkeh teh 1 nhiq 2 nhiq lauq ka mha...

As for BBC/VOA it's been over 10 years. About 10 years.

- Yeah.
- *As for RFA and DVB, only a year or 2 ago...*

[Inter3]

(5.119)[*Talking about radio programs that criticise the Burmese government, interviewer asks:*]

NHK **kya taw** kaaaw.

- NHK **kya taw** kyA ma thA tiiin twee baa twee lauq peeeh ppaaan mi teeh. Neeeh neeh weee teeh.

What about NHK?

- *For NHK, I only listened to their news programs. (It's) a bit too far (for radio reception)*

[Inter3]

It should be noted here, as shown in (5.118), that 'kya tau' co-occurs with both NPs that are being compared⁵³. However, it can be argued that the second 'kya tau' (with RFA/DVB) in (5.118) is used in contrast to old information (about BBC/VOA), which was new information the first time 'kya tau' is used. So the first 'kya tau' is used to introduce new information (BBC/VOA), and the second 'kya tau' marks the new information (RFA/DVB) in contrast to (BBC/VOA), by which time has become an old information. This question cannot be discussed further as there are not sufficient examples for a robust conclusion.

There are some examples from Okell & Allot (2001) which also illustrate the context-dependent nature of 'kya tau', and its discourse function as a topic marker, which are expressed with different lexical items in English,

(5.120) Daa pee meh tA kkyo **kya tau**...
Some, however, ...

(5.121) Daa pee meh seiq daq thaq ti shi teh thuu **kya tau**...
A courageous person, on the other hand...
 [Okell & Allott, p. 15]

5.3.4.2.3. 'Ssoo tau'

'Ssoo tau' typically follows a complete phrase⁵⁴, and expresses the meaning *because, since, in the case of, given that* +(phrase). Following questions, on the other hand, 'ssoo tau' expresses *when we consider the*

⁵³ In contrast with a more common structure in English, in which only one of the NPs co-occurs with the expression 'as for': X does something good. **As for** Y, s he does something bad.

⁵⁴ Note here that 'ssoo tau' can also follow NPs, as it is presented in a separate category in Okell & Allott (p. 63). However it has been consistently shown in the corpus. (as well as Okell & Allott's examples), that the NP in 'NP ssoo tau' implies an embedded 'verb to be': NP tau → 'it is NP'.

question, in response to the question (Okell & Allott, 2001:63). In other words, I would like to argue here that, whether it is used with statements or questions, in terms of its discourse functions, 'ssoo taw' indicates to the interlocutor that the information following 'ssoo taw' is to be interpreted as some sort of consequence in relation to the information preceding 'ssoo taw'.

(5.122) Mweee mhaa ka leech 7 yauq myauq **ssoo taw** thweee aaa neeh taw taa paw.

Since it is the 7th child that you're going to give birth to, naturally you are anaemic.

[AP:Kyeleq]

(5.123) Taa wuun neh **ssoo taw** beeh mha mA thwaaa kkeh paa buuu Mee Mee yeeh.

As I was on duty (it was a business trip) I didn't get to go anywhere (=be a tourist)

[AP:LeHlain]

Let us now consider the most frequent collocates of 'ssoo taw' (cf.

Table 68) in order to identify its discourse functions more precisely.

collocates	Frequency
leech ssoo taw	67
teeh ssoo taw	50
eeeh daa ssoo taw	32
meeh ssoo taw	23

Table 68. Most frequent left collocates of 'ssoo taw'

- Although 'leech' may represent *also* or a sentence-final question particle for information questions according to reference grammars, in the present corpus all instances of 'leech' as a collocate of 'ssoo taw' are used as a question particle. Moreover, a closer examination of the collocates in Table 68 suggests that in terms of discourse functions, 'ssoo taw' following

the question particle 'leeh' also work as a topicalization marker⁵⁵, as shown in (5.124)-(5.125).

(5.124) Hteq Hteq Mo Oo ka baa louq **leeh ssoo taw** Dwe neh liin
mA yaaa loo ppyiq thwaaa taa paw.

(So) *what HHMO did was, she became like Dwe's wife* (i.e. they are not really a married couple)

[FN:TT1]

(5.125) Siq ppyiq touuun ka beeh nhA kku **leeh ssoo taw**...
- Ngeeh ngeeh lee peehee laaa.
- MA ngeeh buuu lee. A ppwaaa ka eehee dii touuun ka
15 nhiq 16 nhiq lauq shi pyii.

The year was (literally: *To say what year it was...*)

- *Were you very young?*

- *Not very young, you know. I was about 15-16 then.*

[Inter1]

When we consider other collocates in Table 68, 'teeh' and 'meeh' are among the most frequent collocates on the list. Given that 'ssoo taw' represents reported speech [cf. Ch.2.5.3.Table 33, 34], it makes sense that many phrases immediately preceding 'ssoo taw' end with 'teeh' and 'meeh', which are known as verb-sentence-markers for realis (non-future) and irrealis (future) respectively [cf. Ch. 2.5.2.2.3]. An alternative is 'taa' which appears with a smaller frequency in this corpus⁵⁶.

Similarly, the frequent occurrence of 'eeeh daa' in the corpus also makes sense: 'eeeh daa' means *that*, or *that is*, and 'eeeh daa soo taw' expresses the equivalent of *so* (*since that is the case* in reference to the idea expressed by the preceding phrase).

⁵⁵ This use of 'ssoo taw' may be argued as a **hedging device** in Burmese discourse where the speaker is buying time before getting to the core of the answer to the question (which may be self-imposed or posed by the interlocutor)

⁵⁶ The use of 'taa' and 'teeh' will be discussed at great length in Chapter 6.

(5.126) [*Talking about children*]

Thaaa siq tteeh wiin **meeh ssoo taw** kooy lee aan dA yeeh
myaaa teeh lo pyaaaw mi taa mhaq mi thee teeh Sa Beh.

*When (you) **said that** (your) son was going to join the army,
I remember saying it was dangerous, you know Sa Beh.*

[AP:Pan]

(5.127) Daa pee meh thu thA mihi neh thu meihin ma thwaaa nee
teeh ssoo taw thuu ka eeh dii eiin mhaa lai q nee ya yaaaw.

*But **since** his wife and daughter went and lived (in her
father's house), he had to follow them and live there.*

[FN:SSS1]

5.3.4.2.4. 'Ka taw' → See discussion in 5.3.3.2.8.

5.3.4.2.5. 'Demonstratives + taw': '(eeh) dii taw', 'eeh taw' →
126 occurrences

'(Eeh) dii taw' or 'eeh taw', which is a shortened form of 'eeh dii taw', have not been paid special attention in the traditional grammars. For instance, there is no separate entry in Okell & Allott (2001). MLC (1994) defines 'eeh dii taw'⁵⁷ as *therefore, then*, but there is no entry for 'dii taw' (nor its literary equivalent 'thii taw'). In terms of their grammatical functions, 'dii' and 'eeh dii', are equivalents of English demonstrative pronouns *this* and *that* respectively. By extension, 'dii taw' and 'eeh dii taw' represent *given this* and *given that* respectively. There is evidence in the present corpus that they are mostly used as a discourse connector such as *in that case*, or *so* in English; they indicate to the listener 1) what follows '(eeh) dii taw' and 'eeh taw' is a consequence of the information that precedes in the previous stretch of discourse, or 2) they serve to

⁵⁷The actual definition is given under its literary equivalent 'eeh thii taw', where 'thii' is a literary equivalent of 'dii'.

reconnect the speech to the previous stretch of discourse; such usage typically occurs after an interruption. For instance, out of 81 occurrences of 'eeh taw' 26 occur in turn-initial position, which occurs when the speaker is interrupting with a question. I will illustrate the two different uses of '(eeh) dii taw' as a discourse connector with (5.128)-(5.130).

(5.128) A ngeeh lee ka eeh dii hoo baa leech Tha Ton, Tha Ton ppeq mha hoo siq taq ka ttweq pyiii taw kA yiin ma leeh neh ya teeh.

-Aaw.

-**Eeh dii taw** thuu eeh dii thu haa thuu peeh eee eee kkyaaan kkyaaan louq saaa nee teeh.

The younger son, um, from Tha Ton, got married with a Karen girl from Tha Ton.

-I see.

-**So** he worked and lived there peacefully. → result of marrying a girl from Tha Ton

[Inter1]

(5.129) [*Daughter and Mother*]

Nyiii A mee koo baa neh kaan taw kkeh thA leech teh.

-Iiin iin **dii taw** nyiii ka beh nheeh pyaaaw kkeh thA leech.

(My mother-in-law) asked me what I gave you (my mother).

-Yeah yeah, **so** what did you tell her?

[DF:ThuBeq]

(5.130) [*Discussing when the mother of the interviewee died. Interviewer asks:*]

Beeh loo thee thwaaa taa leech.

-Thuu ka taw Man Da Lay bouuun kya taw lee du ti ya nhiq lauq mhaa thee thwaaa taa. **Eeh dii taw** A mee ka thee thwaaa taa.

-Bouuun kya lo laaa thee thwaaa taa.

-**Dii taw** kyA ma to mauun nhA ma 3 yauq ka hoo A daaw twee A ppwaaa twee neh thwaaa nee ya taa.

How did (she=your mother) die?

-Her, when Mandalay was bombed you know, she died during the 2nd year. **So** mother died.

-She died because of the bomb?

-So the 3 of us the siblings, um, we had to go and live with the aunts and grandmothers.

[Inter1]

In (5.130) the first 'so' expressed with 'eeh dii taw' brings back 'the mother' (as the subject associated with the verb *died*) to the current discourse context, after a brief interruption from the interviewer enquiring about the time when she died⁵⁸. After being distracted from her main topic, the speaker probably feels the need to reconnect the subject to the discourse, which she does with 'eeh dii taw'. With the second 'so' expressed with 'dii taw', the speaker is reconnecting the discourse further back, i.e. to her original story about her childhood in general.

5.3.4.2.6. Other frequent left collocates of 'taw'

Among the rest of the collocates in Table 65, 'yiin' following a VP, which means '*if... V*', comes before 'taw' and occupies the same slot in the sentence as other auxiliary verbs⁵⁹, as shown in (5.131). It should be pointed out here that in (5.131) the utterance with or without 'taw' does not affect the meaning – conceptual or procedural – of the utterance.

(5.131) Ppee Ppee meiiin ma yuu **yiin taw**
Dad wife take if ptcl
If you (Dad) get married (again)...

[AP: PePe]

⁵⁸ In fact, she did not die in the bomb either, but bombing was mentioned as a time reference.

⁵⁹ The two examples below demonstrate how 'yiin' functions like auxiliary verbs in the sentence structure:

E.g.(1) '...ttaa sa yiin...'
again tease if → if (you) tease again...

[AP:Kyeleq]

E.g.(2) '...ttaa sa naiin...'
again tease can → (you) can tease again...

Other left collocates 'thwaaa', 'ya', and 'laiq' preceding 'taw' can function as a main verb or an auxiliary verb⁶⁰. [cf. 2.5.2.2.1], depending on the context. For instance, 'thwaaa' as a main verb means *to go*, but it may be used as an aspectual marker, usually indicating that an action was accomplished in the past (5.132). Similarly, 'ya' as a main verb means *to get, to receive*, but as a modal verb, it means *to have to* V⁶¹; 'laiq' as a main verb means *to follow*, and as an auxiliary verb, 'V laiq' "minimise(es) the time and effort involved in the action"⁶² (Okell & Allott, 2001: 214, (5.134)-(5.135)].

(5.132)...eeeh daa A luun a kyuun ppyiq **thwaaa taw** ...
*...so since she **got** pregnant → auxiliary V*
 [FN:TT2]

(5.133)ThA miii ka leeh A louq thwaaa **ya taw** pyu su kkyeiin
 theiq mha mA ya taa Ppee Ppee yeh.
*Since I **have to** go to work, I didn't have much time to take
 care of you, you know Dad?*
 [AP:PePe]

(5.134)...Ko Ko youuun koo Me Thin Sa Oo **laiq taw** meeh ssoo
 pyiii pyaaaw taa.
*MTSO said I'll **follow** you to your (KK) office. → main V*
 [FN:TT2]

(5.135)A Ba A pyiq koo A Ba pyaaaw pya **laiq taw** meeh.
*I (A Ba) will confess my crime (**now**). → auxiliaryV*
 [FS:Beeh]

Whether the verb is used as a main verb or an auxiliary verb,

'V/VP taw' tokens seem to express two main grammatical functions:

⁶⁰ Bernot (2001. p.27) uses the term "marque modales" (modal markers) for such lexical items.

⁶¹ 'Ya' may also be a part of a passive structure 'V kkaan ya-' meaning *get V-ed*, but there is no occurrence of examples in the present data.

⁶² Okell & Allott add that 'laiq' is "a high frequency suffix used with a range of meanings not yet fully understood" (ibid.)

1) Generally speaking, the VP with 'taw' indicates that the idea comes into effect starting from the moment of speaking or the current point in narration. With the same logic, a sentence with the 'VP taw' followed by a post-verbal or post-sentential particle [cf. Ch.2.5.2.2.3.] expresses an equivalent of near future tense in English as in *going to V* [(5.136)-(5.137)].

(5.136) 4 naa yii **kweeeh taw** mhaa ppyiq paa teeh.

It's about (going to be) 4.30 now.

['kweeeh' → clock strikes the half hour]

[AP:Chitgati]

(5.137) A Ba leeh eiq yaa tteeh mhaa thwaaa **lheeeh nee laiq taw** meeh.

I (A Ba) am going to lie in the bed.

[FS: Beeh]

It should be noted here, however, that there are some occurrences of 'V taw' in which such meaning of near future is not evident, or is debatable, as shown in (5.138) below.

(5.138) ...geiq ssouun mhaq taiin koo sseq leq pyiii

laiq paa laa keh **taw** teeh kkiin byaa.

come along

... (he) continued to come along (in the bus) until the last stop.

[AP:ChitGati]

This indicates that the person continues on the bus (instead of getting off) from that moment on: i.e. near future in relation to the point of narration in the discourse.

This example can perhaps be compared to a definition of 'taw' as "V at last, after all, inevitably" by Okell & Allot (2001)⁶³:

⁶³ Actural defintion: (V~-) → V at last, after all, inevitably, nearly, merely; with negative verbs V (no) longer, (no) more: vb mod, CB+FB: [p.77]

(5.139) 9 naa yii ttooo mha peeeh yauq **taw** teeh.
*So we **didn't** arrive **till (as late as)** 9 o'clock.*

(ibid. p. 77)

However, if we re-examine this example in the syntactic and discourse context together, the actual meaning of 'not until' or 'as late as' is to be interpreted in association with the structure 'V mha peeeh' *only when...V* rather than 'taw' by itself which is post-positionally attached to the verb 'ttooo' *to strike* (reference to the *clock*, which is the same word as *hour* in Burmese).

(5.140) KyA ma to kyauuun she shi mhaq taiin twiin kaaa ssaiq
thaaaw kyaun . . .
*Then **as** the bus reaches the stop in front of our school*

ssiiin pyiii lyhiin kyauuun wiin tteeeh tho wiin **taw** thii.
*I get off and go into the compound (**at last**)*

(ibid. p.77)

Similarly in (5.140) the meaning of 'at last' is to be interpreted in a larger context: the VP 'wiin taw' ('wiin' *to enter*) in association with the clause '*...ssaiq thaaaw kyaun*' *because (it) reaches the stop...* rather than the 'VP **taw**' alone, that is *enter + particle*, in which 'taw' means *starting from that moment*.

The point here is that setting aside utterances with the meaning of 'taw' as *at last, inevitably*, etc., which have to be interpreted in a larger context, as illustrated with examples by Okell & Allott, there are occurrences of 'taw' in utterances which simply express near future tense or the meaning *starting from that moment onward*. Such utterances are excluded from the scope of this study.

2) 'Taw' expresses English equivalents of *no longer*, *not any more* in negative statements: 'mA V taw (buuu)' for declaratives and 'mA V neh taw' for imperatives [cf. 5.3.4.1.2]. Such tokens are also discarded as they primarily serve grammatical functions.

Among the two remaining high frequency left collocates of 'taw', namely 'paa taw' and 'mhaa taw', 'paa' is commonly known as a polite particle, and in the present corpus 'paa taw' occurs mainly with positive – declarative or imperative – statements.

(5.141) [*Narrator talking about an old man who is unhappy with his children who do not look after him*]

...tA kku kku taw louq mha ppyiq taw meeh lo thuu ssouuun ppyaq laiq **paa taw** teeh.

...*he decided that he'd better do something about it.* → 'ssouuun ppyaq' to decide

[AP:PePe]

(5.142) [*Husband to wife, who is mad at the daughter who married a man she didn't approve of*]

Taaw **paa taw** Ma Ohn May yeeh. Taaw **paa taw** taaw **paa taw** kwaa.

Stop it please Ma Ohn May, stop it now, please stop now. → 'taaw' to stop, call a halt (MLC 1994)

[FS:MinL]

However, when the usage of 'paa taw' is examined in discourse context, it is found that with 'paa taw' in positive imperatives, the speaker is not always being polite, as can be seen in (5.143) where she is being sarcastic rather than polite⁶⁴.

⁶⁴ It can perhaps be argued here that this phenomenon is similar to the use of the politeness marker *please* with sarcastic meaning in English.

(5.143)[*wife to husband who wants to look after an old man and his blind grand-daughter*]

...2 yauq sA louuun koo eiin kkaaw pyiii kyweee ttaaa laiq
paa taw.

...(*in that case*) *bring both of them home to live (here) and feed them.*

[AP:Ahlu]

One interesting observation regarding the use of 'paa' here is that 20 out of 77 tokens of 'paa taw' (approximately 25%) co-occur with 'ssoo' as in 'ssoo paa taw' meaning *let's say*, of which 17 come from the interview data. It can perhaps be explained on the ground that in personal interviews, speakers are required more often to present their opinions spontaneously, and 'ssoo paa taw' functions as a hedge. Among the rest of the occurrences of 'paa taw', it is found that most of them occur in the narratives when the speaker is talking about something or someone else other than the speakers directly involved in the interaction.

(5.144)Piin siin yuu laiq teeh **ssoo paa taw.** [Inter1]

Let's say I retired.

[AP:Ahlu]

(5.145)U pA maa **soo paa taw.** PA ttA ma ssouun meee kkyiin
taa ka baa leech ssou taw

Let's say for example. What I want to ask first is...

[Inter 3]

As for tokens of 'mhaa taw', its meaning is to be interpreted according to the meaning 'mhaa' that is used in the context [cf. similar to 'ka taw' in 5.3.3.2.3].

(5.146)Pyii twiiin **mhaa taw** m.A ppaq ppyiq buuu.

*When I was **in the country**. I didn't read them (foreign newspapers) → marking place*

[Inter3]

(5.147)...nauq paiin **mhaa taw** thi thwaaa teeh.
...later they (villagers) found out (about his wife's photo he's been carrying around) → marking time
 [FN:SSS1]

(5.148)Hiiin nga **mhaa taw** yiii zaaa saa mhaq pyiii yiin twee
 kkouun lai q ya taa.
Hmm me, thinking that it was a love letter, I had to get excited (in vain). → subject/topic marker
 [AP:Kyeleq]

5.3.4.2.7. Right collocates of TAW: lexical items immediately following 'taw'

In this category of collocates, most of the lexical items immediately following 'taw' are N/NPs (e.g. 'A thaan' *sound*, 'A louq louq ya mhaa' *working*, 'Ba Gan' *name of a town in Myanmar*, Maun Ne Myo *name of a person*) or pronouns (e.g. 'kyA naaw' *I for male*, 'kyA ma' *I for female*, 'thuu' *s/he*), which may represent subject, object or an equivalent of English adverbials of time and place, etc. Other lexical items immediately following 'taw' with a notable frequency are listed in Table 69 in order of frequency.

with lexical items following 'taw'	Frequency
1. 'eeeh'	149
2. 'mA ...' (negative structure or a polysyllabic word)	145
3. 'hoo'	129
4. 'leeh'	90
5. 'meeh'	85
6. 'mha'	72
7. demonstrative 'dii'	65
8. 'tA'	54

Table 69. Right collocates of 'taw': lexical items following 'taw'

The lexical items following 'taw' listed in Table 69 can be divided into

1) those that are syntactically independent from the clause ending with 'taw', and 2) those that are post-positionally attached to 'taw'.

a) Right collocates of 'taw' that are syntactically independent from 'clause+taw'

First items on the list in Table 69, namely 'eeh', 'mA' 'hoo' 'dii' and 'tA' occur in a clause that is not syntactically bound to the clause ending with 'taw'. They do not have any significant effect on the interpretation of 'taw', or the clause containing 'taw'. The reverse is not true, however, as can be seen in (5.149)-(5.151) for example, which also illustrate the context dependent nature of those lexical items.

(5.149)[*Talking about redecorating the husband's study*]

...Khin Than Nu ka lha lha pa pa neh muuun maan pyiin
ssiin pyiii **taw eeh loo** ttaa kkyiin teeh.

*KTN wants to decorate nicely, **and that's how** she wants to keep (it).*

[FN:SSS1]

(5.150)[*Mother to daughter: comparing her daughter and other doctors' wives, because the son-in-law is too generous with his patients...*]

Nga thA miii ssA yaa wuun kA taaw kya **taw mA** pyaaaw
kkyiin paa buuu ee.

*Hmm **my daughter** (you), a doctor's wife, I **don't** want to talk about it.*

[AP:Ahlu]

(5.151)[*Talking about a male protagonist who ran away from home*]

...nauq ssouun kya **taw hoo** luu ssoo twee neh twee teeh.

...*at the end*, he ran into *those* bandits. → 'ho' those
[FN:Alice]

b) Right collocates of 'taw' that are post-positionally attached to 'taw'

In this category, 'leeeh' 'meeh' and 'mha' are bound morphemes, which are post-positionally attached to 'taw'. However, there is evidence in the present corpus that in some cases, they are syntactically detachable, i.e. their present or absence does not have any effect on the truth conditionality or conceptual meaning of the clause ending with 'taw'⁶⁵.

- **leeeh** → The most commonly known semantic value of 'leeeh', unless it is preceded by a question particle, is an equivalent of *also, as well as, in addition* etc. In MLC (1994) 'leeeh' is also described as a "word replicated and prefixed to a pair of verbs to denote simultaneous action (equivalent in usage to adverb 'at the same time')" (p. 453)⁶⁶. This definition is in tune with that of Okell & Allott's (2001) who describe 'leeeh' in parallel clauses as equivalents of *both Phr¹ and Phr²*. Upon a close examination of 'taw leeeh' in the concordance, it is found that the most frequent collocate is 'kya taw leeeh' (43 out of 90, i.e. approximately 50%). While there are occurrences of 'kya taw leeeh' expressing the idea *also, as well, in addition*, it is found that this definition does not hold true for all occurrences of 'kya taw leeeh'. After a careful consideration of all occurrences of 'taw leeeh' in their discourse context, it is found that there are a considerable number of occurrences (17 at least) in which 'taw leeeh' expresses a meaning that is different, and sometimes contrary to *also, as*

⁶⁵ An exception here is clauses ending with 'ka taw', since 'ka taw' itself functions as a DM and therefore it is syntactically detachable, when it is used for emphasis or contrast (5.3.3.2.3) (contrast to when 'ka' is used as an equivalent of *from* – cf. 5.3.3.1.1)

⁶⁶ E.g. 'nyauun thiii **leeeh** saaa lee than **leeeh** naaa ttauun' *eating banyan fruit and listening to the sound of flesh at the same time* (ibid. p. 453)

well as, in addition, both etc. I will demonstrate this observation with examples (5.152) to (5.155).

(5.152)[*Woman talking to a friend, upon hearing the news about her son joining the army*]

A mA leee A theq aan dA yeeh myaaa lha paa teeh shiin.
Pyiii **taw leeeh** ya teh ngwee ka leeeh meq maaaw lauq sA
yaa baa mha mA shi taa.

Oh, that's dangerous for life. Besides, the salary he'll get is far from desirable.

[AP:Pan]

(5.153)[*Wife to husband*]

...eiin mhaa thauq ssoo taa A pyiin ttweq teeh. Eiin mhaa
kya pyaan **taw leeeh** gii taa tA louuun neh dii...

(I) told you to drink at home, but you go out. When you stay at home also, you spend your time with a guitar.

[More appropriate translation in English] → *(I) told you to drink at home, but you go out. But even when you stay home, you spend your time with a guitar.*

[FN:TT1]

(5.154)Eeeh haa niin ka dii ywaa mhaa thA gyiii yeh leq youuun
ssoo **taw leeeh** dii pya thA naa mhaa niin leeeh taa wuun
shi taa paw.

Since you are also a right hand of the village head, in this problem you also have responsibilities.

[FS:Beeh]

(5.155)[*In response to the interviewer about newspapers*]

KyA ma thi kkyiin taa peeh ppaq teeh. Naa yeee **taw leeeh** ppaq paa teeh.

I only read what I want to know. I also read obituaries.

[Inter3]

Examples (5.152)-(5.155) represent occurrences of 'taw leeeh' which collocate with the original semantic value of 'leeeh'. However in some examples, this value is only loosely expressed: for instance, in

(5.153) the wife is reproaching the husband for "going out to drink as well as spending his time with a guitar at home" in which sense the semantic value of 'leeh' holds true. However, as is suggested in my alternative translation, a different discourse structure with a different DM is probably required in English. This can be taken as an indication that 'taw leeh' expresses discourse functions other than its original semantic value. Let us now consider (5.156)-(5.158) which illustrate occurrences of 'taw leeh' with other particles, expressing different discourse meanings.

Note: Suggested equivalents of DMs in English are marked in bold. [?] is used when no lexical equivalent of 'taw' can be found.

(5.156) Myeq Kkiiin Thiq loo myooo **kya taw leeh** thuu kya leeh naaa leeh ya kkeq teeh. TA kkaa tA lee **kya taw leeh** paaw lA sii ppeq koo A leee thaa thA loo neh hoo ouq saa paw. A myiin mA taaw taa twee koo thuu ka thA yaaw ttaa taa twee. Eeh loo myooo **kya taw leeh** pyii thuu twee yeh ssaan da neh kaiq nyii taa paw.

*Something like Myeq Khiiin Thiq (name of journal), it's difficult to understand. **But** sometimes, they seem leaning towards propaganda. Um, like satirising things that cross them.. For things like that, **on the other hand**, it goes in sync with the people's wish.*

[Inter3]

(5.157) KyA naaw ka iin gA leiq laaan nyhuun ssoo taw tA kkaa tA yaan **kya taw leeh** Aa Sha naiin ngaan thaaa twee ka iin gA leiq laaan nyhuun loo kkyiin teeh. TA kkaa tA yaan **kya taw leeh** pyiin thiq twee ka iin gA leiq eh laaan nyhuun loo kkyiin teeh.

*Since I'm an English speaking guide, sometimes[?] Asians want an English speaking guide. **But** sometimes the French want an English speaking guide.*

[Inter:S.]

Note: 'leeh' goes with 'tA kkaa ta yaan' *sometimes*, which suggest that the interpretation "Asians as well as the French" is not possible in this discourse context.

(5.158) A louq mA shi yiin taw naaa teeh. TA kkaa tA lee **kya taw leeeh** theiq piin paaan teh A kkaa kya **taw leeeh** naaa kkyala iq teeh.

*When I don't have work, I take a rest. **But** sometimes, when I get very tired [?], I just take a rest.*

[Inter3]

Examples (5.156)-(5.158) are drawn from Interview data only, and they represent collocates with 'kya taw', but similar discourse features of 'taw leeeh' are found with other collocates and in all data across the board, which can be illustrated with (5.159) to (5.161).

(5.159) [*Woman talking to herself after having found out that the letter she got from Ko Htin is not a love letter but a poem about agricultural issues*]

Hiin A mA lee nga mhaa taw yiii zaaa saa mhaq pyiii yiin twee kkouun lai q ya taa. Hiiin daa pee meh Ko Htin ka daa myooo **kya taw leeeh** beeh ssooo lo touuun.

*Hmm boy!, I had to get excited (for nothing) thinking it was a love letter. Hmm **but** [?] **for** this kind of thing, Ko Htin is quite good (he has talents).*

[AP:Kyeleq]

Note: Here, the word 'daa pee meh' *but* is present in the actual speech, but 'NP kya taw leeeh' also expresses the idea of contradiction, which can also be realised with *but* in English.

(5.160) ThA miii ka A yweeh yauq laa taa mhaan pee meh eiin ttauun kkyala ttaa ppee ppo taw saaaw thee teeh ttiin teeh kwaa.

– Aaw kkyeq kkyi in kyiii **taw leeeh** beeh houq pa mA leeeh shiin. Luu kyiii kkyi in pyaaaw ssoo ttaa ppo paa.

It's true that our daughter has grown up, but it's still too early to get married.

*-Oh, of course I don't mean **right away**. I'm just suggesting to make an agreement between the parents.*

[FS:MinL]

[Note: It is hard to find an appropriate English equivalent. 'Taw leeeh' collocates with 'kkyeq kkyi in' *right away*. This may be in tune with the idea of reproach or self-defense, expressed with 'ka leech' [cf. 5.3.3.2.7]

(5.161) [*Man to an aggressive girl who is crying after their argument*] Hiin miiin ngoo nee teeh. Miiin ka dii loo ssoo **taw leeeh** thA naaa sA yaa paa laaa.

Hmm you're crying? Now (seeing) you like this, you (even?) make me feel sorry.

[AP:KaGyi]

Discourse features illustrated with examples (5.159) to (5.161) are in tune with our previous observations regarding the use of 'ka leeeh' (cf. 5.3.3.2.7): that 'ka leeeh' serves discourse functions rather than expressing the semantic value as described in reference materials. However its precise discourse meaning is hard to define. Based on the findings of the present data, it seems reasonable to posit that 'leeeh' is mostly detachable from 'NP/VP taw'; when it collocates with 'NP/VP taw' the speaker is expressing a reproach, self-defense or some sort of consolation, similar to discourse functions of 'ka leeeh' [cf. 5.3.3.2.7]. In addition, I would like to argue here that this discourse feature of 'leeeh' corresponds to a definition of 'leeeh' in MLC cited above: it "denotes simultaneous action". Although the original definition refers to its usage in parallel clauses [cf. 5.3.3.2.7], the same principal seems to apply to its usage in the examples (5.156)-(5.161): 'taw leeeh' as a DM indicates that something positive and something negative happen simultaneously, hence expressions such as 'on the other hand' 'but' 'even if' etc. seem more appropriate in English translation.

- **meeeh** → See.5.3.4.2.6.

- **mha** → In traditional grammars, 'mha' means only, and therefore by extension, 'V taw mha' means *only when ... I*. With a question particle

'beeh' as in 'beeh taw mha' means *never*. In the present corpus, collocates 'taw mha' primarily serves grammatical functions, as shown in (5.162)-(5.163), and are therefore discarded from the list of DMs in this study.

(5.162)[*Talking about male and female protagonists*] ...thi thwaaa
pyiii **taw mha** nauq **taw mha** thuu to miin gA laa ssauun
laiq taa lee.

...*only when* (she) found out (the truth), *then only*, they got
married, don't you remember?

[FN:SSS2]

(5.163)[man complaining about a boss] ...sa mi yiin **beeh taw
mha** mA ssouun paa buuu kwaa.

If (he) starts talking, it never ends...

[AP:ChitGati]

5.4. Concluding note for Chapter 5

In this chapter, particles A, MA, KA and TAW have been examined, of which particles KA and TAW serve various significant discourse functions. The main points of their discourse features are summarised in Table 70.

Particle	+Particle	Discourse function
KA		topicalization: introduces new information, expresses emphasis or contrast
		common with plural nouns TWEE, TO
		common with phrasal verbs and idiomatic expressions
		common in rhetorical questions
KA	+LEEEH	expresses lack of reason for surprise, <i>naturally</i>
		expresses self-defense, self-justification, reproach, complaint
KA	+TAW	topicalization: emphasis or contrast, <i>as for</i> ,
		common with superlative structure
		offers explanation or definition
KA	+NEE	commonly used in 'coda' in narratives
		same as KA: subject or topic marker
KA	+NEE	unlike TAW, it does not co-occur with object marker KOO
TAW		Often overlaps with grammatical functions, collocations with different particles express different discourse functions
PYIII	TAW	following verbs → chronology of events, actions
NEE PYIII	TAW	same as KA: marker of subject/topic, marker of point of origin
SSOO PYIII	TAW	expresses the preceding clause as a quotation, or a thought, an intention, etc. which is indicated as a reason/cause for what happens in the following clause
KYA	TAW	same as KA TAW: topic marker, <i>as for</i>
SSOO	TAW	signals preceding clause as a cause
Demonstratives	TAW	signals following clause as a result
SOO PAA	TAW TEEH	appears in coda in narration
SOO PAA	TAW	Hedge: <i>let's say</i>

Table 70. Main discourse features of particles KA and TAW

Chapter 6

Analysis of Burmese data 2

This chapter examines two post-verbal particles TAA and TEEH, which are the last two items selected for analysis in this study. The chapter ends with a discussion of key discourse features associated with all the particles analyzed in Chapter 5 and 6, i.e the main discourse marking particles KA, TAW, TAA and TEEH, along with their frequent collocations.

6.1. TAA and TEEH

In this section, 'taa' and 'teeh' are analysed simultaneously as they share one grammatical feature: they occur in the same syntactic environment, and are both known as variants of a "verb-sentence-marker" (henceforth VSM) (Okell, 1969), or "sentence markers" (Okell & Allott, 2001). Moreover, 'teeh' and 'taa' also serve other grammatical functions, which will be explained first.

6.1.1 TAA as a marker for nominalizing verbs

In MLC (1994) 'taa' is defined as a "particle suffixed to verbs and adjectives to form nouns"⁶⁷ (p. 166). Okell & Allott (2001) give a more comprehensive description: it "converts a verb clause to a nominalized clause" and represents an equivalent of "that which is V-ed, thing that was V-ed, V-ing" (p. 74). As an NP, the clause ending with 'taa' serves

⁶⁷ 'Saaa' to eat → 'saaa taa' eating; 'pyaaaw ssoo' to speak, to say → 'pyaaaw taa ssoo taa' speaking, what (someone) says, etc.

functions of NPs, such as those described by Okell & Allott (ibid) which can be summarized as follows: they can co-occur with noun modifiers such as plural marker 'twee' [cf. (6.1)] or a particle marking a cause such as 'mo' *because it is* [cf.(6.2)], and they can mark the topic of discourse [cf. (6.1), (6.3)]. They can also mark the NP as the topic of clauses that have to do with temporal duration (6.4), and sometimes suggest the meaning *when V* or *if V* [cf. (6.5)]⁶⁸, etc. (ibid. pp. 74-5).

- (6.1) Daa twee ka Ko Htway ttaa kkeh **taa twee** paa.
*Those are the **things that Ko Htway left behind.***
- (6.2) Saa pee than than peeh ppyiq **taa mo...**
*As it **was pure literature...** ['ppyiq' to be]*
- (6.3) Shuuu ppA naq sii ya **taa** mA theq thaa buuu.
*It is not comfortable **having to wear shoes.***
- (6.4) Saun nee **taa** kyaa pyiii laaa.
*Have you been **waiting long?***
- (6.5) Thaaa Tay Tay ka puu ssaa **taa** koo thwaaa kyweee laiq
thee teeh.
When her young son Tay Tay made a fuss she even went and fed him.

[cf. Okell & Allott, 2001:94]

Out of the 3,492 tokens of 'taa' in the present corpus, there is a large number of occurrences of 'taa' as a nominalizing marker, as described above⁶⁹:

⁶⁸ (6.3)-(6.5) can be interpreted as a general topic marker: 'having to wear shoe' (166), 'waiting' (6.4) and 'the fact that Tay Tay is making a fuss' (6.5) are all topic of discourse in each context that the speaker intends to draw our attention to. See their literal translations:

(6.3) *Wearing shoes, it is not comfortable.*

(6.4) *Waiting, has it been long?*

(6.5) *Tay Tay's making a fuss (marked with an "object marker" koo, may be suggesting that it is something she has to take care of?) she went and fed him.*

⁶⁹ The exact frequency count is not given here, as it is irrelevant to the focus of this study.

(6.6) [*Talking about daughter*]

Nyaaa **taa** 4 nhiq shi pyii.

It's been 4 years that they're married.

[Literally: *Being married, it's been 4 years*]

[AP:Ahlu]

(6.7) [*Talking about the authoritative head of the family*]

Loo aq **taa** mhaan thA myha A kouun A ssiin thin shi nee ya meeh.

Whatever he needs must be readily available (for him).

[NP mhaan thA myha *all that are truly N* Okell & Allott: 174]

[DF:Yekyi]

(6.8) [*Talking about a male protagonist at a girl's house working as a gardner*]

...yee koo A paaw ttauun laiq **taa** yee ka paaan pyiii kauun ma leee ssii yauq thwaaa yaaaw.

...*when he lifts the hose upwards, water gets directly to the gril* [Literally: *...lifting the hose upwards...*]

[FN:MiThu]

6.1.2. TEEH as intensifier

'Teeh' preceding a verb represents an equivalent of English adverbs *very much, a lot* (Okell & Allott, 2001), or *very, exceedingly* (MLC, 1994). Okell (1969) describes 'teeh' in this usage as "slightly exclamatory" (p. 424).

(6.9) Dii ne **teeh** aiq teeh.

How hot it is today!

[Literally: *Today, quite hot!*]

[ibid:94]

(6.10) [*Man complaining about the treatment that the girl is trying to give him for his flu*]

Teeh kkeq paa laaa.

Oh, what a pain!! [Literally: *you are quite difficult*]

[AP:KaGyi]

It is found in the present corpus that there is another usage of 'teeh' as an exclamation expressing anger⁷⁰ (6.11). However, there are only two instances in the present corpus, and therefore it is not considered for further analysis in this study.

(6.11) [*Mother to daughter, upon her reproach that the mother is being nosy and asking difficult questions about her private life*]

Meee taw kaq thiii kaq thaq teh. **Teeh** ngaa mA pyaaaw lai q kkyiin buuu.

When I asked, you said I'm being difficult. Hmmm [sound of a grunt??] I don't want to say anything!

[DF:Thubeq]

6.1.3. TAA and TEEH in polysyllabic lexical items

Like other particles discussed in previous sections, 'taa' is a multi-functional lexical item, and it may be a part of a multi-syllabic word such as 'buu taa' *railway station*, 'bii taa miin' *vitamin*, 'thiq taa' *suitcase*, etc. There are approximately 20 such 'taa' tokens representing words with conceptual meaning. Similarly, there are also a small number of 'teeh' tokens found in polysyllabic words such as 'hoo teeh' *hotel*, '(ttA miin ssaiin) teeh' *to set up (a restaurant)*, '(ppA yaaa) teeh' *to build (a pagoda)*, etc. Such tokens of 'taa' and 'teeh' are outside the scope of this study, and are therefore discarded from the list of particles for further investigation.

In sum, 'taa' and 'teeh' as described in sections 6.1.1 to 6.1.3 are excluded from the list of particles for further investigation, as they either express conceptual meaning, or they primarily serve grammatical functions, which are not concerns of this study.

⁷⁰ Okell (1969:424) briefly mentions this usage, without any example, and suggests that 'teeh' may have come from 'theeh' when the speaker is expressing anger.

6.1.4. 'TAA' and 'TEEH' as verb sentence markers

6.1.4.1. In reference grammars

Okell & Allott describe 'taa' and 'teeh' as variants of a sentence marker (or VSM, Okell 1969), which "indicates general statement of realized or non-future state, also habitual action", which can be translated into English with verbs in past or present tenses, as shown in (6.12)-(6.13) (Okell & Allott, 2001: 94).

(6.12) Moo ywaa nee **teeh**.
It was raiing / It is raining.

(6.13) U bouq ne taiiin ppA yaaa thwaaa ppuuu **teeh**.
Every sabbath day he goes to visit the pagoda.

[ibid:94]

They observe that in particular the use of 'taa' is associated with the following contexts:

- for emphasis, or when correcting the hearer's mistaken view:

(6.14) Eiin koo yauq mha yauq pa ouuun mA laaa lo auq me nee **taa**.
*There was (me) **wondering** if you'd ever get home.*

[ibid:94]

- as the preferred form before the phrase particles 'paw' 'peeoh' 'paa' 'kooo'

(6.15) Myiiniin ppyaun myiiniin kweee twee tauun naaa leeh nee **taa kooo**.
Well well! So you have a grasp of straight and curved lines, I see.

[ibid:95]

- "when the information conveyed by the verb is already known to the listener and the new information in the sentence is in one of the noun

phrases preceding the verb", which can be compared to the English cleft structure *It was because X that Y.* (ibid:95)

(6.16) TA kkyo kyauun twee mhaa thaa dii loo ppyiq nee **taa** paa.
It's only in some schools that this is happening.
 [ibid:95]

- in sentences embedded before the verb 'ppyiq' to be the case that

(6.17) Thu kyaun miin sii seiin koo ya kkeh **taa ppyiq** teh
 A tweq ...
As it was thanks to him that he had attained his position as king ...
 [ibid: 95]

- Furthermore, 'taa' is also a variant of 'thA' in interrogative structures, as shown in Table 71:

with TAA	standard form	Function
<i>V taa laaa.</i>	<i>V thA laaa.</i>	Yes/No questions
<i>Baa/Beeh ... V taa leeh.</i>	<i>Baa/Beeh ... V thA leeh.</i>	Wh-question

Table 71. 'Taa' in interrogatives

(6.18) Myaaa **thA laaa** mA myaaa buuu laaa.
Is that too much or not ?
 [Okell & Allott, p. 199]

(6.19) [Talking about radio progams]
 ...taiiin yiin thaaa yiin kyeee mhu A sii A siin koo pyaaaw
taa laaa.
Are (you) talking about the ethnic cultural programs?
 [Inter3]

(6.20) Baa ppyiq lo mA louq ya **thA leeh.**
Why aren't you allowed to do it?
 [Okell & Allott, p. 206]

(6.21) [Husband to wife]
 Miin baa lo kA leee mA yuu kkyiin **taa leeh** hiin.
Why don't you want a child?
 [FS:MiinL]

6.1.4.2. In the corpus data

After 'taa' and 'teeh' tokens with features as described in sections (6.1.1) to (6.1.3) have been manually eliminated, the remaining tokens for a more extensive investigation are presented in Table 72. It should probably be mentioned here that identifying VSM 'teeh' in the concordance file (by extension few of those that are not) is relatively easy, as it occurs consistently in sentence-final position, with a possibility of only one or two more particles following 'teeh'. On the other hand, since Burmese allows a (relatively more) flexible word-order (than English), clauses containing 'taa' (where 'taa' functions as a noun-forming particle suffixed to a VP) can occur in sentence-initial, sentence-medial or sentence-final positions. Given that Burmese does not make use of the verb *be* [cf. 2.5.2.1.4], there are also NPs that may be considered complete clausal utterances. In other words, an utterance-final 'taa' in the concordance file may represent a VSM or a noun-marking particle. Consequently it is necessary to distinguish them in the discourse context, a selection process which has to be done manually.

Table 72 shows 'taa' and 'teeh' tokens with two different sets of frequency: 1) the number of tokens as VSMS⁷¹ that are to be considered closely for their discourse functions, and 2) the number of tokens on the original raw frequency lists.

⁷¹ Given that these tokens are manually selected, an overwhelmingly time-consuming process, I am taking into account a possibility of minor errors, such as tokens that are not VSMS that were overlooked in the selection. Nonetheless, such errors are unlikely to alter the interpretation of the data, especially in the following sections where the main focus is placed on the qualitative interpretation, rather than the quantitative one only.

Particle	tokens considered for discourse functions	Total # of tokens
taa	1,941	3,492
teeh	3,392	3,433

Table 72. Tokens of 'taa' & 'teeh' analyzed for discourse features

As can be seen from Table 72, 'teeh' and 'taa' occur with a comparable frequency on the original raw frequency list. One may be tempted to stipulate from this almost equal distribution in the original frequency list that 'taa' and 'teeh' may be in systemic opposition rather than a variant of 'teeh', just as English *that* is not a "variant" of *this*. However the frequency of 'taa' is considerably reduced when the selection is limited to 'taa' as VSMS only, which leads us to reconsider the previous assumption. On the other hand, the number of VSM 'teeh' remains high, with no significant difference from the original frequency. It might be tempting to assume that 'teeh' is a preferred VSM rather than 'taa', as suggested in the reference grammars, based on this consistently higher frequency of 'teeh'. Nonetheless, for a more accurate identification of discourse functions associated with 'taa' and 'teeh' that may dictate the choice of one over the other, I shall seek to examine their distribution in two categories: by genres and by collocations.

6.1.4.2.1. 'Taa' and 'teeh' by genres

In my earlier study of Burmese particles in discourse (Hnin Tun, 2004), which was based on a much smaller corpus (total of 27,111 tokens),

findings suggested that the choice of 'taa' vs. 'teeh'⁷² may be genre specific. The evidence of the previous study comes from the higher frequency of 'teeh' in news broadcast, and in parts of the narrative where the speaker is presenting facts – both of which represent pre-scripted speech⁷³. This frequency is in contrast to a low frequency of 'teeh' in personal interview data (ibid. pp. 82-3). Following this initial finding from the previous study, distributions of 'taa' and 'teeh' are examined first by genres in the present corpus, and are summarized in Table 73.

⁷² Note - a different transcription system was used in the earlier study: 'deh' and 'da' represent 'teeh' and 'taa' respectively in the present study.

⁷³ In Burmese, news is almost never announced and discussed spontaneously, probably due to strict censorship.

DF	Taa	%	Teeh	% ⁷⁴
One	3		13	
Samsara	15		10	
ThuBEQ	19		24	
YeKyi	29		123	
Total (DF)	66	3%	170	5%
FS				
Beeh	121		330	
Miin L	223		390	
Total (FS)	344	17.7%	720	21.2%
AP				
A hlu	16		78	
Chitgati	15		61	
Kagyi	92		70	
KoKo	32		44	
KyeLeq	86		139	
LeHlain	42		62	
MinGadaw	24		46	
Myita	10		47	
Pan	30		72	
PePe	21		28	
Total (AP)	368	18.9%	647	19%
Pre-scripted sp	778	40%	1,537	45.3%
FN				
Alice	137		120	
MiThu	94		88	
SSS1	55		209	
SSS2	98		240	
TT1	64		67	
TT2	36		32	
Total (FN)	484	24.9%	756	22.2%
Inter				
AT	270		336	
SJ	46		242	
Inter1	149		144	
Inter2	87		191	
Inter3	127		356	
Total (Inter)	679	34.9%	1,269	37.4%
Spontaneous sp	1,163	59.9%	2,025	59.6%

Table 73. Distribution of 'taa' & 'teeh' by genres⁷⁵

⁷⁴ In theory, these numbers should add up to 100% in the total, but as I have mentioned before, I am not confident about the 100% accuracy of the numbers, mainly due to machine-generated frequency counts for Burmese transcripts (even when they are transliterated in roman letters) which often come out differently at different times and manual counts of many sections which are subject to human errors. Nevertheless numerical differences are minimum and they should not skew the interpretation of the findings. Not having any better solution for the moment, I am leaving them as they are now

⁷⁵ Note. DF: Dialogue in fiction, FS: Film Script, AP: Radio Play [Pre-scripted]
FN: Film Narratives, Inter: Interviews [Spontaneous]

Some interesting observations are in order here: we can see in Table 73 that the frequency of 'teeh' is consistently higher than that of 'taa' across genres. However, in terms of percentage, their frequency is comparable: 40% 'taa' vs. 45.3% 'teeh' for pre-scripted speech, and 59.9% 'taa' vs. 59.6% 'teeh' for spontaneous speech. On the other hand, 'teeh' appears more frequently than 'taa' in pre-scripted speech whereas 'taa' appears more frequently than 'teeh' in spontaneous speech. This is summarized in Table 74.

Overall corpus	Pre-scripted speech	Spontaneous speech
TEEH > TAA	TEEH > TAA	TAA > TEEH
3,492 > 3,434	45.3% > 40%	59.9% > 59.6%

Table 74. Comparison of TAA & TEEH by genres (categories?)

Without further investigation, Table 74 seems to confirm that the use of 'taa' vs. 'teeh' is genre-specific: 'taa' is more typically associated with spontaneous speech, a more representative genre of actual spoken language⁷⁶. Findings for the overall category of spontaneous speech are also in tune with the findings for the film narratives, where 'taa' appears more frequently than 'teeh'. However, we can see a contradictory indication in the interview data, where 'teeh' appears more frequently than 'taa'. Two provisos may be offered here: their quantitative difference is relatively insignificant (34.9% vs. 37.4%, which is less than 3%), and we need a much larger and a wider variety of corpus to determine features associated with each genre, which is beyond the scope of the present

⁷⁶ i.e. as opposed to pre-scripted speech as written language delivered in spoken medium, although in Burmese spoken/colloquial Burmese is linguistically distinct from the written/formal Burmese, regardless of the mode of delivery [cf. Ch.2.2].

study. Nonetheless the current findings indicate a relative tendency towards the genre-specific nature associated with the use of 'taa' and 'teeh'.

6.1.4.2.2. 'Taa' and 'teeh' by collocations

Another way to investigate factors that may dictate the choice between the VSMs 'taa' vs. 'teeh' is to identify discourse features associated with each VSM, for which an obvious starting point is to examine their distribution in utterances. Table 75 shows the most frequent left collocates of 'taa' and 'teeh' (with a frequency of 45 and above)⁷⁷ in descending order. These collocates represent lexical items that typically precede the VSMs in question. Table 76 represents the same information as that of Table 75, but rearranged⁷⁸ for the purposes of comparison (Table 76 allows us to see lexical items that are absent from the high frequency list of collocations with one token or the other).

+taa	Total: 1,941	+teeh	Total: 3,392
nee	223	paa	528
ya	167	houq	261
thwaaa	131	ya	246
laiq	121	shi	177
pyaaaw	114	nee	152
kya	98	thwaaa	131
ttaa	72	kkyiin	104
laa	69	theee	93
kkyiin	49	laiq	91
ppyiq	49	ttiin	85
shi	46	kya	75
peee	45	laa	75
louq	45	pyaaaw	73

Table 75. Left-collocates of TAA & TEEH

⁷⁷ There is no real justification of the number selected: for 'taa' fewer than 45 visibly seems less significant, and for 'teeh' I keep the same number as for 'taa'.

⁷⁸ The arrangement is based on the descending order of frequency of 'teeh' tokens.

Particle	TAA	total: 1,941	TEEH	total: 3,392
Paa	∅		528	15.5%
houq	∅		261	7.6%
ya	167	8.5%	246	7.2%
shi	46	2.3%	177	5.2%
nee	223	11.4%	152	4.5%
thwaaa	131	6.7%	131	3.8%
kkyiin	49	2.5%	104	3.0%
theee	∅		93	2.7%
laiq	121	6.2%	91	2.6%
ttiin	∅		85	2.5%
kya	98	5.0%	75	2.2%
laa	69	3.5%	75	2.2%
pyaaaw	114	5.8%	73	2.1%
ttaa	72	3.7%	∅	
ppyiq	49	2.5%	∅	
peee	45	2.3%	∅	
louq	45	2.3%	∅	

Table 76. Comparison of left-collocates with TAA & TEEH

We can see from Table 76 that 'paa' and 'houq' co-occur most frequently with 'teeh', but it is not the case with 'taa'. When the 'paa' tokens are examined in the concordance file of 'taa', there are 7 instances of 'paa' that precede 'taa', and all 7 instances of 'paa' express its conceptual meaning, which can be roughly translated as *to be with, in, or to be included* (as opposed to its use as a polite particle, which will be discussed in the next section). On the other hand, only 17 out of 528 instances of 'paa teeh' represent such conceptual meaning.

6.1.4.2.2.1. Collocates with PAA

As stated briefly in the previous paragraph, 'paa' can function as a free morpheme, expressing a conceptual meaning as in:

- following Ns → *including, as well as N, and, N too* (Okell & Allott, 2001:114):

- as a V → *be with, be together with, hold, be present, be in, come along with*, etc. (MLC, 1994:254).

As a bound morpheme, on the other hand, it functions as a particle and "indicates politeness, respect, deference, or (when correcting a mistaken idea) emphasis, insistence" (Okell & Allott, 2001:113). In MLC (1994), 'paa' is defined as a "particle suffixed to a verb to effect politeness, or a particle denoting inclusion" (p. 254)⁷⁹. 'Paa' may also be a part of a VP: for example, in (6.22) the first 'paa' in bold type is a part of 'waa thA naa paa' meaning *to be interested in* (literally *to have a hobby of*), whereas the second 'paa' is the polite particle without conceptual meaning.

(6.22) [*Mother to daughter talking about a new job*]

ThA miii waa thA naa **paa teeh** ssoo yiin Mee Mee wuuun
thaa **paa teeh**⁸⁰.

If you're interested in (the job), I'm glad.

[AP:LeHlain]

A closer look at 'paa' collocates in the corpus reveal that different usages of 'paa' are directly associated with their syntactically bound environment. As Okell & Allott (2001) observe, 'paa' expressing the idea of inclusion functions as a "sentence medial phrase particle"⁸¹ (ibid. 95) as shown in (6.23). 'Paa' as a free morpheme expressing a conceptual meaning always precedes VSMs, as shown in (6.24). On the other hand, as a polite particle, the distribution of 'paa' is entirely different from 'taa'

⁷⁹ Okell & Allott further state that in colloquial Burmese, 'paa' is used in questions, "only when the speaker wishes to show marked deference" (ibid:113)

E.g. Naan meeh beeh loo kkaaw **paa** thA leeh.
What might your name be?

⁸⁰ Note: compare the two tokens of 'paa' in (6.22): the former represents a part of 'waa thA naa paa' *to be interested in* and the latter functions as a polite particle.

⁸¹ Although they expresses the same meaning *to be included, including*, compare a free morpheme 'paa' that functions as a V (immediately followed by VSM) (6.22) and a bound morpheme that is suffixed to NPs (6.23).

and 'teeh': it is post-positionally attached to a VP or a complete utterance, and therefore always follows VSM 'taa' (which typically occupies an utterance-final position) as in (6.25), and always precedes VSM 'teeh' following a VP, as shown in (6.26)-(6.27)

- (6.23) KA leee twee **paa** mA kyaan tA ywaa louuun laa kya teeh.
*The entire village **including** the children came along.*
 [Okell & Allott, 2001]

- (6.24) [*Explaining why he has high opinion about foreign countries*]

...ppaq ya teh saa twee kyaun leech **paa taa** paw lee.
*It **also** because of what I read (about them).*

[Inter:SJ]

- (6.25) [*A man in bed, in response to a friend's question: Oh are you sleeping?*]

Mheiiin nee **taa paa**.
I'm just having my eyes closed (resting with eyes closed)

[FS:MinL]

- (6.26) BBC koo poo pyiii naaa ttauun **paa teeh**.
I listen more to BBC.

[Inter3]

- (6.27) A myooo thA mihi yee yaa ka Dwe yaaaw **paa teeh**.
*(Among the films made by) Women's Association, Dwe's in one **too**.*

[FN:SSS2]

The distinction between the two functions of 'paa' can be illustrated with (6.28) in which the former expresses a conceptual meaning *to be included (in the group of travelers)*, and the latter functions as a polite particle.

- (6.28) [*Daughter in response to the mother's question if the daughter is travelling alone for a business trip*]

Paa paa teeh Mee Mee yeh. Hoo meiiin kA leee A ppaaw pee h lee.
*Yes, mum, of course **there are others**. They are female co-workers, you know.*

[AP:l eHlain]

Upon investigation of 'paa' tokens among the right collocates of 'taa' and left collocates of 'teeh', results show the following: there are 54 occurrences of 'paa' that collocate with 'taa', which account for 2.7% of the total number of occurrences of 'taa' (1941). This is a notably smaller percentage than that of 'paa' collocates with 'teeh' (15.5%, with 528 instances out of 3,392 total number of occurrences of 'teeh') [cf. Table 75, 76], which suggests that the use of 'paa' as a polite particle co-occurs more typically with 'teeh' than with 'taa'. One (preliminary) interpretation is that speakers are likely to be in an informal situation⁸² when they use 'taa' as VSM in their speech, in which case there is less need to explicitly express politeness. In other words, an assumption can be made that the choice of 'taa' and 'teeh' may be closely related to the degree of formality between the interlocutors.

Polite particle with...	# of 'paa'	total	%
TAA	54	1,941	2.7%
TEEH	528	3,392	15.5%

Table 77. Distribution of polite particle 'paa' with 'taa' & 'teeh'

Let us now look more closely at their functions in the discourse. First it should be noted that the notion of hierarchy (in terms of age and social status) is richly reflected in linguistic expressions in Burmese. Consequently, a speaker of inferior status is likely to use a polite particle

⁸² This may be another explanation/revelation why 'teeh' occurs more frequently in interviews whereas 'taa' occurs more frequently in film narratives although they are both spontaneous speech: my interpretation is that the personal interviews represent a formal context because the speakers do not know each other well, whereas the situation is reverse with film narratives.

when s/he is talking to someone superior, which can be demonstrated with extracts from the corpus [cf. (6.28)-(6.30)].

- (6.29) [*Interviewee to interviewer: talking about why some tourists prefer English speaking guides*]

...kyA naaw tA kkaa meee kyi ppuuu **paa teeh**.
I asked (some French tourists) once before.

[Inter:SJ]

- (6.30) [*Old man to a doctor: in response to the question about his family*]

Shi **paa teeh**. Shi **paa teeh**. Thaaa tA yauq teeh peeesh shi **paa teeh**.
Yes I do (have a child). Yes I do. I have only one son.

[AP:Ahlu]

However, there are examples in the present corpus where 'paa' is used by a speaker of a superior status to someone inferior, or equal. In such cases, relevant discourse contexts suggest that the speaker is trying to assume a humble position⁸³ or one of solidarity/empathy, as shown in (6.31)-(6.33). It is interesting that from a semantic perspective, the verbs themselves that co-occur with 'paa' in these situations express humility or sympathy on the part of the speaker, namely 'taaaun paan' *to apologize* (6.31), 'kkwin lhuq' *to forgive* (6.32), 'kooy kkyiin saa' *to put oneself in someone's shoes* (6.33).

- (6.31) [*Father to son, who decided to cover the father's crime of getting a girl pregnant by saying it was him who was guilty*].

A Ba tauuun paan **paa teeh** . A Ba yiin twee kyooo paa pyii kweeh.
I apologize I'm really sorry. My heart is broken now.

[FS:Beeh]

⁸³ We can argue here that humility is a kind of politeness after all.

- (6.32) [*Older sister to younger sister who apologized for being rude previously*]

Ma Ma Poun kkwin lhuq **paa teeh** Nyi Ma yeeh. Nyii ma koo seiq mA ssooo paa buuu.

I (Older sister Poun) forgive you my little sister. I'm not angry with you.

[FS:MinL]

- (6.33) [*Boy to girlfriend in a letter*]

Wuuun neeh kyee kweeeh nee meh Poun Poun yeh kkaan saaa mhu koo A Tu kooy kkyi in saa mi **paa teeh**. Lu bA wa koo mA luun ssaan naiin teh douq kka koo luu thaaa taiin kyoun twe kya ya taa dA mA taa paa pee h Poun Poun ye h.

I (Ko Tu) feels the pain you (Poun Poun) are suffering. It's a law of human nature that we have to encounter inevitable sufferings, you know Poun Poun.

[FS:MinL]

However, there are also other co-occurrences of 'paa' and 'teeh' with which the speaker of a higher status seems to be doing something other than being polite. To explain this further, let us consider examples (6.34)-(6.37):

- (6.34) [*A girl to a friend in response to her reproach about her not wearing foreign made clothing and accessories*]

Thwe pee h pyaaaw pyiii taw to ka dii A taiin pee h lha nee taa ssoo.

– Houq **paa teeh**.

– Ee h daa aaa louun pyii twiin ppyiq twee kkyi pee h.

You (Thwe) were the one who told me I looked nice like this, didn't you?

- **Yeah, that's right.** (showing discontent)

- *Well, that's all local made (=made in Myanmar)*

[AP:KoKo]

- (6.35) [*Daughter saying that people who came to work at her office will end up being nice and gentle because of the nature of their job, i.e. serving other people. Mother responds skeptically*]

ThA miii yeeh. Hoo piin koo sA yaiq ssoo taa pyauq
kkeeh **paa teeh** ee.

*Oh my daughter. People's true characteristics rarely
change.*

[AP:LeHlain]

(6.36) [*Girl talking to a dog*]

Pii Taa lai q lee nga koo. Sheq **paa teeh** he.

*Hey Peter, come catch me. Shame on you (you can't catch
me)*

[AP:KaGyi]

(6.37) [*Mother to daughter who wants to know if her hair-do is
nice*]

Pyee **paa teeh** thA miii yeeh. Meiiin ma to ppouun zA
douun teh.

*Yes, it looks nice. As the saying goes, a woman's power
lies in her hair*

[AP:Pan]

In these examples, by using 'paa' the speaker seems to be expressing discontent (6.34), challenging the interlocutor (6.35)-(6.36), or showing annoyance (6.37) which may be followed by additional information or justification. For instance in (6.37), the second utterance by the mother, after saying *Yes*, can be interpreted as *you have no reason to worry about your hair-do*, rather than indicating politeness out of deference or cultural norms regarding hierarchy in Burmese.

In fact, when collocates of 'paa teeh' are examined in a larger discourse context, findings suggest that when 'paa' is used, the speaker has something more to say (additional information that serves as a justification or supporting argument of what has just been stated), which is typically expressed in the subsequent utterances. In other words, corpus evidences suggest that with 'paa' in the utterance ending with 'teeh', the speaker

indicates to the interlocutor that s/he has not come to the end of the current discourse unit. I will demonstrate this further with examples (6.38)-(6.39) below.

(6.38) [*Man talking to the interviewer about meditation*]

Laaaw kii A myiin ppeq ka kyi meeh ssoo yiin taw daa haa taaw taaw kyiii tiin kyaq teeh lo pyaaaw lo ya **paa teeh** tA yaaa sA kkaaan twee haa. Daa pee meh laaaw kouq tA yaa A nee neh kyi meeh ssoo yiin taw taaw taaw muun myaq **paa teeh**.

From a view of the secular world, we can say it's pretty strict, the meditation. But from a religious point of view, it's a noble act.

[Inter:SJ]

(6.39) [*Mother to daughter: in response to the daughter's request to re-enact a child labour*]

A mA leee aan koo aan koo kyeiq ttaa ya **paa teeh** ee. Pyaaaw yiin kku pyaaaw kku naa teeh. A mA leee.
- Louq paa ouuun Mee Mee ka leeh.

Oh gosh, I had to bite my lips, you know. As I am saying, I can feel the pain now. Exclamation expressing pain.
- *Come on do it again, Mum.*

[AP:LeHlain]

In (6.38) we can compare the use of two 'teeh' in the first sentence: the former represents factual information (that *meditation is a strict discipline*), which is expressed without 'paa', whereas the latter, representing an opinion with *we can say* is expressed with 'paa'. Then the speaker goes on with additional information in the subsequent utterance, which offers a more complete picture (of meditation) with another point of view. In (6.39), the mother has something more to add with the utterance using 'paa', but in the second utterance, she has come to the end of a

discourse and turn unit which is picked up by the next speaker – the daughter – in the subsequent turn.

Another discourse context in which 'paa' frequently co-occurs with 'teeh' is in narratives, in particular narrative sections of radio plays as illustrated in (6.40)-(6.42), and in film narratives when the narrator is repeating dialogues involving a third person⁸⁴ (6.42). Notably, there is no evidence of the use of 'paa' in narration of past events in film narratives. There are a total of 36 occurrences of 'paa teeh' in film narratives, in which 'paa' is either used for its conceptual meaning or in the reported speech of the dialogue between the protagonists. In terms of Labov's (1972) narrative structure, we can say that polite particle 'paa' co-occurs with 'teeh' in declarative sentences of "evaluation" or "coda" segments only (1972: 363).

(6.40) Maun Ne Myo haa theq pyiin tA kkyeq mhoub ttoub laiq
yiin U Myin Sein A kkaaan koo ttweq laa kkeh **paa** teeh.
Maun Ne Myo sighed, and went in to U Myin Sein's room.
[AP:ChitGati]

(6.41) Win Thi DA koo kyA ma haa eiin tteeh koo tweeh kkaaw
kkeh **paa** teeh.
I helped Win Thi Da walk back into the house.
[AP:Pan]

(6.42) [*Recounting a dialogue between two male protagonists*]
Nga yeh nyii ma leee ka thee kkyaa kkyiq **paa** teeh baa
nyaa ssoo pyaaaw pya teeh.
*(He) told (the other protagonist song writer) that his sister
really loves (the songwriter) blablabla.*
[FN: TT1]

⁸⁴ Reported speech will be discussed further in later sections.

- (6.43) [*Upon hearing the news from Ma Ma Loun about a friend who is severely sick with diarrhea, young man responds with disbelief because he saw the friend well the previous night*]

Haa mA **houq taa**. Ma Ma Loun ka louq taw meeh.
Oh no (that's impossible)! You (Ma Ma Loun) are talking nonsense

[AP:KyeLeq]

- (6.44) [*A daughter speaking in response to the father who offers to explain everything to her ex-fiancé – why she had to marry the other man unwillingly*]

Oo mA **houq taa** Ppee Ppee yeeh.
Oh no Dad (you can't do it).

[FS:MinG]

As shown in examples (6.43)-(6.44), findings suggest that 'houq' typically co-occurs with 'taa' in a negative structure to serve as an exclamation to express shock or disapproval. They can be compared to a more straightforward *No it is not* which is expressed with 'MA houq buuu' (248 instances out of 1171 'houq') or 'MA houq paa buuu' (54 instances), as shown in (6.45)-(6.46).

- (6.45) [*In response to daughter asking if he's hungry, father answers:*]

Eee ssaa lo taw **mA houq paa buuu** kweh.
Well, it's not because I'm hungry (but I have to go out later).

[AP:KyeLeq]

- (6.46) [*Talking about radio programs*]

A sooo ya ka dii lauq pyaaaw taa **mA houq buuu**.
The government didn't say that much (about listening to radio programs abroad)

[Inter3]

In addition, 'houq taa' may be followed by other particles: for instance 4 instances of 'houq taa' are followed by 'paw', and 2 by 'peeeh', which are both described as "particles suffixed to a verb as emphasis" in MLC (1994: 255, 261). Okell & Allott (2001) describe 'paw' as a sentence final phrase particle to express equivalents of *of course, by all means, natuarlly, obviously; presumably, no doubt, I suppose; you know, let's say, I mean* (p.122). They further state that in colloquial Burmese, VSM 'teeh' often takes the form of 'taa' when it co-occurs with 'paw'. They describe 'peeeh' as a sentence final particle that expresses the equivalents of *really, indeed, emphatic, exclamatory; at least, at any rate* (ibid: 121). In my earlier study (Hnin Tun, 2004), I observed that the use of 'paw' is genre-specific (it occurs with a higher frequency in spontaneous speech than in broadcast news), and that the speaker uses 'paw' to either check the listener's comprehension or solicit the interlocutor's involvement in the narrative process (ibid: 86-7). The present analysis suggests that between the instances of 'houq taa paw' and 'houq taa peeeh', 'paw' places emphasis on the information, whereas the use of 'peeeh' is directed more interpersonally at the interlocutor.

(6.47) [*Talking to an angry man, U Bo Shein, who wants to punish his daughter's boyfriend for having her humiliated*]

Eee houq taw houq **taa paw** U Bo Shein ya. Daa pee meh kyouq to twee Ko Kan Htoo myeq nhaa koo leech ngeh paa ouuun.

Of course you're right about it U Bo Shein. But think of our friend Ko Kan Htoo (father of the boyfriend).

[FS:Bech]

(6.48) [*Girl to younger sister, upon a complaint by father that nobody takes care of him*]

Eee houq taw leech houq **taa peeeh**. Nyi ma leee ka leech theiq nee nain **taa peeeh**.

- Ppee Ppee mha mA kkaiiin taa peeeh haa.

*Yeah, he's right. You can really be inconsiderate, my sister.
-(But) Dad didn't ask me anything.*

[AP:KoKo]

In (6.47)-(6.48) the speaker is offering his/her agreement with what the previous speaker said. However with the use of 'paw' and 'peeeh' the speaker seems to signal different discourse meanings: in (6.47) the utterance following 'houq taa paw' expresses an idea of what should be done, whereas in (6.48) the speaker is expressing an idea of what should/could have been done, with a reproach directed at the sister.

Let us now look at the collocates of 'houq' with the VSM 'teeh'. It is striking that the first 162 instances of 'teeh'⁸⁷ (out of 3,392) co-occur with 'houq', and almost all of 'houq teeh' instances occur in the turn-initial position, of which approximately⁸⁸ 22 are single-item utterances, i.e. they are the only items in their turn. Another set of 62 instances of 'houq teeh' are identified later in the corpus⁸⁹, of which approximately 37 are turn-initial and 14 are single-item utterances. In other words, 'houq teeh' appears 199 times as turn-initial, i.e. about 76% of all instances of 'houq teeh', and 34 times as single-item utterances. 'Houq teeh' as an

⁸⁷ The first one in the concordance file is 'Kyaiq teeh'.

⁸⁸ I am using the term "approximately" because the frequency count and selection of targeted instances are all manually done.

⁸⁹ For some reason, the instances of 'houq teeh' appear in two different sets on the frequency list (the first set of 162 instances and the second set of 62 instances), and no logical explanation is found.

independent pragmatically integrated phrase means *That's right*, or *That's true*, and therefore may be seen as a non-minimal response item (McCarthy, 2003). A high frequency of 'houq teeh' used as turn-initial and non-minimal response items suggests that it is used typically in response to solicited information/confirmation. We should be reminded here that as explained in 6.1.4.2.2.2), with the polite particle 'paa' as in 'houq paa teeh' the speaker may be expressing discourse meanings other than simply providing solicited information (for example, 'houq paa teeh' may express a challenge, a justification, etc.)

Turn-initial 'houq teeh' instances may also co-occur with 'Eee' or 'Iiin' which are equivalent to English *Yes/Yeah* as in 'Iiin houq teeh' or 'Eee houq teeh'; or with a repetition such as 'Houq teeh. Houq teeh' *Yes Yes/Yeah Yeah*. In addition, 'houq teeh' may be accompanied by NPs such as proper names which are used as vocatives, as in (6.49), or address terms used to compel attention, or it may also be followed by another utterance-final discourse particle such as 'kwa', 'lee', 'naaw' etc. [cf. (6.49)-(6.50)], which do not have a one-to-one lexical equivalent in English.

(6.49) [*Man to woman: upon her declaration that she'd want 3 children*]

Houq teeh **A Loun yee**. Ko Htin thA baaaw ka leech eeh dii
A taiiin peeeh.

Yeah my dear A Loun. My wish is the same.

[AP:Kyeleq]

(6.50) [Narrator to co-narrator, talking about the protagonist getting into trouble with timber smugglers]

Houq teeh. Houq teeh **lee**⁹⁰.

That's right. That's right, don't you remember?

[FN:SSS1]

(6.51) [Man with friends: when the servant said monkeys were rare to find, he responded that rarity was what he desired, to which a friend joins in to support his wish]

Hiiin houq teeh **kwaa**⁹¹. Houq teeh.

That's right, my friend. That's true.

[FS:MinL]

(6.52) [Friends talking about movies on TV]

Houq teeh **naaw**. MyA maa kaaa laa taa neeh teeh.

That's right, isn't it? There aren't many Burmese movies.

[FN:SSS1]

In (6.50), the speaker is trying to solicit confirmation from the interlocutor by evoking her memory. In (6.51) the speaker is being friendly, showing camaraderie with the additional particle 'kwaa'. 'Naaw' typically expresses *that's right, isn't it?*, equivalent to an English checking tag. In (6.52), by using the additional particle 'naaw', the speaker encourages participant involvement by soliciting agreement from another interlocutor.

In sum, findings that have been reported in this section – a high frequency of 'houq' that collocates with 'teeh', and 'houq teeh' as turn-initial and single-item utterances – indicate that 'houq teeh' is used when the speaker is simply providing solicited information (or confirmation), which mostly occurs in interview and narrative data. In other genres, particularly

⁹⁰ 'Lee' → "you see, as you know, I mean, don't you remember?; softens imperatives" (Okell & Allott, 2001:204)

⁹¹ 'Kwaa' is (commonly) used as an address term, or for compelling attention. (ibid:21): a function that is likely to be realized with a vocative in English.

in audio plays, the speaker may be responding positively to questions or requests for information, offering an agreement to support the interlocutor's proposition in the previous utterance/turn, preparing his discourse with something positive before expressing a self-defense/justification, etc. Therefore in the subsequent utterances, the speaker is likely to be providing additional information which serves as a justification or an explanation for his/her response with 'houq teeh', as illustrated in (6.53)-(6.54).

- (6.53) [Daughter in response to father's comment that she came back late from work]

Houq teeh Ppee Ppee. ThA miii neeh neeh moo kkyouq thwaaa teeh.

That's true Dad. I'm a bit late (i.e. not so much).

[AP:PePe]

- (6.54) [*In response to question: so there's not much audience at the movie theatres any more?*]

Houq teeh. Thwaaa koo mA thwaaa ppyiq taa.

Yeah (that's right). We don't (often) get a chance to go.

[FN:SSS1]

There is evidence in the corpus that VSM 'taa' and 'teeh' are both frequently followed by other particles which add various discourse meanings to the utterance, without altering its propositional meaning. Table 78 summarizes the most frequent right collocates of 'taa' and 'teeh'. We should note here that all these lexical items function as particles, which confirms once again the importance of particles in spoken Burmese discourse.

taa+	total - % (over 1,941)	teeh +	total - % (over 3,392)
paw	395 - 20.3%	ssoo	206 - 6%
leech	200 - 10.3%	lee	119 - 3.5%
peech	194 - 9.9%	paw	107 - 3.1%
kooo	86 - 4.4%	lo	100 - 2.9%
laaa	83 - 4.2%	teh	77 - 2.2%
paa	54 - 2.7%	naaw	72 - 2.1%
lee	42 - 2.1%	shiin/byaa	70 - 2%
teh	26 - 1.3%		
Eech	64 - 3.2%	Eech	231 - 6.8%
Hoo	18 - 0.9%	Daa	64 - 1.8%
Daa	12 - 0.6%	Hoo	48 - 1.4%
Dii	12 - 0.6%	Dii	38 - 1.1%

Table 78. Right collocates of TAA & TEEH

Highlighted items represent those that occur with both 'taa' and 'teeh'. It is also interesting that only three particles appear among the most frequent items for both 'taa' and 'teeh', which means different additional discourse particles are likely to co-occur with different VSMs. Tokens in the second set (those starting with capital letters) occur in sentence-initial position, in contrast to particles in the first group which are post-positionally attached to 'taa' and 'teeh' directly. However, identifying discourse functions of each particle is, needless to say, beyond the scope of this study. In the next section, I shall discuss observations of a few particles that share a common feature, namely serving as evidentials.

6.1.4.2.2.3. TAA & TEEH with evidentials

Chafe (1986) broadly defines evidentials as "any linguistic expression of attitudes toward knowledge" (p. 271), which can be realized

with phrases like *I think, I guess, I suppose, you know*⁹², and so on in English, with which the speaker is marking the evidence for his/her utterance. Equivalents of Burmese evidentials include those listed in Table 79, and are illustrated in examples (6.55)-(6.65)⁹³

Evidential	Description/English equivalent
'ssoo'	<i>didn't you say that (phrase), or I heard that (phrase), is that right?</i>
'teh'	indicates the preceding utterance as reported speech
'lo'	marks end of quotation, usually followed by reported verbs such as 'pyaaaw' <i>to say</i> , 'mee' <i>to ask</i> ⁹⁴
'naaw'	invites participation from other interlocutor(s): express English checking tags such as <i>Isn't it</i>
'paw'	<i>you know?</i> ⁹⁵

Table 79. Particles that can serve as evidentials in Burmese

(6.55) Ko Win Nain neh Ko So Thein to ssouun kya thee teeh sso.
I heard that KWN and KST met again, is that true?
 [FS:MinL]

(6.56) [Woman talking about her dying husband]

...baa mha mA myiin ya taw buuu **teh**. A thaan peeh kyaaa ya **teeh teh**.
 ...*(he said that) he couldn't see anything any more, that he could only hear voices.*
 [Inter:AT]

⁹² A more comprehensive list of lexical items including hedges that can serve as evidentials would be long, but the current list should suffice to illustrate the use of evidentials that typically co-occur with 'taa' and 'teeh'.

⁹³ I set the maximum number of examples to 5, but I find it necessary to include all these examples given here as they allow us to make a more comprehensive comparison of the discourse functions of 'taa' and 'teeh'.

⁹⁴ 'Lo' following a VP may also represent an English equivalent of *because*.

⁹⁵ 'Paw' is generally described as a marker for emphasis in traditional grammars. Findings of my previous study (Hnin Tun, 2004) suggest that when 'paw' is used, the speaker seems to be checking the listener's comprehension, or soliciting confirmation (p. 87). However, discourse features of 'paw' seem more complex and these findings are still worth investigating further, and other discourse features of 'paw' are yet to be identified using larger corpora.

- (6.57) [*Talking about the daughter living abroad whose husband kept two wives*]

MA yaaa kyiii ka A yaaan nheiq seq **taa teh**.
(I was told that) the first wife gave her (my daughter) a lot of trouble.

[AP:Pan]

- (6.58) [*Talking about some sort of bartar system practised in their village*]

...eeh loo leq ssauun twee baa twee peee **teeh paw**.
...(then) then bring gifts and such, you know?

[FN:Alice]

- (6.59) [*Talking about his experience being a novice monk at a monastery*]

...neeh neeh taw wuuun neeh sA yaa kauun **taa paw**.
...(well) it was a little sad, you know?

[Inter:SJ]

- (6.60) [*Talking about a mother: upon learning that the daughter is really attached to her father that she is separated from*]

Eeh dii mhaa A mee ka taw tA aaa tti kkaiq **taa paw naaw**.
There the mother felt really hurt, you know.

[FN:SSS1]

- (6.61) [*Talking about a female protagonist*]

...kauun ma lee ka maa na kyiii **teeh paw naaw**.
...the girl is arrogant, you know.

[FN:MiThu]

- (6.62) [*Talking about movie stars*]

Thuu leeh A keeh dA mii ya **teeh naaw**.
He also got an academy award, right?

[FN:SSS1]

- (6.63) [*Talking to an ailing friend*]

Kyaaan maa auun peeh nee paa. Sei q peeh A yeee kyiii **taa naaw**.
Just try to be healthy. It's the mind that's important. alright/OK?

[FS:Minl]

- (6.64) [*Woman recounting her dialogue with husband in the past: in response to his request to bring all his children to his bed*]

Dii mhaa A ngeeh leee peeesh shi **teeh lo**.

(I told him that) There's only the youngest here (because the others were taking their exams at school).

[Inter:3]

- (6.65) [*Repeating the dialogue she had with the father*]

...A ppyee pee ya mhaa sooo lo A louq mA thwaaa **taa lo**.

...(I told him) I don't go to work because I'm afraid to have to give my answer to him (who declared his love).

[Inter:AT]

With (6.55) – (6.65) I have given here examples of VSM 'teeh' and 'taa' that co-occur with evidential particles in Table 79, each with both 'taa' and 'teeh'. There is no occurrence of 'ssoo' with 'taa' in the present corpus, but it is my assumption that such occurrences can easily be found in everyday speech as in:

- (6.66) Dii kA leee koo thuu ttaa **taa sooo**.

Didn't you say that he's brought the child here?

I heard that he brought the child here, is that true?

[Okell & Allott, 2001]

In fact, a closer examination of 'taa' instances in their discourse context reveals that in many occurrences, 'taa' itself in sentence-final position serves as an evidential, since it indicates to the listener that the speaker (narrator) is simply reporting the knowledge which originated somewhere else (such as a film). This evidential function of 'taa' as a VSM sheds light on the distinction between 'taa' and 'teeh': with 'taa' the speaker is signaling additional information to the listener – that the information in the utterance is being repeated, and not of his/her own –

whereas with 'teeh' the speaker is simply presenting the information itself. The use of 'taa' as an evidential can be illustrated with examples (6.67)-(6.68) which also demonstrate that there is no direct lexical equivalent in English for evidential 'taa'.

(6.67) [*Recounting the incident where the male protagonist was robbed*]

A wuq A saaa twee baa twee A kouun louuun kkyuq yuu thwaaa **taa**. Kkyuq yuu pyiii pyiq ttaaa **taa**.

(The robbers) took away all his clothes. They took off his clothes and left him there.

[FN: Alice]

(6.68) [*Father talking to children*]

...naa mA kyaaan ppyiq pyiii kA teeh ka ein ttauun pyu ppo siin saaa kkeh **taa**.

...since I got sick then, I have thought about getting (re)married.

[AP: PePe]

In (6.68) 'taa' signals to the listener(s) that the speaker (the father) is reporting his thought, which originated elsewhere. Such evidential function of 'taa' can be compared to utterances with VSM 'teeh' in which the speaker is simply presenting the information without any additional information about the discourse itself, as shown in (6.69). In other words, by using VSM 'teeh' the speaker is not expressing her 'attitude towards the information' in the utterance, to put it in Chafe's (1986) terms.

(6.69) [*Talking about how she took care of her husband when he was ill*]

...kyA ma ka A eee kkaan pyiii taiq taw pA saq ha peee **teeh**. 2 ngouun koo ppyeee ppyeee leee myo kkya **teeh**.

...when I let (the tea) cold and then brought it to his mouth, he opened the mouth. (Then) he took two sips slowly

[Inter:AT]

In addition to the particles discussed above, there are verbs such as 'ttiin' *to think*, 'pyaaaw' *to say*, 'mee' *to ask*, which serve as evidentials, and they also co-occur frequently with 'taa' and 'teeh' (6.70)-(6.71).

(6.70) [*Talking about the male & female protagonists*]

Myin Myin Khin neh thuu ka thesis louq nee teeh **ttiin teeh**.

I think MMK and he were working on a thesis (together).

[FN:SSS2]

(6.71) [*Talking about male protagonist and sister*]

Thu yeh nyii ma ka **pyaaaw teeh**. Ko Ko paw meiiin ma mA yuu ya buuu paw.

His sister said. KoKo, you must not get married, you know.

[FN:TT2]

There is no occurrence of 'ttiin' *to think* with 'taa' in the corpus, which suggests that if 'taa' itself functions as an evidential, and is used to signal the utterance as reported speech in narratives, there is no reason to use the evidential 'ttiin' *to think* following the clause ending with 'taa': in a normal context, it does not make much sense to say *This is what I heard* and *I think* together.

6.1.4.2.3. TAA & TEEH in turn positions

As briefly mentioned in earlier sections, given that VSMs tend to co-occur with other post-positionally attached particles, identification and selection of VSMs in different turn positions have to be done manually. Findings of a manual count show that there are at least 709 'teeh' in turn final position, which account for 20.9% of the total. As for 'taa', there are 453 occurrences of turn-final 'taa' which account for 23% of the total. In

addition, as we have seen with 'houq', there is a large number of instances with 'teeh' that are single-item turn. Quantitative findings are not entirely reliable nor sufficiently informative, as, for example, some instances of turn-final 'teeh' may appear as two utterances, but they are the same utterance repeated exactly such as 'Houq teeh. Houq teeh.' *Yeah. Yeah.* 'Kauuun teeh. Kauuun teeh'. *Good. Good.* 'Thi teeh. Thi teeh' *I know. I know* and so forth. I have presented therefore a breakdown of the turn-final 'teeh' by genres [cf. Table 80], which reveals some interesting information.

Category	# of turn-final
DF	
One	Ø
Samsara	4
ThuBEQ	Ø
YeKyi	Ø
Total DF	4
FS	Ø
Beeh	Ø
Miin L	5
Total FS	5
AP	
aahlu	4
Chitgati	8
Kagyi	Ø
KoKo	Ø
KyeLeq	20
LeHlain	4
MinGadaw	Ø
Myita	10
Pan	14
PePe	4
Total AP	64
FN	
Alice	Ø
MiThu	Ø
SSS1	1
SSS2	64
TT1	Ø
TT2	1
Total FN	66
Inter	
AT	31
SJ	Ø
Inter1	17
Inter2	40
Inter3	120
Total Inter	208

Table 80. Number of turn-final TEEHs by genres

Table 80 shows that turn-final 'teeh' occurs most frequently in the interview data (henceforth Inter), and the least frequently in two pre-scripted speech data, namely dialogues-in-fiction (henceforth DF) and film

scripts (FS). It is an interesting direct correlation between the data genre and the frequency of turn-final 'teeh': the data in which turn-final 'teeh' appears with the smallest frequency represent the least spontaneous speech, and they are both delivered originally in written medium. Two more observations regarding the quantitative findings are in order here: 1) the number of occurrences of turn-final 'teeh' in film narratives (henceforth FN) and audio plays (AP) are almost identical (66 vs. 64), although they belong to two different categories of speech, namely spontaneous and pre-scripted, and 2) there are individual text files in which turn-final 'teeh' is absent (for example, Inter:SJ, FN: Alice, etc). Based on these findings and the information described in data description [cf. Ch. 4], further interpretations can be made as follows.

We can assume that when 'teeh' occurs at the turn-final position, the speaker is probably answering affirmatively to a question by the interlocutor in the previous turn, (especially when 'teeh' occurs in single-item turns or with 'houq'), or leaving the turn open to the next speaker for interruption of some sort. As we have seen in an earlier section, 'teeh' is frequently used as a single item response token such as '(Iiin/Eee) Houq teeh', which is equivalent to English *Yes, that's right* or *That's true*. The discourse function of particle 'teeh' in such responses may be compared to those of McCarthy's (2003) "non-minimal response items" that accompany simple *Yes*, which is a characteristic of good listenership. To illustrate the function of turn-yielding signalled by 'teeh', let us consider (6.72)-(6.73).

(6.72) [*Talking about an actress in a movie*]

<\$1> Eeéh dii kaaa mhaa leeéh taaw taw koo lha thee **teéh**.
(*She*) *was still quite pretty in that movie.*

<\$2> 10 nhiq lauq shi thwaaa pyii paw naaw.
It must be about 10 years ago, right?

[FN:SSS1]

(6.73) [*Talking about radio listening habits*]

<\$1> Shaw pyiii naaa ttauun ppyiq taa shi laaa?
Do you sometimes listen less to the radio?

<\$2> KyA ma A louq koo poo uuu saaa peee paa **teéh**.
I give priority to work.

<\$1> A louq koo poo uuu saaa peee **teéh**.
(You) give priority to work.

[Inter3]

In (6.72) speaker <\$1> ends the utterance with 'teéh', which serves as a signal that she is yielding the turn, which is picked up by the next speaker <\$2>, who offers additional information about the actress. In (6.73) utterance ending with 'teéh' by <\$2> is a short response to the question by speaker <\$1>, and it also serves as a turn-yielding signal, which speaker <\$1> picks up with a back-channel statement.

In the DF and FS data, the turns are usually pre-defined, which requires less signalling of upcoming turn-yielding action. Moreover, among the four text files of DF data *One* and *YeKyi* contains a relatively larger portion of description or narration. In *ThuBeq*, most of the dialogues evolve around an authoritative nagging mother and the two defensive children against the mother's reproach. It is more difficult to interpret the lack of turn-final 'teéh' in one film script (*Beeh*) and not the other (*MinL*). However, even though turn-final 'teéh's are present in the

second text (*MinL*), the frequency is minimal, which suggests that the occurrence of turn-final 'teeh' is associated with a turn-yielding function.

As for the three texts in Audio Play (AP) data with zero turn-final 'teeh', they involve a minimum amount of narrating to each other: in *Ka Gyi*, the main characters are mostly fighting with each other and finally fall in love; in *Ko Ko* also, the story evolves around two young women who have a fall-out and then reconcile; in *MinGadaw*, most of the speech represents the main protagonist's thinking, narrating (as a third person), her conversation with the mother or the fiancé, about daily routines, etc. In short, it is evident that there is no real need for the speaker to signal turn-openings to the interlocutors, which probably is an explanation for the lack of turn-final 'teeh' in these data.

Regarding the *FN:Alice* and *Inter:SJ* data, the conversations took place between the main speaker (narrator) who is a native Burmese speaker, and the interlocutor, who is a foreigner⁹⁶ who knows Burmese but not at the proficiency level of a native speaker, which probably explains why there are fewer turn-yielding functions which are associated with turn-final 'teeh'. As for the other FN data in which no turn-final 'taa' is found, there is no empirical evidence in the findings for a sound interpretation. However, since I was personally involved and present at the recordings, my personal knowledge of the speakers leads me to assume that the reason may have to do with their personality and individual/idiosyncratic narrating style.

⁹⁶ In *FN:Alice*, the foreigner on the tape speaks and understands Burmese, but it is not the case with the foreigner involved in *Inter:SJ*

In comparison to 'teeh', turn-final 'taa' occurs with a smaller frequency, but their frequency to overall ratio is comparable (21% 'teeh' vs. 23% 'taa'). Just like 'teeh' we shall look at the distribution of turn-final 'taa' by genres, which is presented in Table 81 below.

Category	# of turn-final
DF	0
One	0
Samsara	0
ThuBEQ	6
YeKyi	0
Total DF	6
FS	
Beeh	41
Miiin L	63
Total FS	104
AP	
aahlu	0
Chitgati	2
Kagyi	0
KoKo	3
KyeLeq	23
LeHlain	10
MinGadaw	0
Myita	1
Pan	6
PePe	6
Total AP	51
FN	
Alice	8
MiThu	8
SSS1	28
SSS2	40
TT1	9
TT2	3
Total FN	88
Inter	
AT	40
SJ	
Inter1	80
Inter2	37
Inter3	41
Total Inter	198

Table 81. Number of turn-final TAAs by genres

Findings show that turn-final 'taa' also occurs with a high frequency in the interview data, but unlike 'teeh', the frequency in the FS data is considerably higher. Upon close examination of functions in the discourse, it is found that, in contrast to the turn-final 'teeh' which tends to occur in response to questions, VFM 'taa' signals to the interlocutor that a response is expected; in other words, its function is comparable to an English question-tag, soliciting clarification [cf.(6.74)-(6.75)], which is typically followed by a response in the next turn. In (6.74) 'taa' serves as a question with an elided question particle, as shown in the example. The utterance ending with a turn-final 'taa' may also express an unsolicited commentary – additional information or correction of the information just stated in the previous turn – to another speaker [cf. (6.76)-(6.79)]. The commentary may be either accepted [cf. (6.76)-(6.77)], rejected, or ignored [cf.(6.78)], in the third-turn response.

- (6.74) <\$0> Kauun ma leee ka meee **taa** (laaa)⁹⁷
(You mean it's) the girl (who) asked?
 <\$1> Iiin kauun ma leee ka meee **taa**.
Yeah, that's right. (It's) the girl (who) asked.
 [FN:MiThu]

(6.75) [*Mother to daughter, prying if her husband gives her his entire salary*]

- <\$1> A kouun ssoo taa tA pyaaa mA kyaan pyaaaaw **taa**.
By all, I mean not a penny left behind (that's what I mean?)
 <\$2> TA pyaaa mA kyaan taw mA houq buuu paw
 Mee Mee yeeh.
*Well, of course it's not every single penny;
 you know Mum.*
 [DF:ThuBeq]

⁹⁷ The particle within (-) means a particle that may be omitted. In this example, 'laaa' is a question particle for Yes/No questions.

- (6.76) <\$1> Aaw *Khin Than Nu Pyaaaw* **taa**.
Oh, (I mean it's) *Khin Than Nu*.
- <\$2> *Khin Than Nu yeeh Su Hlain Win yeeh ...*
KTN, (and) SHW ... [correction accepted and
continues narration]
- [FN:SSS1]
- (6.77) <\$0> PA yeiq thaq ka sweeéh kyaan kkeh **taa**.
(*The film*) *remains unforgettable for the audience*.
- <\$1> Houq teeh. Eee dii mhaa . . .
That's right. So . . . [add. info. accepted and continues
narration]
- [FN:SSS1]
- (6.78) [*Three people present: \$1 and \$2 recounting a film to \$3*]
- <\$1> Eeéh dii A leeh paiin kyA ma pyaq nee teeh...
That middle part (of the movie) I didn't see it...
- <\$2> Houq laaa. Hoo haa ppyiq teeh lee. Thuu leq ttaq
laiq **taa**.
*Is that right? Um [hedge: that thing happened]. He
got married.* [offering unsolicited information]
- <\$1> Pan Hlain gauq kwiiin yauq mha kyA ma kyi ya **taa**.
*I saw it again only when (they) get to Pan Hlain
golf course.* [Info by \$2 - ignored.]
- [FN:SSS2]

6.1.5. Summary: TAA vs. TEEH

'Taa' and 'teeh' as VSMs are considered variants of the same form in the traditional grammars. However, corpus findings suggest that they serve different functions in the discourse, and they are not always interchangeable in a given discourse context: the choice between one and the other seems to be dictated by the discourse features they are associated with. The findings can be summarized as follows:

- **the use of 'taa' or 'teeh' is genre-specific:** 'teeh' seems to be a preferred form over 'taa' in the pre-scripted speech, when the speaker is presenting factual information. In spontaneous speech, 'taa' seems to be a preferred choice as there is a stronger need for the speaker to manage the direction of discourse, such as indicating his/her attitude towards the information, signalling to the listener turn-openings, expectation for a response, challenging the interlocutor, etc.
- **distribution of most frequent collocates are different for 'taa' and 'teeh'.** For example, 'houq' meaning *it is true*, or *it is a fact*, occurs with a significantly high frequency with 'teeh', but it is not the case with 'taa'. When 'houq' co-occurs with 'taa' it is usually in negative statements. 'Houq teeh' occurs most frequently in utterance initial position, and in fact most of the occurrences of 'houq teeh' are single-item utterances. In contrast, occurrences of 'mA houq taa' as a single-item utterance are less likely, as it is likely to be followed by another utterance expressing the speaker's justification for saying *Of course it is not*. However, there are not enough data in the present study to substantiate this claim.
- **Polite particle 'paa' collocates differently with 'taa' and 'teeh'.** First of all their syntactic distributions are different: 'teeh' follows 'paa' whereas 'taa' precedes 'paa'. In Burmese, socio-cultural rules are more explicitly reflected in the use of linguistic expressions (than in typical western linguacultures), and the use of 'paa' as a polite particle is one of the important characteristics of Burmese

discourse. A close examination of 'paa' collocates with 'taa' and 'teeh' also reveals that Burmese speakers manipulate the use of "polite particle" 'paa' not only to express politeness, but also to express challenge, reproach or justification.

- **'taa' as evidential marker:** while both 'taa' and 'teeh' are used with evidentials such as English equivalents *I heard [phrase], is it true?, he said that, he thinks that, I was told that, you know* etc., corpus findings suggest that particle 'taa' itself can serve as an evidential since it signals to the listener that the source of the information originates somewhere else, and indicates his/her utterance as reported speech. In other words, the use of 'taa' as an evidential pertains to language use, and expresses a procedural meaning rather than a conceptual meaning. On the other hand, there is no evidence of 'teeh' serving this discourse function in the present corpus.
- **'taa and 'teeh' in turn-positions:** in the present corpus, there are more turn-final 'teeh' than 'taa', but in terms of frequency ratio to the overall 'taa' and 'teeh' tokens, their frequency rates are comparable. Their distribution in genres indicates that 'taa' appears with a higher frequency in spontaneous speech than 'teeh', which supports the first assumption that their use is genre-specific. A closer examination of their usage in discourse contexts reveals that a turn-final 'teeh' typically occurs in response to questions, and signals a turn-opening to the interlocutors, whereas turn-initial 'taa' serves to solicit information.

Table 82 below summarizes the findings of the use of 'taa' and 'teeh' in terms of their discourse functions.

TAA	TEEH
<p>1. More frequent in spontaneous speech</p> <p>2. With polite particle <i>paa</i> -Precedes <i>paa</i> -Lower frequency than <i>paa teeh</i> -Associated more closely with informal speech</p> <p>3. With <i>houq</i> -Considerably lower frequency</p> <p>-Express negative utterance: equivalent of "It is not" <i>Ma+houq+taa</i> → express shock, disapproval -Express more speaker attitude</p>	<p>1. More frequent in pre-scripted speech</p> <p>2. With polite particle <i>paa</i> -Preceded by <i>paa</i> -Higher frequency than <i>taa paa</i> -Associated more closely with formal speech</p> <p>-Usually by inferior to superior speaker -When used by superior to inferior → express discontent, challenge the hearer -Turn-holding: more to say -More common in narratives</p> <p>3. With <i>houq</i> -Higher frequency -Mostly turn-initials, single-item responses -response to solicited confirmation -common in interviews -Express support to interlocutor's proposition -Frame upcoming utterance contradicting the interlocutor's message -No equivalent for negative utterance</p> <p>-Express neutral utterances: stating factual information -common in narratives</p>

TAA	TEEH
<p>-Most frequent additional post-positional particle:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>paw</i> → emphasis (on the message) • <i>peeh</i> → emphasis (directed at interlocutor) negative attitude <p>4. Can serve as an evidential (reported speech) → express indirectness</p> <p>-Evidential particles: <i>ssoo</i>, <i>teh</i>, <i>ttiin teeh</i> [Note: absence of <i>pyaaaw teeh</i> meaning <i>to say</i>]</p> <p>5. Turn-final</p> <p>-high frequency in interviews</p>	<p>-Most frequent additional post-positional particle:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>lee</i> → solicit confirmation by evoking memory • <i>kwaa</i> → establish rapport, shows camaraderie • <i>naaw</i> → checking tag, solicit agreement from interlocutor <p>4. Needs additional particle for evidentials</p> <p>-Evidential particles: <i>ssoo</i>, <i>teh</i>, <i>ttiin teeh</i> (<i>to think</i>), <i>pyaaaw teeh</i> (<i>to say</i>)</p> <p>5. Turn-final</p> <p>-high frequency in interviews</p> <p>-in response to questions, single-item token,</p> <p>-signals turn-yielding</p>

Table 82: Summary of discourse features associated with TAA and TEEH

6.2. Burmese particles as DMs

In the previous sections a detailed analysis of the findings of the top six particles on the frequency list in Table 50 & 51 was reported. The findings give evidence that while all six particles can express grammatical meanings, four of them, namely **ka**, **taw**, **taa**, and **teeh**, are found to serve important discourse functions. In terms of their syntactic distributions, the four particles represent two sub-categories of particles: 'ka' and 'taw' are **post-nominal particles** whereas 'taa' and 'teeh' are **post-sentential particles** [cf. 2.5.2.2.2 & 2.5.2.2.3]. Moreover, among them 'taa' and 'teeh'

serve grammatical functions and discourse functions simultaneously, i.e. they both serve various discourse functions while they also function as VSMs in the syntactic structure. On the other hand, when 'ka' and 'taw' function as discourse marking particles, their grammatical meaning may be absent [cf. 5.3.3 & 5.3.4]. In any case, there is strong evidence in the present data that Burmese particles manifest many characteristics of DMs as described in the existing literature [cf. Ch 3]. Table 83 summarizes the particles analyzed, along with the DM criteria they satisfy.

	KA	TAW	TAA	TEEH
Syntactic distribution	Post-nominal	Post-NP/VP	Post-sentential	Post-sentential
Syntactically detachable	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Position in utterance	Clause-final	Clause-final	Utterance-final	Utterance-final
Single- / polysyllabic	Single	Single	Single	Single
Truth conditionality	Not affect	Not affect	Not affect	Not affect
Procedural meaning	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Sequentially dependent	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Operate beyond sentence level	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Pertain to language use	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Table 83. DM criteria checklist for 'ka', 'taw', 'taa' and 'teeh'

All the particles described are syntactically detachable, and their presence or absence does not affect the truth conditionality of the propositional/conceptual meaning in the utterance. For instance 'ka' is described as a subject marker in traditional grammars, but its presence is non-obligatory. However corpus findings indicate that when 'ka' is used to express non-grammatical meaning, i.e. not as a subject marker or expressing the meaning *from*, for example, it may function as a topic marker, marker for new information, or a contrast marker.

'Taw' like many particles in Burmese, is multi-functional: it may express a grammatical meaning as a core function (for instance, a part of a negative statement as in MA+V+**TAW**+BUUU, or a negative imperative as in MA+V+NEH **TAW**, both of which are expressing English equivalents of *no longer, not any more*), or it may function primarily as a discourse marking particle (for instance, following an NP, its meaning may be interpreted as a marker for contrast, which may be expressed in English with an utterance initial *But, As for, etc.* although, it should be noted, that *as for* is more characteristic of written English). When 'taw' functions as a discourse-marking particle, there is no one-to-one equivalent of 'taw' in English, as its discourse meaning is context-dependent. Except for cases where 'taw' express primary grammatical functions, 'taw' is syntactically detachable without affecting the propositional meaning of the utterance.

Post-sentential particles 'taa' and 'teeh' are obligatory in terms of their syntactic function: they are VSMS for affirmative declarative sentences. However, they are syntactically detachable in the sense that their presence or absence does not have any bearings on the content meaning of the verbs they are attached to.

It is apparent in the data that all four particles may occur as monosyllabic particles, or they may co-occur with other particles. Particles in the latter cases shall be considered polysyllabic particles, which may or may not signal a different discourse meaning altogether. Examples of polysyllabic particles are abundant in the data, of which 'ka leecheh' is one of the most striking one that has been overlooked in the

current literature of Burmese grammar. As has been demonstrated with the analyses in 5.3.3.2.7, 'ka leeh' is used by the speaker to express some kind of self-justification, self-defense, or a reproach which is directed at the interlocutor. Furthermore, when 'ka leeh' is directed at a third person or an inanimate object, it expresses a complaint, which in principle serves the same function as a reproach. In other words, as a reproach or a complaint, there is one common feature in the discourse functions served by 'ka leeh', i.e. expressing some dissatisfaction. Hence, I propose that 'ka leeh' may be assigned the term "marker of dissatisfaction/disapprobation".

There is a good variety of particles that co-occur with the four particles analyzed, but the data strongly suggest that their collocations are either syntactically bound (for instance, polite particle 'paa' does not occur before 'taa' and after 'teeh'), or different collocations express different discourse meanings (compare 'pyiii taw' as a discourse connector like English *and then* and 'ssoo taw' as a causal marker with an English equivalent *since* [cf. 5.3.4.2.3]). By the same token, the choice between one particle and another represents signalling different functions in the "discourse management system" (McCarthy, 1993). For instance, an utterance ending with 'teeh' (especially single-item responses to a question) is likely to signal turn-yielding, whereas 'taa' at utterance-final position tends to be followed by further explanation or justification to support the proposition in the previous utterance by the same speaker, within the same turn.

In short, discourse meanings of particles are found to be highly context-dependent, which probably explains why there is no one-to-one lexical equivalent in other languages such as English. Be that as it may, given the context-dependent nature of the Burmese discourse marking particles, their accurate interpretation has to be made beyond the sentence level, and at the discourse level. In the same vein, post-nominal 'taw' may also co-occur with other particles such as 'ka' (a subject/topic marker), 'koo' (an object marker), 'ssoo taa' (literally meaning *the thing that is called*), and the like.

Other examples of polysyllabic discourse marking particles include 'ka taw' and 'ka nee'. As polysyllabic DMs 'ka taw' and 'ka nee' may both serve the same discourse function as 'ka', namely as a topic marking particle. However, 'ka taw' may operate more specifically as a focus-marker (for emphasis), shift marker (which marks the shift in topic, like *as for* in English). Additionally evidence in the corpus shows that the choice of 'ka taw' (rather than the monosyllabic 'ka') is more closely associated with expressing superlative utterances, and offering a definition or an explanation (compared to presenting new information with 'ka').

It should also be noted that their grammatical meaning and discourse meaning might overlap, as observed by Okell & Allott (2001), when they function simultaneously as a subject marker and topic marker. In other words, 'ka' like other particles in Burmese, can function at the local or global levels, which is in line with Schifffrin's (1987) observation regarding discourse connectivity of DMs. Discourse functions they serve indicate that they express procedural meaning.

In a similar way, post-sentential particles 'taa' and 'teeh' are obligatory in the syntactic structure, except for imperative and interrogative utterances. However, findings in the data reveal that while 'taa' and 'teeh' serve the same syntactic function, namely as a VSM, they serve different discourse functions. Traditional grammars consider 'taa' and 'teeh' as variants of the same VSM, but there is evidence in the present corpus that they are not always freely interchangeable without altering the discourse meaning of the utterance. For instance, by using 'taa' the speaker may be signalling to the interlocutor that his/her statement is not his/her own; while an utterance ending with 'teeh' typically occur in a response, an utterance ending with 'taa' indicates an expectation of a response from the interlocutor, in which case it serves as a signal for a turn opening. In other words, corpus findings suggest that 'taa' and 'teeh' are used for discourse management, such as soliciting information, opinion, or turn-yielding. This serves to signal to the listener, independently of the content, what is happening, where the discourse is going. In addition, particles that co-occur with 'taa' or 'teeh' also serve discourse functions [cf. 6.1.4.2], i.e. they do not affect the propositional meaning, which is an indication that they pertain primarily to the language use and not the language structure.

So far I have shown that Burmese particles share many characteristics of DMs as described in the current literature [cf. Ch.3]. However, in terms of utterance position, Burmese discourse marking particles do not operate in the same way as English DMs. Given the syntactic structure of Burmese, particles are post-positionally attached to NPs, VPs, and utterances, and therefore never occur utterance-initially.

However, unlike sentence-final particles 'taa' and 'teeh', clause-final particles 'ka' and 'taw' can occur in a clause that occupies an utterance-initial position [compare (6.79) for post-nominal and (6.80) for post-sentential particles].

(6.79) [*Man talking about his experience with Buddhist ordination*]

Ko Yin ttweq ya teeh ne **ka taw** A pyaaw ssouuun peeeh.
*The day I finished living like a novice monk was
the happiest.*

[Inter:SJ]

(6.80) [*Girl to younger sister, upon a complaint by father that nobody takes care of him*]

...Nyi ma lee ka leeh theiq nee naiin **taa peeeh**.
- Ppee Ppee mha mA kkaiiin **taa peeeh**.
...*You can really be inconsiderate, my sister.*
- (*But*) *Dad didn't ask me anything.*

[AP:KoKo]

Maynard (1997) posits that clause- or sentence-final position of particles is an explanation for Interpersonal particles (IPs) since they allow the utterance to end with some emotional effect (cf. Ch.3). Haruhiko Kindachi (1977, 170 in Maynard 1997) goes as far as saying that a "Japanese speaker deplores letting a sentence end on a note of finality". Both of these two positions seem to hold true for Burmese discourse ending with particles⁹⁸.

In sum, there is sufficient evidence in the data indicating that Burmese particles share many characteristics of DMs. In addition, it can be argued that post-positionally attached discourse marking particles in Burmese are more suitable for interaction-oriented communication (as

⁹⁸ However, before we can posit such a strong statement with confidence, we need more empirical studies of the common interactional practices of Burmese cultures.

opposed to information-oriented communication), which is characteristic of Asian languages such as Burmese. According to socio-cultural rules in Burmese, like those in Japanese as Maynard (*ibid*) observes, negative value is placed on assertiveness, precision, or finality⁹⁹. We could argue therefore that Burmese speakers make use of particles, typically at the end of information or discourse units, to provide (for their interlocutors) additional information about the discourse (procedure), their attitude towards the message or the interlocutor, and so forth in order to maintain the maximum convergence as well as a good rapport.

⁹⁹ See also 94 above.

6.3. Key discourse features of Burmese particles examined

Particles	Functions	Most frequent collocations
<i>ka</i>	topic marker	Right collocations: <i>-taw, -yaaaw, -nee, -nee pyiii</i>
	introduces new information	Left collocations: <i>daa-, haaaw daa-, eeeh daa-</i>
	expresss emphasis	Left collocations: <i>-taw, -leeeh, -lee</i>
	expresss contrast	Right collocations: <i>daa-, eeeh daa-, dii N-</i> Left collocations: <i>-mhaa, -neh-, -ppo-, -a tweq-</i> plural Ns Clause medial: Phrasal V, idiomatic expression
	Rhetorical questions	Right collocation: <i>Beeh-</i> Left & right collocation: <i>Beeh [-]laa, Beeh[-]nee, Beeh[-] beeh loo</i>
<i>ka leeeh</i>	marker of dissatisfaction	
	expresses self-justification	2nd person pronoun, proper N as a pronoun
	expresses reproach	2nd person pronoun, proper N as a pronoun
	expresses complaint	3rd person, inanimate objects
<i>ka taw</i>	expresses contrast	Left collocations: NP, clause ending with equivalent of English prepositions: <i>for, if</i> With expression <i>In reality</i>
	expresses emphasis	Left collocations: NP, clause ending with equivalent of English prepositions: <i>for, if</i> With expression <i>In reality</i>

	topic marker	With superlative utterances: NP/clause <i>ka taw A [verb] ssouuun</i>
	explains, defines NP	Preceding NP/clause ending with <i>ssoo taa-</i>
	appears in coda in narration	Followed by <i>VSM+peeh</i>
<i>ka nee</i>	same as <i>ka</i> , for emphasis	Left collocations: <i>-pyiii, -pyiii taw</i> Note: does not co-occur with object marker <i>koo</i> [compared to → <i>ka taw</i> (subject) and <i>koo taw</i> (object), which are both topic markers]
<i>taw</i>	discourse connector	<i>pyiii taw</i>
	topic marker	<i>ka nee pyiii taw</i>
	discourse connector <i>saying that, given that</i>	<i>ssoo pyiii taw</i>
	contrast marker	<i>kya taw</i>
	causal marker: <i>since</i>	<i>(teeh/meeh) ssou taw</i>
	causal marker: <i>because</i>	<i>baa ppyiq lo leeh soo taw</i>
	discourse connector: marks following utterance as consequence: <i>so</i>	<i>ssou taw</i> With demonstratives: <i>dii taw, eeh dii taw, eeh taw</i>
	appears in coda in narration	VP <i>paa taw teeh</i>
	Hedge: <i>let's say</i>	<i>ssou paa taw</i>
<i>taa</i>	expresses negative attitude: self-defense, disapproval, shock, etc.	<i>mA V taa</i>
	evidential marker: indicate info source as elsewhere	utterance ending with <i>taa</i>
	turn-final: expects a response, solicits clarification	utterance ending with <i>taa</i>
<i>teeh</i>	state neutral, factual info: common in narratives	utterance ending with <i>teeh</i>
	expresses support to interlocutor's proposition	<i>Houq teeh</i>
	frames upcoming utterance contradicting the interlocutor's message	<i>Houq teeh</i>
	turn-yielding in turn-final & single-item tokens	utterance ending with <i>teeh</i>

Table 84. Key discourse features of Burmese discourse particles

Among the discourse features listed in Table 84, the following key discourse functions are selected as the most prominent/interesting to compare with English:

a) topic marker

- presents new information,
- expresses emphasis, contrast
- explains, defines
- expresses superlatives

Particles used: NP/clause + *ka, ka taw, ka nee, ka nee pyiii ta, kya taw*

b) signals for 'resolution' and 'coda' in narratives

Particles used: Demonstratives + *ka taw ..., ...paa taw teeh.*
[Utterance final]

c) marker of dissatisfaction in FTA (Face Threatening Act) situations

- expresses self-justification (typically with 1st / 2nd persons)
- expresses reproach (typically with 1st/2nd persons)
- expresses reproach/complaint (also with 3rd person)

Particles used: Pronouns, proper noun used as pronoun +
ka leeh

d) discourse connector

Particles used: V *pyiii taw (and then)*; Utterance + *ssoo pyiii (taw) (saying that, given that)*; Utterance + *ssoo taw (since then)*
→ marks following utterance as consequence of the previous

- e) **hedge**
Particles used: *ssoo paa taw (Let's say)*
-frame upcoming utterance that may contradict with message in previous turn
Particles used: *Houq teeh.*
- f) **simple response to solicitation of confirmation**
Particles used: *Houq teeh (single-item token)*
- g) **turn-yielding**
Particles used: *VSM teeh. (single-item token)*
- h) **Evidentials**
-avoid/divert responsibility for the assertion/proposition stated
Particles used: *[VP/utterance] taa*

This chapter concludes the analyses of the Burmese data. In the next chapter, I shall attempt to find out how these discourse functions are likely to be realised in English, based on the existing literature as well as data from the English corpora used in the present study.

Chapter 7

Analyses of English data

7.1. Analytical framework

The Burmese findings in Chapter 5 have been arrived at on their own terms, by using the corpus to generate a frequency list of Burmese syllabic words, which, in turn, became the source of analysis for the concordances which yielded information on their discourse roles. From the initial list, six particles emerged as extremely high frequency, ranking in the top 19 items across the three datasets (i.e. the pre-scripted, the spontaneous, and the whole corpus combined).

This high frequency can be attributed to the fact that the Burmese particles have a syntactic identity and a morphological makeup which predictably places them high on the frequency list. This is further boosted by the absence in Burmese of items which would crowd out such particles in an English frequency list, items such as subject pronouns (which are non-obligatory in Burmese clauses), articles, copular verbs, and auxiliary verbs such as *do*, *be* and *have*.

This fact presents a problem for any comparison with a similarly generated frequency list for English words. All frequency lists for English are dominated by in excess of 100 high-frequency grammatical-functional items such as determiners, pronouns, auxiliaries, the various forms of copular *be*, etc. (see McCarthy and Carter, 2006). For example, in the top 50 list of the English corpora used in the present study [cf. Table 85], only seven items, namely *and*, *know*, *but*, *so*, *like*, *just*, could potentially be candidates for discourse-marking functions [cf. highlighted items in Table

85], and, of these, only three appear in the top 20 [cf. Table 86]. This compares unequally with the top 19 items in Burmese [cf. Table 51], of which all are unambiguously particles¹⁰⁰ and potentially, therefore, of interest to the present research. In short, in comparing raw Burmese frequencies with raw English frequencies, we are not comparing like with like.

How, therefore, does one address this issue? All studies of English discourse marking underline the fact that discourse marking in English is primarily a lexical phenomenon. For example, Carter and McCarthy (2006: sec.107) list items such as *right, well, anyway, fine, good, great*, all of which have core lexical meanings which have into their present-day discourse-marking functions. These, along with some more grammatically-oriented markers such as *and, but* and *so*, plus phrasal items such as *you know, I mean* and *you see*, make up the contemporary repertoire of English discourse markers. The problem, therefore, is that one is attempting to compare a syntactically-oriented marking system with a lexically oriented one. The solution proposed here is to use a classification of functions, based on the Burmese findings (rather than based on a list of English-derived functions), as a bridge between the two systems. What we shall do in the case of English, therefore, is to see in what way the prime functions of the highest frequency types in Burmese, for example, topic marking with *ka*, and discourse connecting with *taw*,

¹⁰⁰ Table 51 is based on the first 50 items in Table 50 that occur across all three categories, which yielded a total of 19 items. Table 86 represents items that occur among the first 50 across all three categories on the frequency list of Table 85, which yielded 36 items altogether.

could be realised, if at all, in the English lexical system as reflected in the English corpora used in this study. These are clear functions which it will be possible to compare across the two languages; other phenomena such as VSM, which can also operate as evidential and attitudinal particles, will be even less amenable to cross-linguistic analysis.

For the purposes of this study, therefore, chapter 7 will discuss three prime discourse-marking functions of Burmese and seek their equivalent realisations, if any, in English. This process not only enables us to confirm the integrity of the findings for Burmese; it also enables us to reflect on the various methodologies which could potentially apply to cross-linguistic discourse studies. It is by no means to be taken for granted that a system of items and functions derived from English will be applicable and valid for a non-western language such as Burmese.

The English corpus, which has been created to match the Burmese data as closely as possible, is composed of selected data from BBC radio drama scripts, which represent pre-scripted speech, and the Saarbrücken Corpus of Spoken English and CANCODE conversations, which represent spontaneous speech. [see further details in 4.3.2]. Table 85 presents the first 50 tokens in the English sub-corpora in three categories: the pre-scripted, the spontaneous, and the whole corpus combined; all items that occur across the three sub-categories in Table 85 are summarized in Table 86.

N	Pre-scripted			Spontaneous			Total		
	Word	Freq.	%	Word	Freq.	%	Word	Freq.	%
	91, 658	3 files		87, 095	22		178, 753	25 files	
1	I	1,423	1.55	AND	2,149	2.47	I	3,354	1.88
2	THE	891	0.97	THE	1,980	2.27	AND	2,894	1.62
3	TO	799	0.87	I	1,931	2.22	THE	2,871	1.61
4	AND	745	0.81	TO	1,218	1.40	TO	2,017	1.13
5	YOU	724	0.79	YOU	1,210	1.39	YOU	1,934	1.08
6	IT	582	0.63	A	1,144	1.31	A	1,665	0.93
7	A	521	0.57	IT	1,018	1.17	IT	1,600	0.90
8	THAT	368	0.40	OF	868	1.00	OF	1,235	0.69
9	OF	367	0.40	THAT	814	0.93	THAT	1,182	0.66
10	SHE	335	0.37	WAS	806	0.93	WAS	1,077	0.60
11	ME	305	0.33	IN	736	0.85	IN	986	0.55
12	WAS	271	0.30	HE	611	0.70	HE	833	0.47
13	WHAT	271	0.30	YEAH	522	0.60	SHE	718	0.40
14	IS	267	0.29	IS	441	0.51	IS	708	0.40
15	MY	267	0.29	WELL	419	0.48	WHAT	624	0.35
16	IN	250	0.27	KNOW	410	0.47	KNOW	618	0.35
17	HE	222	0.24	THEY	400	0.46	BUT	592	0.33
18	KNOW	208	0.23	NO	390	0.45	MY	557	0.31
19	BUT	203	0.22	BUT	389	0.45	YEAH	533	0.30
20	HER	197	0.21	OH	389	0.45	THEY	531	0.30
21	DO	192	0.21	SHE	383	0.44	NO	521	0.29
22	BE	189	0.21	MM	370	0.42	ON	510	0.29
23	LIKE	171	0.19	SO	363	0.42	ME	509	0.28
24	HAVE	163	0.18	THERE	363	0.42	HAVE	507	0.28
25	THIS	161	0.18	ON	354	0.41	THIS	506	0.28
26	NOT	157	0.17	WHAT	353	0.41	SO	504	0.28
27	ON	156	0.17	THIS	345	0.40	LIKE	503	0.28
28	WE	154	0.17	HAVE	344	0.39	WELL	502	0.28
29	FOR	150	0.16	WE	335	0.38	WE	489	0.27
30	JUST	149	0.16	LIKE	332	0.38	FOR	460	0.26
31	WITH	145	0.16	ALL	312	0.36	THERE	456	0.26
32	SO	141	0.15	FOR	310	0.36	DO	443	0.25
33	WANT	135	0.15	ER	306	0.35	BE	442	0.25
34	IT'S	133	0.15	IT'S	296	0.34	OH	442	0.25
35	NO	131	0.14	ONE	292	0.34	NOT	431	0.24
36	THEY	131	0.14	MY	290	0.33	JUST	430	0.24
37	HIM	129	0.14	JUST	281	0.32	ITS	429	0.24
38	CAN	128	0.14	NOT	274	0.31	ALL	400	0.22
39	AT	122	0.13	HAD	270	0.31	WITH	395	0.22
40	THEN	120	0.13	BE	253	0.29	AT	373	0.21
41	IF	117	0.13	AT	251	0.29	MM	373	0.21
42	GO	116	0.13	DO	251	0.29	IF	366	0.20
43	ABOUT	114	0.12	WITH	250	0.29	ONE	364	0.20
44	ARE	112	0.12	IF	249	0.29	DON'T	353	0.20
45	SAY	112	0.12	GOT	248	0.28	HER	349	0.20
46	I'M	111	0.12	DON'T	245	0.28	OUT	342	0.19
47	WHY	109	0.12	OUT	244	0.28	THEN	341	0.19
48	DON'T	108	0.12	THINK	228	0.26	HAD	337	0.19
49	WHEN	105	0.11	WOULD	226	0.26	GO	326	0.18
50	SAID	104	0.11	YES	226	0.26	THINK	324	0.18

Table 85. First 50 tokens on the frequency list of the English corpora¹⁰¹

¹⁰¹ Items highlighted in green represent items that occur across all three categories of the frequency list.

Rank	Item
1	I
2	THE
3	TO
4	AND
5	YOU
6	IT
7	A
8	THAT
9	OF
10	WAS
11	IN
12	HE
13	SHE
14	IS
15	WHAT
16	KNOW
17	BUT
18	MY
19	THEY
20	NO
21	ON
22	HAVE
23	THIS
24	SO
25	LIKE
26	WE
27	FOR
28	DO
29	BE
30	NOT
31	JUST
32	WITH
33	ITS
34	AT
35	IF
36	DON'T

Table 86. Items that occur in all three sub-categories in Table 85¹⁰²

7.2. English realisations of prime discourse functions in Burmese

Aijmer (2002) states that making functional distinctions of DMs is a common practice in analysing discourse particles (p. 38). Following Aijmer's approach, prime discourse functions identified in the Burmese data can be divided into two main categories: 1) those that signal

¹⁰² Highlighted items represent items that are potential candidates for discourse marking functions.

relationships between utterances representing discourse units, and 2) those that serve **primarily interpersonal functions** (Traugott 1999: 180 cited in Aijmer 2002). It is in these two categories that the English realisation of discourse functions will be investigated for the present study. The first category includes **topic-markers** and **discourse connectors**, and the second category includes **hedges**, **evidential markers** (expressing indirectness) and **markers of negative/ disapproving stance**.

7.2.1. Markers that signal discourse relationship

Under this category, topic marking is a common discourse function in many languages and can probably be considered universal; it is difficult to imagine any communication without a topic marking function in the discourse system. Moreover, in the Burmese data topic marking particle 'ka' (and its collocations that serve the same function, such as 'ka taw' 'ka nee' etc. - cf. 5.3.3.2.8-5.3.3.2.9) is the highest on the frequency list. For these reasons it makes sense to choose topic marking as one of the main discourse functions for which we shall attempt to find equivalent realisations in English.

7.2.1.1. Topic marking in English

As Carter & McCarthy (2006) posit, "topic and comment together in a clause constitute a proposition": topic is defined as "typically the starting point of the clause and who or what the clause is about"¹⁰³ (sec.

¹⁰³ 'Comment' refers to the main part of the message which indicates the important part of the information about the topic. (Carter & McCarthy, 2006)

472). It refers to the main subject matter the speaker wants to talk about, and it is most typically associated with grammatical subject, although it is also common to find other parts of speech as a topic of the discourse. As described in Carter & McCarthy (2006), the topic marking system in English involves the use of various DMs that indicate **topic focus**, **topic boundaries**, and which facilitate **topic management**, i.e. signalling an opening and closing of a topic, or a shift in a conversational topic, and also helping the speakers check the state of shared knowledge, etc.

The **topic focus marking** function serves to draw the listener's attention to what the speaker feels as important - be it new information, something for emphasis or for contrast. Carter & McCarthy (2006) observe that attention or focus can be directed to a topic by a number of DMs including *now*, *hey*, *ah*, *oh* (cf. sec 108d), and imperative directives such as *look*, *listen*, *just think*, *remember*, etc., which I shall illustrate with examples drawn from the present corpus.

(7.1) [$\langle S1 \rangle$ adult, $\langle S2 \rangle$ child. After the child $\langle S2 \rangle$ has succeeded in doing some multiplications:]

$\langle S1 \rangle$ **Right**. So you have no trouble apart from one little hiccup.

$\langle S2 \rangle$ Uh huh.

$\langle S1 \rangle$ **Now** do the same for your three times table and you can have your game.

[CANCODE: 70018004]

In (7.1) the adult speaker has challenged the child to do multiplication tables in exchange for a game he wants to play. After affirming the child's correct response (not included in the example) with *Right*, followed by a comment on a different topic (*a hiccup*), therefore

indicating also a topic shift, the second DM *now* signals resumption of the original topic (*multiplications*). Let us now consider a few more examples of topic-marking [see (7.2)–(7.4)].

- (7.2) [*Talking about an employer who doesn't trust his employees when they call in sick: the speaker is recounting an anecdote about the time he called to check on her friend who was sick*]

...her older sister was so frustrated she just yelled down
"Look. she's sick and she's in bed. What do you want?"
[SBBC:bakery]

Examples (7.3) and (7.4) also demonstrate topic-focus marking function with different DMs.

- (7.3) [*Speaker recounting an anecdote*]

...the man leans out of the car and says: "Hey, Mister.
Your cat just jumped out of the window."
[SBBC: story]

- (7.4) [*Talking about banks and opening accounts*]

And $\langle \$ \Rightarrow \rangle$ they really ought it ought to be sort of $\langle \backslash \$ \Rightarrow \rangle$ the
onus ought to be on them to say **Look** you got this money
that could be making some money. Put it in a different
account. But they don't.
[CANCODE:70017001]

In examples (7.2) to (7.4) we can see that topic-marking DMs also mark the **topic boundaries** between reporting and reported speech, which is the next focus of analysis.

Markers of topic boundaries indicate to the listener the beginning or end of a topic, or a transition from one topic to another, and such markers include *Okay* and *so* (Carter & McCarthy, 2006: section 108c). In

the present corpus, there is evidence of such markers which are illustrated with examples (7.5) – (7.7) below.

- (7.5) [*The speaker is about to tell an anecdote about her Nigerian husband who mistook 'carousel' for 'caramel'*]

Okay, on an international note, am, my <short pause> husband- who I sometimes call my fiancé don't ask me why, he's from Nigeria...

[SBBC: Caramel]

- (7.6) [*speaker recounting his experience with the problems he had at a photo shop*]

<\$2> So I then looked at the ...
<\$G?> you've got the little pink slip that says "If you buy the ten by eight it'll cost fifty. If you buy all the photographs in the envelope you can have them for seven pounds". **So** that's it. very badly duplicated.

[CANCODE: 7019001]

- (7.7) [*Same speakers as in (6)*]

<\$2> Yeah. And so I rang up and there was no reply. And I rang <\$G?> to see how long it was <\$G3>.

<\$1> <\$E> laughs <\\$E>

<\$2> Erm no. I'll give you a short version. **So** in a fit of pique I rang the school and spoke to Judy Mottram the secretary and said er These people

[ibid]

The marker *Okay* in (7.5) signals opening of a new topic (*about her husband from Nigeria and his misunderstanding of a word*), and so in (7.6) signals closing of a topic (*about the problem with the photograph shop*). In (7.7) the highlighted *so* indicates a shift in topic (to the shorter version of the story).

7.2.1.2. Topic management in English

In terms of **topic management**, DMs not only allow the speakers to signal the beginning and the end of a topic [cf. 7.2.1.1], as Carter & McCarthy (2006) observe, DMs also help the speakers negotiate their way through talk, including checking whether they share a common view of the topic and of the unfolding nature of the discourse with the listener (ibid. Sec. 108c). Vocatives commonly serve this function, to signal a shift of conversational topic or to signal an encouragement to continue or expand a topic, or they may be used as a way to validate or confirm one's assertion (ibid: Sec 118e). Vocatives used to signal topic management are demonstrated with (7.8) and (7.9).

(7.8) [*The speakers are discussing A's deceased mother; a Geordie accent is the accent associated with the area of Newcastle in north-east England*]

A: And said said when she came down here to Bristol she er she had a Geordie accent and all the kids used to+

B: Well she would have.

A: + make fun of her

B: She would have.

A: Yeah.

B: Of course.

A: Where were you born then, **Mary**?

B: In Bristol.

A: You're a Bristol girl.

B: Yeah.

(Mary is already the addressee; the vocative coincides with a topic shift)

(Carter & McCarthy, 2006: Sec. 118e)

(7.9) [*Speakers are discussing a well-known family of traditional Irish musicians*]

A: Er we were in er Cork weren't we, **Barbara**, and we heard his brother. Which brother was it we heard?

B: Er, Sean, I think.

(ibid)

In (7.9) above, the vocative *Barbara* occurs close to the topical information, about the musician brother, which <A> calls on to confirm. I will further illustrate the use of vocatives with (7.10) and (7.11) from the present corpus, in which speakers call on the other participants as a part of their topic management function in the discourse: in (7.10) Serena wants to draw the mother's attention to the fact that she was not bothered by being made fun of, which was the previous topic (in the mother's utterance). In (7.11) Terry attempts to¹⁰⁴ divert the conversation to a new topic, by calling on Jane, and by stating the reason why the previous topic has to be closed. In sum, (7.10) and (7.11) present further examples of vocatives used as a marker for topic management.

(7.10) [*Talking about a sister, Serena, who got made fun of at school for being a foreigner to whom mother apologized: speaker starting with imitated speech by mother*]

..."Serena I'm sorry that all these kids are making fun of you" and she's like "**Mom**, what are you talking about"
[SBBC: Story]

(7.11) [*Terry to wife, Jane, who was rambling on about a crime scene she witnessed*]

<TERRY> **Jane**, I'm tired. Look at me.
[AP: Far from home]

In 7.2.1.1 and 7.2.1.2, I have outlined how various DMs signal different functions of topic marking in English, namely topic focus, topic boundaries and topic management. As can be seen in the examples (7.1) –

¹⁰⁴ This attempt was not successful as evidenced by the subsequent turn by Jane, who continues rambling about her "traumatic" experience.

(7.11), it should be noted that, unlike Burmese topic-marking particles that are always post-NP, which may occur in utterance initial- medial- or final positions, English DMs for topic marking typically occur in front position in the utterance. In addition, topic marking is signalled mostly by one specific particle in Burmese, namely 'ka'¹⁰⁵ (and its collocates 'ka nee (pyiii taw)' 'ka taw', etc.) whereas topic marking in English is realised through a repertoire of lexical items which are more varied. Moreover Burmese discourse marking particles do not have propositional meaning but lexical items used for topic marking in English have their own core meanings and may well retain some element of those meanings in their DM uses. A comparison of two different topic-marking systems suggests that Burmese particles seem to mark topics more explicitly – typically for emphasis or for contrast [cf. 5.3.3.2] – but topic marking is realised more subtly in English. Another difference between the topic marking systems in the two languages seems to lie in the way narratives are constructed. For instance, topic marker 'ka' occurs with a high frequency in Burmese narratives¹⁰⁶, which we can interpret as an indication of a prominent role of subject marking in the Burmese discourse system. Such information is very difficult to extract from the English data, as the lexical items that serve the topic marking function do not come from one particular word class, but different word classes. I attempted however to have a frequency

¹⁰⁵ Note however that not all 'ka' particles signal topic marking [cf. 5.3.3.1]

¹⁰⁶ In fact, in all 6 film narratives, 'ka' is either the first or the second on the frequency list. However, as explained in 5.3.3. not all 'ka' tokens serve the topic marking functions. On the other hand, subject marking function can be realised by other particles such as 'taw' (cf. 5.3.4.2.1.a) 'kya taw' (cf. 5.3.4.2.2) 'mhaa taw' etc. It is therefore justifiable to assume that the high frequency of 'ka' is indicative of a prominent nature of subject marking in Burmese.

list generated for each narrative sub-corpus [see Appendix E] with *Wordsmith Tools*, and the only lexical item that occurs among the top 10 across the board (except for a BBC play *Far from home*) is *and*, which is also a common DM that functions as a discourse connector, which I shall discuss further with corpus examples in the next section.

7.2.1.3. Marking discourse connectivity

Carter & McCarthy (2006) use the term 'conjunction' as an alternative to 'connector', defined as "items used to mark logical relationships between words, phrases, clauses and sentences" (Sec. 539) and they distinguish two types of conjunction, namely 'coordinating' (e.g. *and*, *but*, *or*, etc.) and 'subordinating' (such as *although*, *after*, *as*, *because*, *before*, *since*, *when*). Although the description reflects mainly grammatical meanings, there is evidence in the discourse literature that many of the items (for example, *and* and *but* are among the most cited DMs) also serve as discourse connectors, signalling the logical relationship between discourse units. In terms of discourse connectivity, I shall discuss two prominent functions, namely marking **discourse sequence**, and **signalling cause and effect**.

7.2.1.4. Signalling discourse sequence

Carter & McCarthy (2006) identify more than 20 lexical items that serve as DMs for sequencing, which indicate explicitly the order in which things occur or how different segments of a discourse are being organised" (Sec 108b). Their list of DMs for signalling sequence includes *and*, *and*

then, finally, first of (all), firstly (more formal than first), for a start, going back to, in general, in the end, in the first place, last of all, lastly, next, on top of that, second, secondly (more formal than second), so, there again, third(ly), to sum up, what's more (ibid). Among them this study considers *and (then)* the most interesting one, as its lexical counterpart 'pyiii taw' in Burmese has a different syntactic realization (for instance, post-positionally attached to a VP, or occurring as an independent phrase in utterance-initial position [cf. 5.3.4.2.1]), yet both *and (then)* and its Burmese counterpart *pyiii taw* occur among the highest items on their respective frequency lists¹⁰⁷. Let us consider further, therefore, the use of *and (then)* in the present corpus.

There are altogether 2,894 tokens of *and* in the total corpus, and as can be seen in Table 85, *and* occurs among the top five items across all three categories. Carter & McCarthy (2006) observe that *then* can express the meaning of *next* or *after that* and when it does it commonly occurs with *and* (Sec 73). After eliminating *and* tokens that serve as a conjunction between two NPs, adjectives (e.g. *old and ugly*) or adverbs (e.g. *clearly and honestly*), and fixed expressions that do not serve as discourse connectors (such as *out and about, ages and ages, over and over, N and all* or *N and everything*, etc.), 436¹⁰⁸ tokens were analysed in terms of their discourse connecting functions. It was found that *and (then)* signals the order of incidents in which the speaker wants to present his/her

¹⁰⁷ *And* occurs among the top 5 items across the three categories (cf. Table 85-86).

¹⁰⁸ Actually this is based on a total of 500 tokens randomly selected by WordSmith Concordancing software (I did maximum number specified at 500 in generating the concordance file)

discourse. (7.12) is a good example of *and then* as a marker for discourse sequencing.

(7.12) [*Talking about drawing to run an advertisement*]

That each flat bit **and then** a ball **and then** another flat bit
and and that next **and then** there's the face+

[CANCODE: 70019001]

In the Burmese data, another common discourse connector with a high frequency, typically used in narratives, is 'ssoo pyiii taw' which literally means *after saying X*. However, when it is examined in a larger discourse context in the corpora, it is found that there are more than one English equivalents depending on the context, such as *saying Stc*¹⁰⁹, *thinking stc*, *on the grounds that Stc.*, etc. [cf. 5.3.4.2.1.b. (5.114) – (5.117)]. In other words, 'ssoo pyiii taw' signals that, in terms of the order of events, the proposition expressed in the clause precedes what happens in the subsequent utterance/clause. In English on the other hand, such discourse meaning is likely to be expressed with *X said (utterance) and ...VP*, or *thinking (utterance) X ... VP*. In these two cases, saying and thinking are explicitly distinguished in English, whereas in Burmese 'ssoo pyiii taw' seems to function more like a DM, signalling that some kind of internal reflexion or verbal action occurs either prior to or simultaneously with the proposition in the following utterance. In that way, 'ssoo pyiii taw' may signal a cause, which in English is likely to be expressed with *because*, *cos*, or *given that*. In the corpus data, there are 22 occurrences of *saying*, and only one occurrence that expresses this discourse meaning:

¹⁰⁹ Stc = Sentence

signalling discourse sequence and indicating the utterance as a reason or cause of the subsequent utterance.

(7.13) [*People talking about buying chairs: the present speaker is recounting an anecdote of a particular salesperson*]

<\$2> Mm. It was quite interesting this Watchdog programme though. It was **saying** that you have to be very very careful of these auctions because there are an awful lot of loss leaders+

<\$1> Mm.

<\$2> +if you like. This guy will sort of er sell fictitiously to somebody and it's then packed away and put underneath the you know the good quality ones+

[CANCODE: 70019001]

In (7.13) *saying* occurs in the reported speech in which the associated subject is the *Watchdog programme*. After quoting the warning by the *Watchdog programme* as a reason/ grounding argument, the speaker explains further what salespeople may do to sell their merchandise. We can argue here perhaps that *saying that* serves to indicate the semantic relationship between the two discourse units, which is similar to "*talking about X*" which typically marks the linking of a current or earlier topic to a new one introduced by the speaker" (Carter & McCarthy, 2006. Sec 106b).

The last discourse marking function to discuss under discourse connectivity is realised in Burmese by 'ssoo taw' of which an English equivalent is *since*. As Carter & McCarthy (2006) describe, *since* can express two meanings, as a **reference to time** and a **reference to reasons**. This section is concerned with *since* as a marker of reason. Carter & McCarthy explain that "*since* is used when the reason for something is

presumed to be already known to the listener" (ibid. Sec 70). with the following example (7.14):

(7.14) **Since** around 30% of the contents of the average dustbin are made up of kitchen waste, it makes sense to encourage more people to compost rather than dump it.
(or: As we know, around 30% of the contents of the average dustbin is made up of kitchen waste, so...)
[ibid. Sec. 70]

(7.15) It may be because they don't know what the guidelines are.
(this is a possible reason, we do not know)
[ibid. Sec. 70]

which they compare with (7.15) in which *because*, another marker for reason, is used: in (7.15), they point out, "there is no necessary implication that the reason is already known" (ibid. Sec. 70). In the corpus data however, there are only 13 occurrences of *since* and four are used as a marker of reason, which I will illustrate with (7.16) below.

(7.16) [*Talking about a girl pissing through the screen door with boys when they were kids*]

"...was- and here's the fi- and it was my first realization that girls could do that at all, **since** boys think, you know, that girls can't do that at all."

[SBBC: Backdoor]

In (7.16) above, *since* implies that *it is common knowledge what boys think, that is, girls cannot do things like boys do.*

7.2.2. Markers that serve primarily interpersonal functions

"Face saving, politeness and indirectness are characteristic of everyday conversation and are therefore involved in the usage of discourse particles with interpersonal function"

(Aijmer 2002 citing Bazzanella 1990: 636).

Aijmer (2002) posits that particles (DMs) that serve primarily interpersonal functions "express attitudes, feelings and evaluations" (p. 39). Bazzanella (1990) uses the term 'phatic connectives' for such DMs, which underlies the interactive structure of the conversation (p. 630). According to Aijmer, among interpersonal functions expressed by such particles are found hedges, evidentials, responses or reactions to the preceding utterance and backchannelling, and she further notes that these can be analysed in terms of face and politeness. Aijmer's position concurs with the observation made by Carter & McCarthy (2006) that hedging is used for politeness, and "politeness serves to protect the self-esteem and dignity of the speaker and listener, and to prevent speakers imposing on listeners or forcing them to act against their will" and therefore allows communication to proceed harmoniously (Sec. 423). Among these discourse functions with interpersonal focus, **hedging** and **evidentials** are prominent features in the Burmese data, and therefore are selected to be examined in the upcoming sections.

7.2.2.1. Hedging

Carter & McCarthy (2006) define hedging as "a linguistic strategy used to avoid sounding too authoritative or direct" (Sec. 539), and it typically makes the proposition less assertive (Sec. 146). A range of expressions are used in everyday spoken language to down tone the assertiveness of a segment of discourse: for instance in English, hedging

can be realised through modal expressions such as *could*, *would*, simple tense forms (Sec 146), with a negative expression (*not* often accompanied by *actually*, *necessarily*, as in *Her acting wasn't actually convincing, was it?* – *ibid.* Sec.447b), through a range of adverbial and prepositional constructions such as *kind of*, *sort of*, *more or less*, etc (Sec 146c), or through the use of impersonal *it*- constructions with passive voice¹¹⁰ (Sec. 146d), etc. These interpersonal functions are illustrated with examples from the present corpus in (7.17) - (7.19).

(7.17) [*Talking about some (Greek) salesman*]

Oh yes. The knock-on effect **would** be considerable
wouldn't it. He moves in the right circles doesn't he?

[CANCODE: 70020001]

(7.18) [*Talking about being on some medication*]

So she must have been on them for s= <\\$=> Oh.
September October November. She's been on them four
months I suppose. Which is **not really** a long term. I don't
know what the long term thing is. <\$=> I <\\$=> She's got
out the drugs book at school and <\$=> there d= <\$E> sighs
<\\$E> there are no there <\\$=> there appear to be no side
effects.

[CANCODE: 70019001]

(7.19) [*Talking about her experience in the orthodontist's office
where she played around with tools when she was a child*]

So I **kind of** start panicking because I'm kind of like, "What
am I going to do?"

[SBBC: Story 2]

The existing discourse literature suggests that hedges are closely related to vagueness. Carter & McCarthy (2006) maintain that "being vague is an important feature of interpersonal meaning and is especially common in everyday conversation". In their view, vagueness is motivated

¹¹⁰ Note however that this construction is more typical of written academic English.

and purposeful and is often a mark of the sensitivity and skill of a speaker" (ibid). (Sec 103d). They further explain this position by stating that since vague language softens expressions they do not appear too direct or unduly authoritative and assertive, which is a favourable situation for harmonious communication. Moreover, using vagueness is also a strong indication of an assumed shared knowledge and therefore can mark in-group membership. Following this argument the referents of vague expressions are assumed to be known by the listener. Carter & McCarthy (ibid) observe that "speakers are often careful not to sound too blunt and assertive, and a variety of markers exist to hedge (i.e. to express degree of assertiveness)" (Sec 112)

7.2.2.2. Evidentials

In English, like hedges, questions or requests can be softened by means of reporting structures with *hope*, *think*, *wonder* etc. (Carter & McCarthy 2006: Sec 423c) which serve evidential functions. Evidentials are defined as "items expressing attitudes to or modes of knowledge" (Aijmer 2002: 48. See also Brinton 1996:190 on *I think*; Chafe 1986). We have seen in (6.1.4.2.2.3) that the evidential function realised by the Burmese discourse marking particle 'taa' (post-positionally attached to an utterance) signals indirectness (or diverting responsibility of the proposition stated, i.e., implying *it's not me saying this. I'm just repeating what I heard...*). According to Holmes (1988) evidential markers can also express imprecision and approximation, which seem to signal the

"speaker's desire to reduce social distance between herself and addressee" (p. 99). Other evidential markers in English include items such as *well*, *now*, *I mean*, *I guess*, *I know*, *you know*, etc. Examples (7.20) – (7.22) demonstrate how evidential markers function in English.

(7.20) [*Young woman recounting a story of her band*]

I- I was going to go in June and I got a ca- a sort of a somewhat of a career playing my guitar? somewhat professional-like, **I guess**, you know.

[SBBC: Band]

(7.21) [*Talking about taking care of tomato plants*]

<\$1> And so you wait for your five flowery trusses and then pinch out the tops and sit back and wait for results.+</p></div><div data-bbox="291 394 862 431" data-label="Text"><p><\$2> Yes. **Well I suppose** we **could** <=\$=> erm de= <=\$=> possibly get round to that. Anyway it's not a good time.</p></div><div data-bbox="605 430 838 448" data-label="Text"><p>[CANCODE: 70020001]</p></div><div data-bbox="222 465 830 501" data-label="Text"><p>(7.22) <\$1> **I thought** there were some ideas which <\$H> were a **little bit** <\\$H>off the wall.</p></div><div data-bbox="605 500 838 518" data-label="Text"><p>[CANCODE: 70054001]</p></div><div data-bbox="152 553 840 862" data-label="Text"><p>In (7.20) with the evidential marker *I guess* the speaker signals her attitude (hint of doubt in this case) towards the message about her career playing guitar as a "professional-like" activity. In (7.21) *well* and *I suppose* by speaker <\$2> suggest that he is not sure about his ability to follow the suggestion made by <\$1>. It can be seen from the examples that hedges and evidentials often co-occur in the discourse. For instance in (7.22) *I thought* signals the speaker's attitude towards the proposition (*some ideas being off the wall*) – it's only a personal opinion – which is accompanied by the hedge *a little bit*.</p></div><div data-bbox="478 962 520 981" data-label="Page-Footer"><p>299</p></div>

7.2.2.3. Marker of negative/disapproving stance with *also*

Among the Burmese discourse marking particles analysed in Chapter 5, one of the striking findings was the use of topic marker 'ka' in collocation with 'leeh' literally meaning *also*. We have seen that together, 'ka leeh' express some sort of discontent: self-defence or reproach when the clause containing 'ka leeh' co-occur with the first person or the second person, or a complaint/reproach when it co-occurs with third person NPs (see further details in 5.3.3.2.7). Let us now investigate its equivalent realisations in English, starting with the use of *also* in discourse.

According to the *Random House Webster's College Dictionary* the word *also* has two core meanings: 1) *in addition, too, besides* and 2) *likewise, in the same manner* (Costello et al., 1995). Waring (2003) uses the term 'additive meaning' for the first meaning and observes that it "involves some sort of listing, and the features being enumerated are bound by a common topic" as in *He's young, and he's also brilliant* in which 'he' is the common topic which is associated with qualities *young* and *brilliant*. The second meaning underscores similarities of some sort as in *Since you're having another cup of coffee, I'll have one also*, in which *also* is concerned with the identical act of *having another cup of coffee* (p 417).

Waring (2003) argues that semantic features of *also* may be strategically deployed to "accomplish different interactional goals in either a disjunctive or a disaffiliative environment" (p. 417). Findings of her

corpus-based study¹¹¹ indicate that where an *also*-bearing turn appears disjunctive to prior talk, *also* serves to claim a coherent relationship between the two disjunctive utterances. With the example in (7.23) she demonstrates that "using *also*, co-participants are able to contribute new elements to the discussion (Tamar's utterance in L. 13) – elements often more reflective of their own experience and knowledge than relevant to the topic of the moment – while maintaining the appearance of coherence and being attentive" (p. 422).

- (7.23)
- 1 Kelly: =Well I was relieved actually I've never really thought
 2 about the topic, and I kne:w there was sorta one out
 there.
 3 but as I mentioned before having this sort of (.)
 4 unconscious fear when someone asked me to summarize
 5 the main point. I was like- you know putting it on
 6 paper was a horrifying id_ea.=
 7 Prof: =Commitment. Hah?=
 8 Kelly =ye:ah! It's a commitment
 9 (.)
 10 that has a right or wro:ng to me. An:d (.) I didn't want
 11 to be wr(hh)ho:ng an:d uh
 12 (1.2)
 13 **Tamar** → °It's **also** a different () of maybe reading
 14 () ° which depends on our task. My task, for example,
 15 f- f-find five concepts, it didn't even say main concepts.
 16 ((continue to end the turn))
- (ibid)

In disaffiliative environments, on the other hand, *also* can serve various interactional goals, including serving a 'mitigating' function. As Waring explains, in such cases, *also* serves to create an illusion of affiliation, by appealing to its semantic feature of 'additive' or 'likewise', while speakers implicitly disagree with their co-participants (ibid. p. 431).

¹¹¹ Her study is based on a graduate seminar and a television forum.

Although Waring's claim is perhaps debatable without sufficient supporting examples from corpus data, the claim is appealing, as it can be compared to the use of 'leeh' *also* in Burmese, which serves as a softener when the speaker is being defensive or reproaching someone (cf. 5.3.3.2.7). Naturally it is not easy to find a large quantity of supporting examples from the present corpora, especially in that they are mostly narratives where there is not much reason for disagreement or argument. I will attempt however to illustrate the mitigating function that can be realised by *also* with the example (7.24) below.

(7.24) [*Speakers just received something in the post*]

<\$2> <\$H> Well the <\\$H> post is totally boring as usual. Apart from will <\$E> turns pages <\\$E> the Institute of Advanced Motorists stuff which I no doubt find fascinating.

<\$1> In the fullness of time.

<\$2> <\$=> In the fullness of <\\$=> They're off. <\$=> But this looks <\\$=>

<\$1> You like it do you?

<\$2> Yeah. <\$H> <\$=> I've only <\\$=> I've only gone for the parlour. <\\$H> It looks as though there's some googly stuff in here.

<\$1> Yes. I've marked it with all sorts of things+

<\$2> Mm.

<\$1> +that I'd like to buy.

<\$2> There's **also** loads of people I've never even heard of.

<\$1> Yes. And they've got an interesting scheme. Well it's a potentially interesting scheme whereby if you spend X pounds' worth of stuff on your order+

<\$2> Yeah.

<\$1> +they'll give you+

<\$2> <\$=> You get <\\$=>

<\$1> +a free single.

[CANCODE: 70019001]

In (7.24) speaker <\$2> seems unhappy with the mail that she just found. She found the material boring, to which <\$1> responds, indicating its utility for her (*googly stuff she marked for items she'd like to buy*). In line 14, through the use of *also*, speaker <\$2> expresses her disagreement to the prior utterance by <\$1> (no positive thing to say about the material – *There's **also** loads of people I've never even heard of*). In other words her utterance with *also* may appear to express something additive to what <\$1> said, whereas in reality <\$2> is disagreeing with <\$1>. However we should be cautioned that it is not impossible to make a counter argument here: for instance one could argue that speaker <\$2> is simply being insistent about her justification of her argument with an additional supporting fact. In any case, as mentioned earlier, this is an interesting observation about the interactional use of *also*, which has been overlooked in many discourse studies of English. It is worth investigating further with larger and more relevant corpora, such as corpora of argumentation.

7.3. Concluding note on Chapter 7

In this chapter, the English data have been analysed in terms of their discourse features in two main categories, namely markers that signal discourse relationship, and markers that serve primarily interpersonal

functions. Based on the prime discourse features identified in the Burmese data in Chapter 5 and 6, equivalent realisations of six major discourse functions in English have been identified, and their findings and interpretations presented. However, the findings show that for some discourse functions, although equivalent realisations of the same discourse feature exist, there are significant differences between the two discourse marking systems. Discourse marking is primarily a lexical phenomenon in English, whereas Burmese uses a syntactically-oriented marking system of discourse. Such a difference in the linguistic structures has required us to adopt a methodology of comparative analyses in a non-conventional way. Moreover, when and how a discourse function is typically used may vary from language to language. This is a not an insignificant aspect which has to be examined systematically in terms of the cultural values associated with different language communities, much of which is beyond the scope of the present study. Nonetheless, a comparative analysis of discourse markers between Burmese and English has led us to useful conclusions about their discourse systems, as well as refreshing and novel ideas about directions for research in discourse studies and corpus studies involving non-western languages such as Burmese, which I will discuss in the next and final chapter.

Chapter 8

Conclusion

8.1. Summary of the study

In this study a corpus-based comparative analysis of discourse marking systems in Burmese and in English has been presented. Chapter 1 defined the main objectives of the study, namely identifying discourse functions typically associated with a set of lexical items in Burmese which belong to a particular word class called 'particles', and to find their equivalent realisations in English, which does not make use of the same linguistic system. Burmese particles do not have one-to-one equivalents in English, and their semantic values are highly context-dependent. Given that Burmese is significantly different from English, Chapter 2 presented a linguistic sketch of Burmese, including its historical and cultural backgrounds. Unlike many studies which tend to describe a less commonly studied language in the framework of well-established linguistic systems such as English, this study made an attempt to outline a linguistic sketch of Burmese on its own terms, which I hope may serve as a starting point for new models of discourse grammars of Burmese. For example, particles are simply defined as bound lexical items and presented in three categories primarily in terms of their positions in the utterance¹¹², and they also receive a separate category of description in terms of their discourse functions. Chapter 2 also highlighted significant features of spoken Burmese which reflect the greater differences from its written

¹¹² That is, instead of labeling them with a specific grammatical term, according to their syntactic functions.

counterpart in comparison to the differences between spoken and written registers of a western language like English. Significant characteristics of spoken languages were revisited in greater detail in Chapter 3, which focuses on a review of literature on discourse analytical models and discourse marking systems of spoken languages, including Asian languages, Germanic languages and Romance languages. This comparative survey of discourse studies alerted me to an early warning for the present research that discourse models based on western languages such as English are not entirely applicable to other languages that do not share the same linguistic system and cultural backgrounds/values, for example. Nonetheless existing literature on discourse markers provide a general framework for analysing discourse functions of Burmese particles, and setting criteria for the identification of discourse markers.

Chapter 4 described the corpus data used for this study, which involved first of all a challenging exploratory task of data transcription for Burmese: there is not yet any available concordancing computer software which can analyse texts in Burmese script. Transliteration in Roman script was a logical option, and a coding system was devised – a system that represents tones in Burmese which are phonemic. Nonetheless the transliterated texts only allowed us to do a partial machine analysis of the Burmese data using *Wordsmith Tools*, and the bulk of the analysis had to be done manually (i.e. for selection, identification and interpretation) because of the polysemous nature of particles, most of which are highly context-dependent. The English corpus was created by drawing data from existing available corpora and from banks of texts on the internet, and

selection was based on the Burmese corpus, with special attention to their comparability. For instance, both corpora include texts in spontaneous and pre-scripted speech. Given that Burmese is a syllabic language in which the notion of 'word' cannot be defined in the same way as it is defined for western languages like English (a problematic issue for corpus-based analyses of non-western languages like Burmese which I shall discuss again later), the corpus size for English was determined through a normalization process with a ratio of 1.5:1 for Burmese and English tokens. Chapters 5, 6 and 7 were devoted to detailed analyses of Burmese and English, in which findings and their interpretations were presented with supporting examples from the corpora.

8.2. Evaluation of the present study

8.2.1. Main research questions

This study set out to answer a main research question and its corollaries, which the findings have answered positively as summarized in Table 87 below, followed by detailed discussions in 8.2.2.

Research Question	Conclusions
Do the particles in Burmese serve discourse functions, and if so, what are the discourse functions typically associated with specific particles?	Findings demonstrate that four out of the six particles investigated serve important discourse functions and their semantic values are closely associated with their discourse functions (cf. 6.3 Table 83).
Once the prime discourse functions of particles are identified in the Burmese corpora, what are their equivalent realisations in English, if any?	Comparing two discourse marking systems which use different morpho-syntactic realisations has proven complex. However, when the key discourse features identified in Burmese are grouped into two categories, based on their functions, it is found that similar functions exist in English, but are realised differently. Whereas Burmese uses a syntactically-oriented discourse marking system, discourse marking is primarily a lexical phenomenon in English.
How can we justify the validity of the existing models of discourse marking systems which tend to involve prejudgments based on western languages such as English?	The existing models have provided the general framework for analysing Burmese discourse. However since they are mostly based on western languages such as English, their models are not entirely suitable for Burmese, a language with different linguistic as well as socio-cultural rules. Similarly corpus-based comparative studies tend to base their analyses on lexical items in frequency lists, which turn out to be unsuitable for comparing Burmese and English: Burmese discourse marking particles are bound-morphemes with syntactic distribution that are different from English, in which most DMs are free morphemes. Furthermore corpus-based approach uses 'word' as a basic unit of analysis which is not applicable to Burmese, as the notion of word has not been defined in Burmese, nor is it definable in terms of the western notion of 'word'.

Table 87. Research questions and conclusions

8.2.2. Summary of results: findings and interpretations

Upon investigation of a set of six particles in Burmese that were among the top 50 tokens on the frequency list generated by *Wordsmith Tools*, it was found that four out of the six particles serve important discourse functions, and that they satisfy the criteria for identification of discourse markers as outlined in Chapter 5.1. These findings support major discourse analytical models such as Schiffrin's (1987) most frequently cited functional modal, and its variants/modified versions (e.g. Redeker 1991, Fraser 1990, 1998, Schourup 1985, 1999 to cite a few, cf. 3.3). On the other hand, as anticipated in Chapter 3 and evidenced by the present data, Burmese discourse marking particles differ from DMs as described in literature reviewed (Schiffrin 1987, Redeker 1991, Fraser 1990, 1998, Schourup 1985, 1999 Brinton 1996, etc.): Burmese particles are all bound morphemes with no core meaning, which are post-positionally attached to other lexical items. As a result, they do not occur in utterance-initial position, as proposed by Schiffrin's model.

Following the key concepts of Relevance theory (Blakemore 1987), cultural aspects embedded in discourse (e.g. as suggested by Wierzbicka 1986, 1991) and interpersonal aspects as proposed in Maynard's (1993) model of Discourse Modality Indicators, the present findings evidence that Burmese particles serve important discourse functions. Prime functions of the Burmese particles analysed include topic marking (e.g. with the use of 'ka' cf. 5.3.3.2.1 – 5.3.3.2.3, with 'ka taw' and 'kya taw' cf. 5.3.3.2.8 & 5.3.4.2.2), expressing self-defence (i.e. protection

of face), reproach or complaint (with the use of 'ka leeh' cf. 5.3.3.2.7), expressing evidential meanings (with the use of 'taa' cf. 6.1.4.2.2.3). etc.

In Chapter 7, equivalent realisations of these functions in English were investigated under two main categories, namely, markers that signal discourse relationship (expressed with lexical items including *right*, *now*, *so*, *OK* and vocatives cf. 7.2.1) and those that serve primarily interpersonal functions (expressed with hedges such as *not really*, *kind of*, with evidentials such as *I guess*, *I suppose*, etc. cf. 7.2.2), based on the current literature and the selected corpora. The data offer clear evidence that these discourse functions are commonly found in spoken English, but that they are not realized through the same discourse marking system: Burmese uses a syntactically-oriented marking system whereas discourse marking in English is principally a lexical phenomenon. This is therefore problematic for a comparative analysis, and calls for a different comparative analytical method rather than using traditional analytical models of comparing like with like, as suggested by corpus-based translation studies which focus on comparative analyses (Løken 2004, Ramnäs 2004, Johansson 2004, Tognini-Bonelli 2004).

Be that as it may, the findings of the present study clearly indicate that Burmese particles do share central characteristics of DMs, and that the same discourse functions are realised differently in Burmese and in English, which answered positively to the first two research questions of this study in Table 87.

In addition, the findings reveal some particularities and differences regarding the discourse marking systems in the two languages. Given the

linguistic system of Burmese which is verb-final/clause-final, particles are post-positionally attached to NPs, VPs or whole utterances. As a result, Burmese discourse marking particles do not occur in the utterance-initial position, which is a common position of English DMs, and also a principal characteristic of DMs as described in the literature (cf. 5.1. DM criteria, Schiffrin 1987).

Unlike English, most Burmese particles do not have a core lexical meaning, and instead their meaning is to be interpreted in a discourse context (e.g. see the use of 'ka' in 5.3.3.2). On the other hand, some particles may serve a core grammatical function (e.g. VSMS 'taa' and 'teeh' in affirmative statements) as well as a discourse function, a characteristic which is in tune with Schiffrin's claim that DMs function on different (primary and secondary) planes [cf. 3.3]. Burmese particles are syntactically detachable, which seem to demonstrate that they share the same characteristic of DMs (Schiffrin 1987). However, some clarification of the term used are in order: some particles may be "syntactically detachable" in the sense that their presence or absence does not affect the propositional meaning of the utterance, but they may be syntactically obligatory in some syntactic structures as their absence can make the utterance grammatically unacceptable according to the norms of standard Burmese. For instance, in traditional reference grammars, VSMS 'taa' and 'teeh' are described as obligatory elements in affirmative statements and they are also considered variants of the same VSM. However, corpus findings show that they are not always entirely interchangeable, as a choice of one over the other signals different discourse meanings. In

English, on the other hand, all DMs analysed in this study are syntactically detachable and their absence does not impact the propositional meaning of the utterance.

What these findings show is that the existing analytical models for spoken discourse (Schiffrin 1987, Redeker 1991, Fraser 1990, 1998, Schourup 1985, 1999 Brinton 1996) including literature on Relevance theory (Blakemore 1987), cultural aspects embedded in discourse (e.g. as suggested by Wierzbicka 1986, 1991) and interpersonal aspects as proposed in Maynard's (1993) model of Discourse Modality Indicators have contributed valuable insights and provided us with general frameworks that are applicable to Burmese, or indeed to any language. However, since they are mostly based on western languages such as English, they are found to be not entirely suitable nor sufficiently delicate for Burmese, a language that is different from English not only in terms of linguistic features but also in terms of the cultures of its linguistic communities, which are closely reflected in language use. Furthermore, this study also calls for a more effective comparative methodology (similar to the model for a corpus-based translation studies as proposed by Tognini-Bonelli & Manca 2004) for the study of discourse markers when the two languages concerned do not share the same linguistic or discourse marking systems. Last but not least, this study also challenges the notion of 'word' as a unit of analysis for a corpus-based approach. Existing discourse models and models which underpin the creation of software algorithms for corpus tools have been mostly based on English, which depends on the notion of DMs as free-standing morphemes such as words

or phrases. Yet, Burmese is a syllabic language in which syllables may represent free-standing as well as bound lexical items, which are highly polysemous and context-dependent. As a result, the definition of 'word' is problematic for Burmese.

8.2.3. Limitations of the study

In this study, I have attempted to investigate the discourse marking systems in Burmese and in English, using a corpus-based approach within the framework of discourse analysis, and the focus of this study is on lexical items that serve as DMs. The starting point of analyses was the particles in Burmese, and needless to say it was impossible to analyse more than the chosen six within the limitations of the present thesis. Quantitatively, the number of discourse-marking particles may appear small, but the in-depth analyses required (analyses never carried out in this way before) revealed many valuable insights about the discourse features of the particles and the discourse marking system in Burmese.

In terms of corpus analysis, currently available tools are not suitable for analysing Burmese, a tonal language that uses non-Roman script. As a result, additional steps had to be taken to make the tools usable for the present study, which was extremely challenging and time consuming. In addition, given the polysemic nature of Burmese particles, manual counting is necessary, which runs a risk of human error. Nonetheless maximum care has been taken at every step and such mistakes are expected to be minimal and do not interfere with the interpretation of the findings.

8.2.4. Implications and future directions

The findings of this study, although rather limited due to time and space, strongly suggest that most particles in Burmese are likely to serve discourse functions, either as a single/mono-syllabic item or in collocation with other particles. For example, in my earlier research, it was found that the use of particle 'paw' [cf. N° 24 on the frequency list of the total corpus. Table 50] which is simply described in reference grammars as a "particle suffixed to a verb as emphasis", serves significant discourse functions such as "checking comprehension, soliciting comprehension, soliciting involvement from the interlocutor, or toning down the presentation of one's opinion or interpretation" (see further in Hnin Tun, 2003:84). Moreover, some lexical items with core meanings may function as auxiliary verbs (i.e. as opposed to main verbs) and express discourse meanings that are different from their core meanings. For example, in another piece of research¹¹³, it was found that 'kyiii' and 'lee', which literally mean *big* and *small*, can also serve as DMs: 'kyiii' is typically associated with negative stance whereas 'lee' tends to express a positive attitude, as in 'sheq sA yaa kyiii' *something shameful* vs. 'kkyiq sA yaa lee' *lovable, cute*. In the same vein (8.1) demonstrates how different discourse meanings are expressed when 'kyiii' or 'lee' co-occur with the same word 'kkweee' meaning *dog*.

¹¹³ Hnin Tun, S. 'Translating Burmese discourse particles' Presentation at IVACS 2006, Nottingham.

(8.1) [*Two neighbours disputing about their dogs coming to the other's compound*]

*Nauq nauun nin kkweee **kyiii** koo niin tteiiin. Nga kkweee ma **lee** koo ngaa tteiiin meeh.

*In the future, you take care of **your dog** (with 'kyiii'). I will take care of **my dog** (with 'lee').*

[AP:KaGyi]

It cannot be gainsaid that new and valuable insights can be achieved through corpus-based studies of the discourse system in Burmese, and that plenty more work needs to be done in this area. For instance, this study is mainly concerned with single item particles only, which are selected among those generated by *Wordsmith Tools*. Yet these particles in collocations reveal interesting and novel information about new DMs (cf. 'ka leeh' 5.3.3.2.7), which suggest that poly-syllabic or multi-item particles should be investigated on their own terms, similar to phrasal DMs in English such as *you know, I see, there you go*, etc. In addition, including prosodic features (such as Intonation Units as discourse-marking elements in Mandarin Chinese proposed by Tao, 1996) can no doubt give a more comprehensive picture of the discourse marking system in spoken Burmese.

This study was based on a Burmese corpus that was created using audio materials that are readily available, primarily for practical reasons. Although the present corpus is considered sufficient for the purposes of this research, as it is representative of the naturally-occurring spoken Burmese, and its variety of genres reduces idiosyncrasy to the minimum, it is undeniable that a more carefully designed corpus with a greater size and

a variety of genres could increase the reliability of the findings. It calls for a National Corpus of spoken Burmese which would be invaluable to our understanding of the discourse marking system in Burmese, and of spoken Burmese in general. Nonetheless, such a large-scale project is often difficult to realize in an immediate future. I would suggest therefore a programme of collaborative work in building several small-scale corpora which might ultimately lead us to the realisation of a National corpus of spoken Burmese. A parallel corpus of Burmese and English with identical texts in translation would also be of great value for comparative studies, which always lead us to a better understanding of both languages involved.

As explained in 7.2.3 analysing Burmese using a corpus-based approach presents challenges involving both analytical tools and methodology. Generally speaking, working with Burmese texts tends to be "problematic" but also challenging and gratifying, for the following reasons. First of all, Burmese, in particular the Burmese discourse marking system, has not been studied as widely as other western languages or 'bulk' Asian languages such as Chinese or Japanese, and therefore reference materials are still relatively few. Secondly, advances in information technologies are not easily applicable to Burmese: currently available concordancing tools are not compatible with texts written in Burmese script, and transliterations in Roman alphabet are not ideal representations of a tonal language like Burmese. Furthermore, an automatic word counting function is not yet applicable to texts in Burmese script, as the notion of 'word' in Burmese is not easy to define. As a result, discourse models that are based on the notion of 'word' are not entirely

suitable for analysing languages like Burmese which uses a syllabic system. In the same vein, comparing discourse markers in Burmese and English, which use two different discourse marking systems, calls for a new comparative analytical model. This study therefore challenges the notion of 'word' as a basic unit of analysis, as well as the suitability of existing discourse models for Asian languages like Burmese. I have proposed a fairly crude ratio measure as the only sensible procedure for typical corpus-linguistic tasks such as building comparable corpora, normalization, and so on. In the meantime, we must await technical advances which will obviate the statistical difficulties and minimize the need for manual counting which has intensified the labour involved in the present thesis. Last but not least, findings of this study strongly suggest a need for different types of reference grammar for Burmese such as a Grammar of spoken Burmese along the lines of the *Cambridge Grammar of English* (Carter & McCarthy 2006), with a separate section devoted to the particles in terms of their discourse functions. I am convinced that such reference material will complement the currently available works which focus on grammatical/syntactic functions, and will be of great value to our future researchers and learners alike.

8.3. Concluding comment

This thesis has been a long and arduous journey into new territory, but one from which I emerge with a new understanding of my own native tongue and how it relates to English, an understanding that can only benefit my professional development as a teacher and, in however small a

way, it is hoped, the growth of corpus linguistics into a more language-sensitive, globally-applicable science.

9. Appendices

9.1. Appendix A: Abbreviation

N	Noun
NP	Noun Phrase
Obj mkr	Object marker
Phr	Phrase
Pron	Pronoun
Ptcl	Particle
Subj mkr	Subject marker
V	Verb
VP	Verb Phrase

9.2. Appendix B

Transcription codes for Burmese

Consonants

For unaspirated and aspirated pairs of the same phoneme such as /k/ and /k^h/, a double consonant represents the aspirated consonant. On the other hand, words with the same pronunciation regardless of their orthography such as န and က for the sound /n/ will be transcribed with the same consonant sound /n/.

က	/k/	န, က	/n/
ခ	/kk/	ပ	/p/
ဂ	/g/	ဖ	/pp/
င	/ng/	ဗ, ဘ	/b/
စ	/s/	မ	/m/
ဆ	/ss/	ယ, ရ	/y/
ဇ, ဈ	/z/	လ	/l/
ည	/ny/	ဝ	/w/
တ	/t/	ထ	/th/
ထ	/tt/	ဟ	/h/
ဒ, ဓ	/d/		

Consonant clusters

၎ ဝဲ /-y/

၎ /-h/

ဝဲ /-w/

Glottal stops

Note: there may be a variation of orthography for each vowel sound, which is not included in this list. Burmese do not pronounce final consonants but for practicality, final consonants for all glottal stops will be expressed with the letter 'q' as in 'ppaq' for /ppaʔ/

အက် /eq/

အစ် /iq/

အတ်, အပ် /aq/

အောက် /auq/

အိုက် /aiq/

အိပ်, အိတ် /eiq/

အွတ် /uq/

Vowels and tones

Note: there may be a variation of orthography for each vowel sound, which is not included in this list. In general, short tone is expressed with one vowel, middle tone with two and high tone with three vowels. For vowels that are expressed with two letters in English transliteration such as /oun/, only the second vowel will be doubled or tripled in expressing tones. When the vowel /a/ is not pronounced in the full value, schwa 'ə' is marked with the capital A. For example, first syllable of the English 'ago' with this transcription system will be /A goo/.

Basic vowels

Short tone

အ /a/

အိ /i/

အေ /e/

အဲ /eh/

အော့ /aw/

အို /o/

အု /u/

Middle tone

အာ /aa/

အီ /ii/

အေ /ee/

အယ် /eeh/

အော် /aaw/

အို /oo/

အူ /uu/

Long tone

အာ: /aaa/

အီ: /iii/

အေ: /eee/

အဲ: /eeeh/

အော: /aaaw/

အို: /ooo/

အူ: /uuu/

Nasal vowels

Short tone

အင်္ဂ် /in/

အန် /an/

အိန် /ein/

အိုင် /ain/

အုန် /oun/

အောင့် /aun/

အွန် /un/

Middle tone

အင် /iin/

အန် /aan/

အိန် /eiin/

အိုင် /aiin/

အုန် /ouun/

အောင့် /auun/

အွန် /uun/

Long tone

အင်: /iin/

အန်: /aan/

အိန်: /eiin/

အိုင်: /aiin/

အုန်: /ouun/

အောင့်: /auun/

အွန်: /uun/

9.3. Appendix C

Examples from the Burmese data

5.3.1. 'A'

- 'A' attached to a V (non-stative or stative). → derived adverbs or attributes

kyiii- *to be big* → A+kyiii+ssouuun *the biggest, eldest*

(1) A ma ka A **kyiii ssouuun** laaa.

You eldest.

Are you the eldest?

[Inter.AT]

weee- *to be far* → A+weee+thiin (*at a distance*)

(2) Poun Poun ka A **weee thiin** teq nee teeh.

Name distance-learn attend

Poun Poun is taking a distance-learning course.

[FS:MinL]

5.3.2. 'mA'

- 'mA' followed by V+'buuu' in simple negative statements:

(3) Daa yii sA yaa **mA houq buuu**.

sth to laugh to be

This is not funny...

[FS:Beeh]

- 'buuu' preceded by another post-verbal particle, which serves as an auxiliary verb:

(4) ...**mA nee kkyiin taw buuu**.

live ('kkyiin' expresses want to, 'taw' expresses no longer)

...(She) doesn't want to live (in Mandalay) any more.

[FN.TT1]

- 'mA+V' followed by other particles for different types of syntactic structures:

(5) ...saa taaan **mA tiin kkyiin** haa ...

submit ...('kkyiin' nominalizes the verb 'tiin')

...the reason for (her) not submitting the thesis

[AP.Myita]

- (6) ...**mA** louq **kkyiin** taa twee
do ('taa' nominalizes the V)
...*what (I) don't want to do*
[FS:Miiin]
- (7) ThA baaaw **mA** kya **pee meh**
like ('mA' ...'pee meh' → *although*)
...*although (he) is not satisfied ...*
[Inter1]
- (8) Hoo **mA** thi **peeeh neh...**
know ('mA...peeeh → without...)
...*without knowing (that)*
[Inter3]
- (9) ...**mA** pyaaaw **taq yiin**
say ('taq' know how to, 'yiin' if)
...*if (you) don't know what to say*
[FS:MinL]

- '**mA**' as a weakened post-sentential particle '**meeh**' for irrealis (future) statements before the question particles '**laaa**' and '**leeeh**' for yes-no questions and information questions, respectively.

- (10) Beeh thwaaa **mA** lo **leeeh** hiin.
go
Where are you going, huh?
[AP:Ahlu]
- (11) ...baa pee ya **mA** **leeeh** siin saaa nee taa
give (V ya mA leeeh → *Shall... V*)
(I) was thinking: what shall (I) give (the doctor)...?
[DF:Sam]
- (12) Dii beeh loo pyaaaw **mA** **leeeh**.
say
This...how shall (I) say?
[Inter3]

5.3.3.1. 'Ka' with grammatical functions

- N/NP + 'ka' as equivalent of *from, by, through*, when N or NP is a place or starting point, or as attribute to a N as in N^1 from N^2 .

- (13) Beee **ka** luu twee mA kaq ya taw buuu.
People near (him) are no longer allowed to come near
[Inter1]

- (14) Ttauun **ka** ttweq laa taa ngaa mA kyaa thee buuu.
*It hasn't been long since I came **out of the prison**.*
[FS:MinL]
- (15) ...dA le ka beeh **ka** ssiin theq laa mhaaa mA thi buuu.
*(I) didn't know **where** that custom came **from**.*
[Inter:SJ]
- (16) Ma neq beeh A kkyeiin **ka** nee beeh A kkyeiin lauq A tti...
*In the morning, **from what time** to what time...*
[Inter3]
- (17) Thuu A louq **ka** ssiin laa kkaa niiii pyii.
*(He) will soon come back **from work**.*
[DF: ThuBeq]
- (18) ...A tteq taaan saaa meiiin ma A ppyiq **ka** nee shaaaw kya
thwaaa taw mhaa paw.
*...my status will fall **from a woman of upper class**...*
[AP:MiiinG]
- (19) Eiq yaa tteeeh **ka** mA tta naiin taw buuu.
*(He) couldn't get up **from bed** any more.*
[FN:TT2]
- (20) ThA tiin nauq koo zuq lai q yaa **ka** nee...
***From** following the (place where you can get) the
news...(changed situation to doing something else)*
[FN:SSS1]
- (21) thooo mwheee sseq ttooo yiiin **ka** ...
***from** continuing to knit (she looked up)...*
[DF:One]
- (22) ...eiin beee naaa **ka** A pyoo kyiii ...
*...the spinster **from** the house next door...*
[Inter:AT]
- (23) ...kkyaan wiiin naaa **ka** kauq ya taa.
*...I picked (it) up **from** near the fence*
[FS:Beeh]
- (24) ...ppA naq **ka** A sa ssA nyhaq A ssouuun
*...starting **from** shoes to hair clip*
[AP:KoKo]

- (25) Dii ppeq **ka** pyiii yiin baa sseq louq ya mA leeeh
*What shall I do when it's done **from** this side?*
 [FS:Beeh]
- (26) Thu ppeq **ka** ya teeh A mwee koo...
*...the inheritance **from** her side...*
 [AP: Myitta]
- (27) ...A mee ppeq **ka** laaa.
*...are (you) **from** the mother's (side or the father's side?)*
 [Inter:AT]

- 'ka' following a time expression, indicating a point of time in the past.

- (28) ...siq mA ppyiq kkiin **ka**...
*...**before** the war broke out...*
 [Inter1]
- (29) Hoo tA laaaw **ka** hoo ywaa mhaa ...
*A **while ago**, in that village...*
 [AP:KyeLeq]
- (30) ... kku na **ka** A ppe kaaa koo ssee kkaiiin laiq lo
*...because I asked him to wash my car **a while ago**...*
 [FN:MiThu]
- (31) Ma neq **ka** Ko Ko ppouun sseq teeh.
*Ko Ko rang up **this morning**.*
 [AP:KoKo]
- (32) A sa ka thuu mA louq peee buuu ssoo.
*Didn't (you) say **at the beginning** he didn't do it (for ...)*
 [FN:SSS2]
- (33) A yiin touun **ka** thuu ka ppouun kyiii...
***In the past**, he was a monk...*
 [FN:Alice]

- 'ka' as a subject marker "usually for emphasis or contrast, or to distinguish the agent from the patient" (Okell & Allott, 2001. p. 1)

- (34) Dii luu **ka** pyaaaw teeh.
***This guy** said.*
 [FN:Alice]

(35) ...thu thA miii **ka** leeh A ppee ko twe ya tee A kkyeiin mhaa
...when the daughter got to see the father...
 [FN: SSS1]

(36) KyA naaw **ka** eeh loo challenge twee koo...kyaiq teeh.
I like challenges like that.
 [Inter:SJ]

5.3.3.2.1. 'Ka' for topicalization:

(37) ...nee yaa lee **ka** **taw** theiq koo A pya lha teeh.
as for the place, it's shown beautifully.
 [FN:SSS1]

(38) Eeh dii kkweee ma lee **ka** **yaaaw**, shin yeh...
As for that dog, it's your...
 [AP:KaGyi]

(39) ...A Ko **ka** **nee** A kyaan pyu ya meeh paw.
...let's say you have to make a suggestion.
 [Inter2]

(40) ...meiin ma **ka** **nee** **pyiii** Maun ppyaq kyi paa.
...(it was) my wife, she said Darling, try to quit (chewing betel nuts)
 [Inter:SJ]

5.3.3.2.2. 'Ka' for introducing new information

(41) Daa **ka** Ko Kyaw Kyaw
This is Ko Kyaw Kyaw (name of a person).
 [FS:MiinL]

(42) Daa **ka** A kkyiin myooo. Yuu thwaaa byaa.
[Talking about fruits] This is the sour kind. Take it along.
 [AP:Kyeleq]

5.3.3.2.3. 'Ka' for emphasis or contrast

Examples with [*] indicate NP+'ka' that are not in an utterance initial position or subject of the sentence.

(43) *ThA Yeq* **ka** myiq yeh hoo ppeq kaaan lee.
Tha Yeq, that's on the other side of the river.
 [Inter1]

- (44) *Ngwe Byain Pyu ka* kA leee myaaa A tweq lee.
Ngwe Byain Pyu, that's for children.
[Inter3]
- (45) Myauq *ka* shaaa teeh ssA yaa.
(As for) monkey, it's quite rare. [Talking about hunting]
[FS:MiiinL]
- (46) Nes Café mhoun *ka* Iin GA Laan ppyiq taw mA houq
kkyee.
Nescafe, it is not made in England.
[DF:Samsara]
- (47) Koo yiin ttweq ya teh ne *ka* taw A pyaaw ssouun peeeh.
*The day I finished my term as a novice monk, that's the
happiest day.*
[Inter:SJ]
- (48) ThA miii kyiii to shiin pyu *ka* taw Mee Mee seiq taiin kya
ppyiq thwaaa taa peeeh.
*My eldest daughter's ordination ceremony, it went (well)
exactly to my satisfaction.*
[AP:Ahlu]
- (49) ...kyA naw A myiin *ka* taw kyA naaw ka aa hoo kku na ka
pyaaaw teh A taiin lee.
As for my opinion, I, um, as I said just now.
[Inter2]
- (50) ...thA baaaw *ka* leeeh thuu to 2 yauq koo twe see kkyiin
teh thA baaaw paw.
...the idea is, it's to have the 2 meet, that's the idea
[FN: SSS2]
- (51) **Thu Maun* yeh myeq nhaa A pya *ka* lee tA keh koo seq
ssouq teeh.
Showing of Thu Maun's face, he looks really disgusted.
[FN: SSS1]
- (52) *...*la saa ka* tauun *Thwe* tA wuuun tA kkaaa thouun mA
kouun naiin paa buuu.
...even the salary, it's more than enough to eat for Thwe.
[AP:Ko Ko]
- (53) A theq *ka* 50 tteq mA kyiii yiin taaw pyii kwaa.
For the age, it's fine as long as it is not older than 50.
[AP: Myita]

- (54) **Thu Maun* ssii mhaa **ka** *Khin Than Nu* yeh daq pouun leee
ka A myeeeh paa teeh.
Thu Maun always have *Khin Than Nu's* photo with him.
[FN:SSS1]
- (55) *KyA naaw to ssii mhaa **ka** pyaaw pweeeh A pyaaw pyaaw
sA yaa 3 yeq shi teeh.
*(For us), fun, for fun, there are 3 days when we can be
happy.*
[Inter:SJ]
- (56) *Trader to baa to mhaa **ka** thuu ka eeeh daa myooo kouun
meh haa koo eeeh dii ppouun kyiii kyauun twee baa twee
pee thuu ka lhuu lai q meeh.
*At places like Trader or such, he, the money that will cost
for that kind of thing (wedding), he would give (it) to the
monasteries or such.*
[FN:Alice]
- (57) *...average **ka** pyaaan myha kkyi in aaa ppyin ssoo yiin
eeeh dii A kkyei in mhaa...
...(for) average, to say in average, at that time...
[Inter3]

- 'NP+ka' for emphasis on the contrast, that is, information on the NP in comparison to something else, which may or may not be stated explicitly:

- (58) MA tuu buuu ssA yaa. Daa **ka** meiiin ma. Thuu to ka
pyaw teeh. Theiin mwe teeh.
*It's not the same Sir. This is a woman [=unlike man].
They are weak. Delicate.*
[FS:MiiinL]
- (59) ...thuu to naiin ngaan mhaa daa **ka** dii loo ppyiq nee teeh.
...in their country, this is it's like this.
[Inter:SJ]
- (60) ...pyiq sii **ka** theq meh ssoo taw keiq sa mA shi buuu.
*...as for (foreign-made) things, since they are inanimate, it
doesn't matter [as opposed to foreigners with flesh &
blood]*
[AP: KoKo]
- (61) TA keeh taaan luu youq maa A siq ka A Ba paa.
The real bad guy is me, A Ba [=not you].
[FS:Beeh]

- (62) Dii ssee **ka** taw kyA ma kA leee A tweek mo paa.
As for this medicine, (I'm checking thoroughly) it's because it's for my kid (=I don't do that for my patients)
 [DF:one]

- 'ka' as a topic marker, preceded by NPs ending with other post-positional particles:

- (63) A kku A koo A ko seiq tteeh **mhaa ka** hoo pyii thuu twee naaa ttauun theiq naaa mA ttauun buuu lo a Ko seiq tteeh mhaa... Eeh loo ttiin teeh.
Now, you, in your mind, um, people don't listen much, in your min, you think like that.
 [Inter2]
- (64) TV **mhaa ka** A keeh dA mii ya teh kaaa tawee koo sseq taiq loo loo pyaan pya taq teeh.
On TV, they usually show movies that got academy awards continuously.
 [FN: SSS1]
- (65) U pA maa ssoo lo shi yiin pyaaaw ya **mhaa ka** [nominalzied VP with future reference] pyiin nyaa taq A myooo thaaa twee ka poo pyiii naaa ttauun teeh.
For example, what we have to say is, educated men listen more [to the radio].
 [Inter3]
- (66) ...thA ti ttaa pyiii shauun kyiin kya ya **mhaa ka** [nominalzied VP with future reference] taw mi mi neh mi mi yeh kA leee kyaaan maa yeee
...what (you) have to pay attention and avoid is, yourself and your child's health
 [AP:Kyelq]
- (67) ...hoo teeh **mhaa ka** tiin kyaq teeh sii kaaan A taiin kyA naaw ka mA saaa ppyiq buuu.
...at the hotel, according to strict rules, I didn't get around to (chew betel nuts).
 [Inter:SI]
- (68) **Dii siq ouq su mhaa ka** yaq kweq ssoo yaq kweq A laiq mA houq buuu laaa.
In this military group, it goes by neighbourhood, doesn't it?
 [Inter2]

- (69) Kyauuun **mhaa ka** yaaaw saa thiin kkyeiin twee baa twee nyaa twee...Ppwin ttaaa teeh.
(What about) a t school , class time and such, it's open.
 [Inter3]

- 'ka' after NPs ending with 'neh' *with, and*; or 'A nee neh' *as, in the role of*; or 'ppo' or 'a tweq' *for*, etc.

- (70) KyA ma **A nee neh ka** leech mA pyaaaw mA ppyiq lo thaa pyaaaw laiq ya kkyiin ppyiq paa teeh.
As for me, I had to say it because I really had to.
 [AP:Ahlu]
- (71) Siii pwaaa yeee twee baa twee kya taw leech kooy **neh ka** A lhaan weee taw naa ttauun pee meh
For things regarding economics, although I listen to them [in a radio program] it's a subject I'm not familiar with... (literally subject distant from me)
 [Inter3]
- (72) Kauun ma leee neh miin thaaa **neh ka** kyaiq thwaaa kya pyii.
The girl and the actor have fallen in love.
 [FN:Alice]
- (73) ...thA miii kA leee **neh ka** Maun Hla Tan koo yiin yiin nhiii nhiii nee kkwin pyu nee taa koo kyA ma thA baaaw mA kyu buuu.
I don't like that (you) allow (our) daughter to hang out closely with MHT
 [FS:MinL]
- (74) Thwe neh Ko Ko **neh ka** OK pyii laaa.
Are you (Thwe) and Ko Ko an item now?
 [AP:KoKo]
- (75) A kku leech kyA ma to neh thuu to **neh ka** zaq laaan mA sa buuu.
Now also, we and them, (we) don't get along.
 [Inter:AT]
- (76) ...kkyeq kkyiin paaw laa **ppo ka** leeh theiq mA lweech buuu kooo.
... [for that kind of question] it's not easy to think of an answer right away (literally for the answers to appear).
 [Inter2]

- (77) ...thuun thiin laaan pya naiin **ppo ka** taw A ttuu loo aq teeh.
...it's especially important that (this person) be able to educate my children.
 [AP:Myita]
- (78) Youuun A **tweq ka** leeh A sii A siin twee 4 kku tauuun ya kkeh teeh...
...I also got 4 plans(ideas) for work(from this trip)
 [AP:Lehlain]

5.3.3.2.5. 'Ka' with phrasal verbs and idiomatic expressions

- (79) Kyauuun **ka** mA nee ya buuu. [**'kyauuun nee'** *go to school*]
(I couldn't) go to school
 [Inter1]
- (80) TV kya taw leeh miii aaa **ka** theiq mA laa buuu. Miii ka laa laiq mA laa laiq. [**'miii laa'** *to have electricity*]
As for TV, the electricity is not very reliable. Sometimes we have (electricity) sometimes we don't.
 [Inter3]
- (81) Mweee ttaaa taa ka leeh thA miii leee 2 yauq. TA yauq ka zA gaaa mA pyaaaw taq buuu. Naaa **ka** leeh mA kyaaa buuu. [**'naaa kyaaa'** *to hear*]
What (he) has is 2 daughters. One can't speak. She is also deaf (She can't hear either).
 [FS:MinL]
- (82) Luu **ka** taw daaaw tha ka seiq ka kyiii teeh. [**'seiq kyiii'** *to be high-strung*]
(He as a person) is quite high-strung.
 [Inter:AT]
- (83) ...tA kkaa tA yaan mhaa taw A thi seiq **ka** wiin laa pyaan pyiii [**'A thi seiq wiin'** *to be aware of*]
...sometimes, (she) became aware of (her own guilt)
 [AP:MinG]

5.3.2.2.7. 'Ka leeeh' as a DM

- as equivalents of *also, as well, too, in addition, or* in parallel clauses as both *Phr¹* and *Phr²*, or neither *Phr¹* nor *Phr²* (Okell & Allot, 2001:219).

- (84) ThA miii ngeeh **ka leeeh** A sooo ya wuun ttaan tA uuu. U Tun Kyaw **ka leeeh** A nyeiin saaa yuu ttaa taa ppyiq paa teeh.
The young daughter is a government employee. In addition, U Tun Kyaw is retired. [In this example, the meaning 'also' or 'in addition' does not make sense in English. The context explains that both of these two reasons make him have a small type writing business – typing legal documents for others since not everybody can afford a typewriter in Myanmar]
[AP: KoKo]
- (85) TA kkaa tA kkaa ssoo lo shi yiin A sooo ya koo paw ...eeeh daa koo shoun kkyaa taa myaaa teeh. Pe Kin **ka leeeh** thuu ka tA youq A sooo ya A kyaaaw twee pyaaaw teeh.
*Sometimes they criticize the government. **Pekin also** (their radio station) criticizes the government.*
[Inter3]
- (86) Thuu ka hoo laaan kyauun teeh luu shi lo leeeh daa **ka leeeh** nyaaa thwaaa taa paw naaw.
*It is **also** because there were **match-makers** that we got married.*
[Inter:AT]
- (87) -[Talking about a customer, a female doctor] Iin doo nii shaaa paa teiq shaaa yauun leee neh zA douun myin myin leee **ka leeeh** eiin dree ya laiq taa.
*(She) looks poised and graceful with her Indonesian batik and **her hair done up**.*
[DF:one]
- (88) Ko Tu lee Poun Poun koo thA ti ya taiin luun taiin Poun Poun ssii koo saa yeee meeh. Poun Poun **ka leeeh** Ko Tu ssii koo saa pyaan naaw. [*2nd person usage.]
*I (KT) will write to you (PP) whenever I think of you. You (PP) **also** write back to me, OK?*
[FS:MinL]

- (89) [Talking about a protagonist who had a motorcycle accident] Ssiin laa teh haa koo kkauun mhaa paq tiii kyiii twee neh paw. Dii **ka leeeh** leq twee mhaa pA laq...- Youq pyeq thwaa laaa. – Hoo diin mA pyeq buuu.
*When (he) was discharged from (the hospital), there was a bandage on the head. In addition, **on the arms as well a** plas...*
 - *He was disfigured?*
 - *No he wasn't.*

[FN:TT1]

- (90) [Talking about why she went to Yan Gon from Za Gain] TtA miin ssain teeh pyiii taw siq thaaa twee la kka mA peee peeh eeh dii loo kyA ma to **ka leeeh** ppA yaaa ppuuu thwaaa yiin neh kyA ma to ka lai q thwaaa taa paw.
***1st person usage**
*(He) opened a restaurant, and the soldiers came to eat there without paying, like that, **us too**, when we went (to Yangon) to visit pagodas, we stayed there. In the context she explained that she went to Yangon for a visit but ended up staying and working at her relative's restaurant for the soldiers. → express 'naturally' ?¹¹⁴*

[Inter1]

- 'NP ka leeeh' + ...VP ssoo/ssoo taw/taw, expressing the idea 'naturally', or lack of reason for a surprise.

- (91) [Talking about the husband who came back drunk, and the reaction of the mother-in-law] Eeh daa thu A mee ka lee thee yiin kauun teeh. Thee pA see. Niin thee thwaaa mha ngaa to wuq kyuq meeh baa nyaa neh. A ppwaaa kyiii **ka leeeh** pyaaaw taa paw A ma yeh.
*So his mother said it'd be good if he died. Let him die. Only if you died, we'll be free (from this trouble). So **naturally**, the old lady said that you know.*

[Inter:AT]

- (92) [Talking about the female protagonist who works in a company] A louq louq teh A kkaa kya taw thuu ka thu pouun saan kA lee **ka leeeh** ssA piin shee shee lee neh ssoo taw hoo yauq kyaaa lee twee kya lauq teeh myeq nhaa lee paw naaw.
*When she works there, her look is, **with long hair**, so **naturally**, it's the kind of look that guys like, you know.*

[FN:TT2]

¹¹⁴ There are examples of 'ka leeeh', which seem to express the idea 'naturally' but it may also be related to other particles in the utterance.

- 'ka leeh' used by speaker for expressing a reproach, complaint, or self-defense

- (93) [*A girl talking to her friend who is too traditional*]
 Paiq ssaan eiq **ka leeh** auq lai q taa. Naiin ngaan kkyaaa ppyiq sling bag leeh baa leeh tA louuun lauq weeh thouuun paa laaa.
(Your) purse is really out of date. Why don't you buy one made abroad (=modern one)?
 [AP:KoKo]
- (94) [*In response to the announcement of the daughter who was never interested in working since graduation*]
 Mee Mee **ka leeh** thA miii A kyauuun leeh thi thaaa neh. ThA miii ka lee paiq ssaan mA kkyaaan thaa yiin nee pA see. Kooy sei q wiin saaa teeh kooy waa thA naa paa teeh A louq koo louq nee ya yiin A loo loo pyaaw nee taq taa Mee Mee yeh.
Mum, you know me. I don't care about getting rich. I'm happy as long as I can do something I'm interested in.
 [AP:LeHlain]
- (95) [*A girl talking to her friend about going on a trip among girls, which her interlocutor thought was a bad idea*]
 Ma Ma Loun **ka leeh** thuu to mA aaa taw baa ppyiq leeh. Aye Kyi Ma to ma ma twee yeh nyii A ma twee shi taa pee h haa.
You MML, if they (the men) can't go, so what? There are AKM and the sisters.
 [AP:Kyeleq]
- (96) [*A woman to her fiancé who shows up unannounced at her modest apartment*].
 Ko Ko **ka leeh** mA laa paa neh ssoo pyaaaw mA ya buuu. Hoo beee paq wuuun kyii twee leeh thi kouun taw mhaa pee h.
 – Oo thi thi kwaa. Thi taw baa ppyiq leeh.
 – Ko Ko **ka leeh** pyaaaw ya theiq kkeq taa pee h. Dii mhaa ttaiin lee. Hoo Nyun Me A yiin touuun ka hoo u yiin ttee h mhaa eiin nghaaa nee kkeh taa paa.
Oh Ko Ko, I told you not to come to my place. What if the neighbours see us?
-Oh let them know. So what?
-Oh Ko Ko, you're so difficult. Sit here. Um I (NM) used to rent a place near the park...
 [AP:MinG]

- (97) [*Wife to the husband who wants to drink NesCafe he just received as a gift*]
 Ko Ko **ka leeh** kkeq taw taa peeoh. .. Ko Ko Japan to le
 laa yeee thwaaa ppo keiq sa U MaunMaun Thwin pyiii mha
 ssoo.
*Oh Ko Ko, you're really difficult. For you (KK) to go to
 Japan en a mission, didn't you say UMMT is a key person
 who makes the decision?*

[DF:Samsara]

- (98) [*A woman recounting the love story between her and the husband. Reported speech of a dialogue with the father at that time*]
 Eeoh daa kyaun A ppyee pee ya mhaa sooo lo A louq mA
 thwaaa taa lo. – Heh niin **ka leeh** baa lo mA thwaaa taa
 leeh. Hoo mhaa teeh thA ttee ka nin koo kkaaw nee pyii
 teeh.
*So (I) told him I didn't go to work because I was afraid to
 have to give my answer to (the man who declared his love
 for me).*
*- You, why don't you go (to work), your boss there was
 asking for you.*

[Inter:AT]

- (99) [*In response to the interviewer asking 2 things that are not covered in the current programs*]
 Kkyeq kkyiin paaw laa ppo **ka leeh** theiq mA lweeh buuu
 kooo.
*(To answer your question) To have ideas immediately, it's
 not quite easy naturally.*

[Inter2]

**- 'ka leeh' with a third person or an inanimate NP: speaker
 expressing a reproach or a complaint:**

- (100) [*A man trying to get on a bus*]
 Hiiin luu twee **ka leeh** myaaa lai q taa kwaa. Yuuu nee taa peeoh
Hmm (the bus) is quite crowded (literally too many people).
It's crazy.
- [AP:ChitGati]
- (101) [*A man thinking, when he was caught with a female stranger (Aye) on the bus by his fiancé's sister*]
 Hiiin nga koo twe thwaaa pyii. Hiiin Aye **ka leeh** nga leq
 koo A tiin ppeq ttaa taa peeoh.
*Hmm (she) saw me. Hmm (besides) Aye is hanging on
 tight to my arms (Here he seems to be expressing I wish she
 didn't do that/ Why did she have to do that now).*
- [AP: Chitgati]

- occurrences of 'ka leeeh' with a first or second person pronoun, in which 'leeeh' expresses the original meaning *also*

- (102) [Man to girlfriend]
Poun Poun **ka leeeh** Ko Tu ssii koo saa pyaan naaw.
(You) Poun Poun also, you write back to me, OK?[because I'll be writing to you often]
[FS:MiiinL]
- (103) [Father talking to daughter: she promised to marry his colleague to pay off his 'debt', which caused the (ex) boyfriend to have wrong ideas about her]
ThA miii ka Ppee Ppee koo seiq kkyaaan thaa see kkyiin
thA loo Ppee Ppee **ka leeeh** thA miii leee A paaw beeh
thuu mha A ttiin mA lweeeh see kkyiin buuu.
Just like you want me (Dad) to be happy, I (Dad) also don't want anyone to have wrong ideas about you.
[FS: MinL]
- (104) [Man talking to bachelor friend who is introducing other guests who are couples]
Kkiin byaaa ka thuu myaaa twee koo peeeh meiq sseq peee
nee teeh. Kkiin byaaa **ka leeeh** souun tweeeh neh meiq
sseq peee naiin auun louq ouuun lee byaa.
You are introducing other people (couples). You also should try to be able to introduce yourself with a partner.
[FS:MiiinL]
- (105) [Mother to daughter upon hearing the real price of a gift: she previously told her a lesser a price in front of the husband]
He eee ngaa **ka leeeh** theq thaa lha kkyii laaa auq me mi
theee teeh.
Huh, yeah, I was also thinking that was quite cheap.
[DF:Thubeq]
- (106) [Wife talking to husband]
Poun Poun ppeq **ka leeeh** A Ko Gyi ssaan da koo taq naiin
thA myha ppye ssiin peee nee taa peeeh mA houq laaa.
I (Poun Poun) also have been trying to do everything I could to have your wishes realized, haven't I?
[FS:MiiinL]
- (107) [Talking about how radio programs should educate people about politics instead of reacting with anger about personal attacks]
Tho thaaw nyaaa leeeh koy ppeq **ka leeeh** lee.
– Iiin.

- Pyaaan pyiii taw tA kkaa ssweeeh ssauun mhu ka pyaan pyiii taw ka louq ya mhaa.

But, from our side as well...

- *Yeah.*
- *Again, (as a reaction) we should try to make (things) attractive.*

[Inter3]

- (108) [*Woman talking about some in-laws: repeating the dialogue*]

Nga ssii **ka leeeh** laa tauuun taa mA houq buuu. Niin to ssii **ka leeeh** laa tauuun taa mA houq buuu.

*(They) didn't ask **neither** from you **nor** from us.*

[Literally: the word *also* is used in two sentences]

[Inter:AT]

- (109) [*Talking about how they chose the time to get married*]

KyA naaw to **ka leeeh** hoo kkA yiii thwaaa nee teh luu ssoo taw kkA yiii thwaaa neeh thwaaa teh A kkyeiin...

Since we are also, um, people who travel, the time we don't (have to) travel much...

[Inter:SJ]

- (110) [*In response to the village head's order that "since no man admitted to having the girl (who is mentally ill) pregnant, all the men in the village must rebuild her house and consider it helping a helpless villager in trouble"*]

Kyouq to **ka leeeh** dii thA baaaw neh louq nee taa.

We also are doing it with the same opinion.

(We also see the situation in the same way and that's why we are doing it)

[FS:Beeh]

- (111) [*Older woman from Sagain explaining how she met her husband during the Japanese occupation in Yangon*]

KyA ma to **ka leeeh** ppA yaaa ppuuu thwaaa yiiin neh kyA ma to ka laiq thwaaa taa paw.

We also were on a pilgrimage trip (=visiting pagodas) and we went with them.

(We wanted to visit pagodas so at the same time, we visited Yangon → doing 2 things simultaneously)

[Inter1]

- (112) [*An older lady upon meeting a new neighbour, a young school teacher: she knew about his profession because she saw the envelope addressed to him, which she received earlier by mistake*]

Daw Daw **ka leeeh** yee yee muun muun shi teeh ein nii
naaa kkyiin neh twe pA ya see lo ssu tauun nee taa.
*I was **also** wishing to have a neighbour who is
courteous/well-mannered (and now I do).*

[AP:KaGyi]

- (113) [*In response to the wife who said she was willing to do
anything to make him happy*]
Kyouq **ka leeeh** eeh dii Poun Poun seiq kkyaaan thaa ppo
peeeh A di ka ttaa teeh.
*I (for me) also, consider your happiness as the most
important thing.*

[FS:MiiinL]

- (114) [*During an argument between two people: older male who
has a dog with the same name as the younger female
neighbour. His sarcastic response to her challenge if he
was calling her a 'dog' when he called out 'her name'*]
Houq teeh. Ngaa **ka leeeh** dii A taiin peeeh thA baaaw ya
teeh.
*Yes. I **also**, think the same way/have the same opinion.*

[AP:KaGyi]

- (115) [*Talking about how men should also be responsible for
contraception*]
Ko Gyi Htin mhaa leeeh taa wuun shi teeh ssou taw eee Lu
Hla yee niin **ka leeeh**...
*Since Ko Gyi Htin is also responsible, yeah, Lu Hla, you
also... [are responsible because you are a man as well]*

[AP: KyeLeq]

- (116) [*Man, upon hearing a woman saying she does not want
more than 3 children, expresses his own wishes*]
Houq teeh A Loun yee. Ko Htin thA baaaw **ka leeeh** eeh
dii A taiin peeeh.
*Yes A Loun dear. My (Ko Htin) opinion is **also** like that. (= I have the same wish)*

[AP:KyeLeq]

- (117) [*Talking about the wife whom he rarely sees at home since
she's busy hunting with the money she inherited...*]
Eeh kyA naw mhaa **ka leeeh** A tteq A yaa shi tA uuu yeh
taa wuun koo paa puu twee yuu nee ya lo A kkyein poo
ssou taa **ka leeeh** shaaa paa lha paa teeh.
*Um, for me also, because I have to take (additional)
responsibilities of a higher official, I **also** rarely have extra
time .*

[AP:Myita]

- (118) KyA naaw **ka leeh** bouq da baa thaa paa peeoh teh.
He said: I too was a Buddhist.
- [Inter:SJ]

- (119) KyA naaw **ka leeh** hoo sii kA yeq louq ngaaan twee louq
 lai q thee teeh.
I also, um, even did some cigarette business.
- [FS:MinL]

5.3.3.2.8. 'Ka taw' as a DM

- NP + 'ka taw' for contrast or emphasis, as stated by Okell & Allott (2001:2)

- (120) [*Introducing a family member*]
 KyA ma yeh kkiin puun boo mhuuu Kyaw Theq Tun **ka taw** A nyeeiin saaa yuuu pyiii aaa laq kkyeeiin mhaa tA yaaa baa wA naa myaaa pwaaa myaaa aaaa ttouq nee pyii ppyiq paa teeh.
My husband KTT is retired, and during his spare time he's been doing religious work.
 [In a larger context, there is a list of other family members being introduced]
- [AP:Pan]

- (121) [*Wife to husband about marrying off the daughter*]
 Mi ba to wuq tA yaaa tteiiin myaaa kkyiiin ssoo taa shiin mhaq mi thee yeh laaa. Kyouq **ka taw** A mee tA yauq A nee neh A taq naiin ssouun kaa ssiin ya mhaa peeoh.
Have you forgotten that it's a duty of parents to marry off their children? For me, as a mother, I'll have to prevent that (daughter marrying with an inappropriate man) as much as I can.
 [Me as a mother, as opposed to you, father]
- [DF: MinL]

- 'ka taw' with the expression 'A mhaan (mhaan)' meaning *in reality*:

- (122) Eeh dii kA ne taw kkauun neeh neeh muuu teeh ssoo pyiii Maun Ne Myo tA yauq youuun ka saaaw saaaw ssiin kkeh paa teeh. **A mhaan ka taw** Aye Nan Da neh twe ppo peeoh ppyiq paa teeh kkiin byaaa.
Well today, MNM left work early saying he felt a little dizzy. (But) in reality, it's (in order for him) to meet up with Aye Nanda (the girlfriend)
- [AP:Chitgati]

- 'ka taw' in clauses with a superlative structure, typically expressed with a pattern 'A...V ssouun', or 'nauq ssouun' meaning *at last*.

- (123) [*In response to the interviewer's question " which program he listens to most"*]
 Naaa ttauun taa A myaaa ssouun ka taw BBC peeeh paw.
*What (I) listen to **most** is BBC.*

[Inter3]

- 'ka taw' in offering a definition or an explanation, typically expressed with lexical items 'ssoo taa', literally (*the thing*) *that is called...*post-positionally attached to the clause

- (124) Luu twee yeh kooy kyin tA yaaa ppauq pyaan yiin leeh kauq peeeh thiii nhaan twee mA ppyiq ttuun buuu. Kooy kyin tA yaaa ssoo taa ka taw 5 paaa thii la paw.
*If people violate good conducts, the vegetable crops get spoiled. **Good conduct means 5 precepts: thou shall not kill, thou shall not steal...***

[FS:Beeh]

- (125) Ssooo kyooo ssoo taa ka taw kku na pyaaaw thA loo paw. Thu yeh pouun paaan thA daan paw. Yii pya yiin tauun mha mA lha teeh A nee A ttaaa paw.
***The disadvantage** is as I just said. It's the look. Even when (you) smile, it doesn't look good.*

[Inter:SJ]

5.3.3.2.9. 'Ka nee' as a DM

- 'NP ka' indicating the NP as a place of starting point, or expressing English equivalents of *from, by, through, etc.* (Okell & Allott, 2001:2):

- (126) [*In response to the interviewer's question when she worked as a teacher in Poungyi village*]
 87, 87 ka nee 90, 90, 92 kku lauq ppyiq meeh ttiin teeh.
*It must be **from** 87, 87 to 90, 90, 92.*

[Inter 3]

- (127) [*Mother teaching the daughter how to "send love" to others: a Buddhist practice of praying for other people*]
 ... pA zaq ka taa wuun a ya pyiii pyiii yaaaw ssoo teh thA baaaw myooo mA ttaaa peeeh yiin tteeh ka nee aa youun saiq pyiii taw po naaw thA miii.
 ...*(when you do that) don't just do it as a duty (and) from the mouth only, but concentrate **from the heart** and send love. OK daughter.*

[AP:Lehlain]

- or as a subject/topic marker:

- (128) [*The guy gets drunk while the couple are alone in the apartment*] Eeéh daa ssoo lo shi yiin kauun ma lee **ka nee** A kkaaan tteeéh A tti lai q po peeé lai q teeéh.
So (literally If that was the case) the girl helps him to the bedroom.

[FN:TT2]

- (129) [*Talking about how the husband quit drinking*]
Ngaa loo A mee meiin ma mo lo kyi naiin taa baa nyaa neh pyaaaw taw thA naaa thwaaa pyiii thuu ka A yeq thauq taa **ka nee** ppyaq lai q taa A ma yee.¹¹⁵
(When the mother said) that it's because you have a mother like me, etc. he felt sorry (for the mother) and from drinking, he stops.

[Here according to the Burmese syntax, it can be argued that 'ka' expresses the meaning of 'from' as in 'stop from doing something'. However, given the context, I think 'ka' indicates 'drinking' as the topic of discourse: "it is drinking he stops doing it".]

[Inter: AT]

- 'ka nee' are followed by 'pyiii (taw)'

- (130) [*Talking about his opinions about foreigners and the west: "I wanted to go there once for the experience but..."*]
A ttuuu thiii kkyaaa thuu to A paaw mhaa shu daun tA kku **ka nee nee pyiii taw** kyi taa myooo mA shi paa buuu.
I don't look at them from a particular point of view.

[Inter:SJ]

- (131) [*The uncle comes to Mawlamyain to sell their fruit plantations*]
Eeéh daa neh thA tteeé thaaa tA yauq ka eeéh dii kauun leeé tA yauq **ka nee pyiii** eeéh dii kauun leeé tA yauk **ka nee pyiii** eeéh dii kkyaan ko weéh meéh ssoo pyiii weéh leeéh weéh lai q teeéh.
Then a rich guy, that one guy, that one guy, said he'd buy that plantation and he did buy it.

[FN: MiThu]

¹¹⁵ This is an e.g. of NP with particles other than those expressing subject marker or meaning *from*.

- (132) [*Talking about ordination ceremony*]
 TA keeh taaan koo yiin bA wa **ka nee pyiii taw** ppouuun
 kyiii bA wa koo kuuu meeh sso lo shi yiin eeh dii koo yiin
 ka tauq shauq wuq laa taa paw.
*Actually, if (you) are going to change from novice monk to
 a real monk, then you can continue as a novice monk ...*
 [fragmented speech and incomplete idea, which will be
 completed much later: that you can also continue as a
 novice and become a monk when you turn 20. instead of
 doing two different ceremonies]
- [Inter:SJ]

- (133) [*Beginning the narration*]
 Thuu to twee **ka nee pyiii taw** eeh dii thA kkyiinin yeee
 ssA yaa neh hoo diiin ka Tun Ein Dra Bo ka hoo A ssoo
 taaw eeh ssoo taw thuu to 2 yauq **ka nee pyiii taw** hoo A
 kkyiinin kkyiinin kyaiq kya teeh paw naaw.
*They, umm since this song writer and that one, um TEDB is
 a singer, those 2, um fell in love with each other.*
 [This is a good example of topic marking function, in
 contrast to subject marking: although the song writer and
 Tun Ein Dra Bo are both subject (the latter marked with
 'ka') it is 'thuu to' and 'thuu to 2 yauq' meaning *they* and
those 2 respectively that are marked with 'ka nee pyiii taw'
 indicating them as the topic of a larger discourse.]
- [FN:TT1]

- (134) [*Talking about the mail protagonist who's been going to the
 girl's house under various kinds of disguise*]
 Aaaw tA ne kya leech kya yaaaw kauun ma leee ka eiin **ka
 nee pyiii taw** hoo yee kkeeeh thiq taa ka pyeq kaaaw.
*Oh, one day, at the girl's house, um the fridge stopped
 functioning.*
 [This is also another good example of topic marking with
 'ka nee pyiii taw', which can be distinguished from a subject
 NP marked with a subject marker 'ka'.]
- [FN:MiThu]

5.3.4.1.2. 'TAW' in the negative structure

- 'mA V taw (buuu)', expressing English equivalents of *no longer, not
 any more*:

- (135) A koo gyi A yiin loo **mA houq taw buuu**.
Darling, you are no longer like before.
- [FS:MinL]

- (136) Hoo beeh thuu ka mha leeh laa **mA** kkaiiin **taw buuu**.
*Um no one asked (us) to come **any more**. (can't find original)*

[Inter1]

- '**mA V neh taw**' in negative imperatives expressing equivalents of *no longer, not any more*:

- (137) [Man to his servant] A yeq weeh pee taa to A myiii weeh pee taa to **mA** louq **neh taw**.
*Don't buy **any more** liquor or hors-d'oeuvres.*

[FS:MinL]

- '**taw**' post-positionally attached to a verb in a sentence-final position in positive imperative statements, express sing urgency, i.e. with an implied meaning *right away, now*:

- (138) ThA miii leeh piin paaan lha paa pyii kweeh.
 Keeeh eq **taw** eq **taw**.
sleep sleep
*You're quite tired now. Well (go) sleep **right away**.*

[AP:LeHlain]

- (139) Pyiinin yiin keeh pyaan yiin pyaan **taw**.
go home
*If you're tire, go home **now** if you want.*

[AP:Kagyi?]

5.3.4.1.3. 'TAW' with question particles

- (140) ...dii myee koo **beeh taw mha** kkyee mA kkyaa taw buuu.
*...I will **never** set foot on this land again.*

[FS:MinL]

5.3.4.2.1. a) 'Nee pyii taw'

- (141) Eeéh dii eh kkaan pweeéh tA kku ka pyaan leeh pyaan laa yaaaw eeéh dii A paaw ka **nee pyiii taw** beeh thuu leeh ssoo taw Tun Eiin Dra Bo ka **nee pyiii taw** veranda mhaa ttweq pyiii taw thuu ka – Thu nyii ma koo – Thu yeh nyii ma koo hoo diiin paw yauuun ma koo ttweq pyiii taw myhaaw taa. [1st NP ka *from*, a starting point]
*When (he) came back from that one reception, **from upstairs, TEDB**, came out to the veranda and she*
 - *Her sister (object)*
 - *She came out to wait for her sister, hedge for self-correcting, her sister-in-law*

[FN:TI1]

- (142) [*Recounting how the couple met*]
 A kyi kkyiin ssouun yaa ka **nee pyiii taw** A kku loo kkyiq
 thuu bA wa koo yauq kkeh kya kkyiin ppyiq paa teeh.
 [preceding clause indicates a point where things started]
*From the moment their eyes met, they became lovers
 like(they are) now.*
 [AP:MinG]
- (143) ...eeh dii loo ma yeq twee mhaa **nee pyiii taw** koo yiin
 wuq ya teeh. ['mhaa' – equivalent of English preposition *in, on, at* for place or time]
*(We) have to be have the ordination ceremony on odd days
 (as opposed to even days)*
 [Inter:SJ]

5.3.4.2.3. 'Ssoo taw'

- (144) Nauq taw thuu ka eeh dii mhaa beeh loo ppyiq **leeeh ssoo taw** Nain Nain yeh Nain Nain ka A daaw neh nee taa.
Then, he, what happened there is, NN, NN lives with an aunt.
 [FN:SSS2]
- (145) [*Talking about the assassination of Aung San, father of independence*] Beeh kkiq mhaa **leeeh ssoo taw** kya ma...
The era/time was...(literally: To say what era it was...)
 [Inter1]
- (146) Naan meeh twee leeeh myaaa **teeh ssoo taw** thA tiin
 ssauun paaa twee kaaaw ppaq ppyiq laaa.
*You said that there were only (a list of) names in the news.
 (So) then, what about news articles, do you read them?*
 [Inter3]
- (147) Auq ka haa twee ka taw mA mweee thee buuu paw. **Eeeh daa ssoo taw** kyA ma yauq kkA ma ka too shee yauun
 taw ...
The younger (kids) were not born yet. So since my mother-in-law made 'to shee' snacks for sale [she went around and sold them in the streets]
 [Inter:AT]

5.3.4.2.5. 'Demonstratives + taw': '(eeeh) dii taw', 'eeeh taw'

- (148) [*Speaker talking about having their own betel nut stand (shop). Interviewer asks:*]. Eeeh daa kyaun kuuun saaa taq thwaaa taa laaa.
 -Iiin **eeeh taw** kuuun thiii ka leeeh kooy nyhaq teeh ssoo taw kooy kooy taiin nyhaq taq teeh lee.

That's how you started chewing betel nuts?

-Yes, so since I also know how to chop betel nuts, I chop them myself (for my shop)

[Inter:AT]

Note. → Here, in the context, the second speaker seems eager to get back to her original story about how they set up the betel nut stall, after being interrupted about her betel nut chewing habit.

5.3.4.2.6. Other frequent left collocates of 'taw'

- (149) ThA miii leee A louq **thwaaa taw** mA laaa.
My daughter, are you going to work now? → main V
 [AP:MinG]
- (150) Eee lee 2 paq lauq A naaa **ya taw** baa ppyiq leeeh heh.
Yeah, if we get 2 weeks' break, what about it? → main V
 [ibid]

5.3.4.2.7. a) Right collocates of 'taw' that are syntactically independent from 'clause+taw'

- (151) A kku kya taw leeeh Miq Sa Ta Gi Ta mhaa thuu ttee thaaa soo laa meee teh A kkyaa **taw eeeh** ppyiq kkyiin taw Nain Nain mhaa thuu ngeeh kkyiin ta yauq shi teeh.
Now when (she) came to Mr. Guitar (coffee shop) to ask for the rich guy (main protagonist), um, there by chance, NN has a friend... [Here 'eeeh' is used as a hedge]
 [FN:MiThu]
- (152) [*Talking about how she didn't know that her future husband was not Muslim*]
 Thee kkyaa **taw mA** thi buuu.
I didn't know for sure, (i.e. I sort of suspected but).
 [Inter:AT]

- (153) [*Talking about life in a monastery*]
 ...mA neq mA neq tta ppyiii **taw mA** neq ssoo A saaaw
 kyiii tta ya teeh.
*...in the morning, we used to get up **and in the morning**, we
 had to get up really early.* [mA neq in the morning]
 [Inter:SJ]
- (154) [*Girl talking to a friend who stops by around lunch time*]
 Shwe Yi ka A kku peeeh ngA pi yee pyaaw **taw mA** lo.
*I was just about to make some 'nga-pi' dish (implying she
 should stay for lunch).* ['V mA lo' going toV]
 [AP:Kyeleq]
- (155) [*Interviewer asking about radio programs*]
 Nauq **taw hoo** tA kkyaaa baa tuu taa twee shi thee leech.
***And, um**, what other similarities are there? ['hoo' used as a
 hedge]*
 [Inter3]
- (156) [*Talking about how she sent money to the husband in
 prison*]
 ...eeeh dii nghA pyaaw thiii A kkauun tteeh koo tteh.
 Tteh pyiii **taw dii loo** peiq pyiii taw...
*...put (the money) in the hollow part of the banana. **After**
 putting that in, you close it **like this**, and then...*
 [Inter:AT]
- (157) [*Reported speech of a dialogue: male protagonist to female
 protagonist in an apartment*]
 ...kku A kkyeiin mhaa teh tA kku kku saaa pyiii **taw tA**
 kku kku thauq ya mhaa paw lee.
*...(he) said, "now we should be eating **something and**
 drinking something". [tA kku kku something]*
 [FN:TT2]
- (158) [*Talking about Buddhist ordination ceremony*]
 ...ssaiiin waiiin neh ppyaaw ppyee ttaa **taw tA** ywaa
 louuun ka leech ssuu nyaan nee kya taa paw.
*...**as** the orchestra was entertaining, **the whole village** was
 having fun.*
 [tA ywaa louuun the whole village]
 [Inter:SJ]
- (159) [*Talking about a favorite radio talk show*]
 ...daa koo naaa ttauun kkyiin **taw tA** kkyaaa A louq twee
 baa twee shi leech pyiq ttaa pyiii...
*...**since** I want to listen to that (show), even if I have **other**
 work and such, I put them aside and...* [tA kkyaaa other]
 [Inter3]

5.3.4.2.7. b) Right collocates of 'taw' that are post-positionally attached to 'taw' with leeeh

- (160) [*Young woman speaking upon being invited by a friend and father to join them for lunch*]
 Keeeh Ba Gyi Aun ka paa pyaaaw nee **taw leeeh** mA nee
 thaa taw buuu paw. Saaa ya taw mha paw.
*Well, since Uncle Aun is **also** insisting, I can't resist. I'll
 have to join you now.*
- [AP:Kyeleq]

- (161) [*Woman bragging about her future son-in-law*]
 A kku ssoo yiin lee Snow White koo ssiin ttaa laiq taa bA
 dA myaaa kyauq seiiin nii laa tA ssiin saa sii. Nauq pyiii
taw leeeh ngwee koo kyaiq thA loo thouuun.
*Now, you know, (he) gave Snow White one set each of ruby,
 jade, sapphire. **In addition**, he lets her spend money as she
 wishes.*
- [AP:Pan]

- (162) [*Man asking an old man who makes his living by repairing umbrella: how much do you earn a day?*]
 A louq paaa teeh A kkaa A taw koo shauq naiin paa mha 3-
 4 kyaq ya teeh. TA kkaa tA lee **taw leeeh** 5 kyaq 6 kyaq ya
 paa teeh lee.
*When there is not much work, only if I walk a lot (in order to
 find clients), I got about 3-4 K. **But** sometimes I got 5-6 K.*
- [AP:Ahlu]

- (163) [*Mother in response to a daughter getting impatient to get a chance to perform in a radio play*]
 Iiin nauq **taw leeeh** ppyiq laa mhaa paw kweeh.
Well, later [?] your chance will come, you know.
- [AP:Lehlain]

Note: It is also hard to translate here. My interpretation, based on intuition and other examples of 'leeeh' with different collocates, is that the speaker seems to be comforting her daughter, saying something like "even if it doesn't happen now..."

- (164) [*Man to his wife, talking about her father who just died*]
 Ko Gyi Ppone mA shi **taw leeeh** A Ko Gyi shi teeh Poun
 Poun.
***Even if** KGP (your dad) is gone, you have me (Ko Gyi), my
 dear Poun Poun.*
- [FS:MinL]

- (165) [*Mother trying to convince the daughter to try out the new job that she was just offered at the broadcasting station*]
 TA nɦiq taan thii 2 nɦiq taan thii taw louq kyi paa ouuun.
 Nauq mA pyaaaw buuu ssoo **taw leeh** tA myooo paw
 kweeh.
*Try to work for a year or two, my daughter. **If by then***
*you're (**really?**) not happy, that'd be a different story. OK?*
 [AP:LeHlain]

6.1.1. TAA as a marker for nominalizing verbs

- (166) Ma houq **taa** louq kkeh yiin
*If one should do **something wrong***
 [cf. Okell & Allott, 2001:94]
- (167) [*Interviewer to informant*] Kyaiq **taa** pyaaaw lo ya teeh.
*(You) can talk about **anything** you want.*
 [Literally: *what you want*]
 [Inter?]
- (168) [*Talking about how he got bit by the dog*]
 Thu leeh piiin paaw teq niin mi **taa** lan pyiii kkeeh lai q taa.
***When** I accidentally stepped on his neck by mistake, he got*
*scared and bit me. [Literally: *Accidentally stepping on his**
*neck...]*¹¹⁶
 [FS:Beeh]

6.1.4.1. TAA and TEEH in reference grammars

- for emphasis, or when correcting the hearer's mistaken view:
 (169) MA houq buuu. PPwin taaa **taa**.
No! I did open it → [correcting a wrong impression]
 [Okell, 1969:94]
- as the preferred form before the phrase particles 'paw' 'peeoh' 'paa' 'koooh'
 (170) Twe kya thee **taa paw**.
See you again.
 [ibid:95]

¹¹⁶I would argue here that in (167) and (168), like Okell & Allott's (166), 'taa' following VPs still serves as a particle for nominalizing the V clause, giving the literary meaning in the brackets. By doing so, the speaker is saying that the clause ending with 'taa' is the topic of the discourse that s/he wants to draw the attention to. However, it is more appropriately interpreted with 'when' in English discourse.

6.1.4.2.2.1. a) Collocates of TAA & TEEH with PAA

- (171) Thu mA yaaa **paa** laa ouuun mA laaa.
*Will his wife come **too**?*
[Okell & Allott, 2001: 95]
- (172) TtA miiin mA saaa taw **paa** buuu.
I won't eat after all.
[ibid]
- (173) [*Woman to a nurse, who's telling her about the importance of family planning*]
Houq **paa teeh** SsA yaa ma yeeh.
You're right, SsA yaa ma (polite address term)
[AP:Kyeleq]
- (174) [*Employee to boss: in response to boss's question if the income and expenses match*]
Kaiq **paa teeh** SsA yaa. A myaq poo ya meeh.
Yes, they do, SsA yaa (polite address term). We're going to get more profit.
[FS:MinL]
- (175) [*Boy to girlfriend*]
Wuuun neeh kyee kweeeh nee meh Poun Poun yeh kkaan saaa mhu koo A Tu kooy kkyiiniin saa mi **paa teeh**. Lu bA wa koo mA luun ssaan naiin teeh douq kka koo luu thaaa taiiin kyoun twe kya ya taa dA mA taa paa peeh Poun Poun yeeh.
I (Ko Tu) feels the pain you (Poun Poun) are suffering. It's a law of life that we have to encounter inevitable sufferings, you know Poun Poun.
[FS:MinL]
- (176) [*Man to another man, who storms in, yelling as he is looking for his wife*] Theiq aaw mA nee neh. Beee ka kyaaa mA kauun paa buuu. Eee eee pyaaaw leeh ya **paa teeh**. Keeeh baa ppyiq kkyin leeh.
*Don't yell. It'd be embarrassing if the neighbours heard you. **You can speak calmly**. So what do you want?*
[FS:MinL]
- (177) Win Thi DA ko kyA ma haa eiin tteeh koo tweeh kkaaw kkeh **paa teeh**.
I helped Win Thi Da walk back into the house.
[AP:Pan]

6.1.4.2.2.2. HOUQ collocates with TAA

(178) [*Man talking to fiancée during his surprise visit to her place. The fiancée does not want him to meet the mother as she is embarrassed. When the mother calls out from the kitchen, he asks her if that is her mother. The fiancée responds:*]

Oo **mA houq taa**. Baa mha mA taaw paa buuu.
Oh of course not! We are not related at all.

[AP:MinG]

(179) [*Talking about a brother who used to work as a Japanese interpreter during the war*]

... thuu ka taw hoo paiq ssaan theiq ya teeh lo taw **mA houq paa buuu**.
...he, he, not that he got a lot of money (being an interpreter).

[Inter1]

(180) Haa houq **taa paw** kwa. Miiin pyaaaw taa houq teeh.
Yeah, that's right my friend. What you said is true.

[AP:KyeLeq]

(181) [*Man explaining why he was late for the dinner party*].
Houq teeh **byaa**¹¹⁷. ZA niii kkyaaaw A lha pyiin taa saun nee lo...

Yeah. It was because I had to wait for my beautiful wife who was trying to doll up

[FS:MinL]

6.1.4.2.2.3. TAA & TEEH with evidentials

(182) [*Talking about how the male protagonist woos the girl*]
Sa laiq taw thu eiin koo A yiin thwaaa **taa**.

When he started wooing her, he went first to her house.

[FN:MiThu]

6.1.4.2.3. TAA & TEEH in turn positions

(183) <\$2> ThA kkyiinin yuuu yuuu **taa**.
(She's) fanatic about music.

<\$1> ThA kkyiinin yuuu yuuu teh luu ssoo taw . . .
Since (she's) someone who is a fanatic about music . . .
.[continues narration]

[FN:TT1]

¹¹⁷ 'Byaa' is a short form of 'kkiin byaa' an address term used by men, an equivalent of 'Sir, Madam' at the end of the utterance in English. Female equivalent is 'shiin'.

9.4. Appendix D
Tables for Chapter 5 & 6

	Token	Propositional meaning
1.	A	
2.	MA	
3.	KA	
4.	TAW	
5.	TAA	
6.	TEEH	
7.	KOO	
8.	LEEEH	
9.	KYA	
10.	TWEE	
11.	MHAA	
12.	TEH	
13.	DI	
14.	YA	
15.	NEE	
16.	NEH	
17.	BUUU	
18.	PYII	
19.	LO	
20.	PAA	
21.	THA	
22.	SSOO	
23.	TA	
24.	TO	
25.	DAA	
26.	THWAAA	<i>to go</i>
27.	PYAAAW	<i>to say, speak, tell</i>
28.	LOO	
29.	PEEEH	
30.	LEEE	
31.	LAAA	
32.	HOUQ	<i>to be true</i>
33.	BAA	
34.	LAA	<i>to come</i>
35.	LEE	
36.	LAIQ	<i>to follow</i>
37.	SHI	<i>to have</i>
38.	LOUQ	<i>to do, make</i>
39.	YIN	
40.	PPYIQ	<i>to happen, to be</i>

Table 1. Tokens that occur in all 3 categories among the first 50 on the frequency list for Burmese corpora [based on Table 50¹¹⁸]

	Clearly bound morpheme: no propositional meaning
	Joint-functional: propositional meaning + bound morpheme
	Clearly free-standing morpheme with propositional meaning

Table 2. Explanation of color codes for Table 1

¹¹⁸ Table 50 includes items among the first 30 only that occur across all categories.

9.5. Appendix E

Frequency lists of narrative sub-corpora in Burmese & English

FN:SSS1– Total: 7, 529			
N ^o	Item	Freq.	%
1.	a	210	2.79
2.	teeh	209	2.78
3.	ka	201	2.67
4.	ma	172	2.28
5.	eeeh	146	1.94
6.	taw	133	1.77
7.	taa	94	1.25
8.	thu	93	1.24
9.	mhaa	91	1.21
10.	buuu	83	1.10

Table 3. Top 10 frequency list of film narrative in Burmese [FN:SSS1]

FN: SSS2 – Total: 10, 231			
N ^o	Item	Freq.	%
1.	ka	292	2.85
2.	teeh	244	2.38
3.	a	228	2.23
4.	ma	215	2.10
5.	eeeh	211	2.06
6.	taw	187	1.83
7.	taa	138	1.35
8.	koo	124	1.21
9.	thuu	124	1.21
10.	dii	123	1.20

Table 4. Top 10 frequency list of film narrative in Burmese [FN:SSS2]

FN: TT1 – Total: 6, 585			
N ^o	Item	Freq.	%
1.	leeh	181	2.75
2.	ka	172	2.61
3.	ma	157	2.38
4.	taw	157	2.38
5.	eeeh	119	1.81
6.	thuu	112	1.70
7.	ssoo	111	1.69
8.	pyiii	106	1.61
9.	paw	102	1.55
10.	koo	100	1.52

Table 5. Top 10 frequency list of film narrative

in Burmese [FN:TT1]

FN: TT2 – Total: 2, 939			
N°	Item	Freq.	%
1.	ka	95	3.23
2.	paw	84	2.86
3.	a	65	2.21
4.	taw	63	2.14
5.	ma	58	1.97
6.	thuu	56	1.91
7.	leeeh	52	1.77
8.	eeeh	48	1.63
9.	thwaaa	48	1.63
10.	dii	43	1.46

Table 6. Top 10 frequency list of film narrative in Burmese [FN:TT1]

FN: MiThu– Total: 9, 247			
N°	Item	Freq.	%
1.	ka	272	2.94
2.	ma	240	2.60
3.	a	210	2.27
4.	eeeh	192	2.08
5.	taw	181	1.96
6.	lee	168	1.82
7.	kauun	165	1.78
8.	koo	147	1.59
9.	taa	135	1.46
10.	neh	130	1.41

Table 7. Top 10 frequency list of film narrative in Burmese [FN:MiThu]

FN: Alice – Total: 17, 065			
N°	Item	Freq.	%
1.	a	596	3.49
2.	ka	251	1.47
3.	teh	198	1.16
4.	taa	165	0.97
5.	eeeh	159	0.93
6.	paw	155	0.91
7.	twee	150	0.88
8.	lee	145	0.85
9.	taw	141	0.83
10.	koo	136	0.80

Table 8. Top 10 frequency list of film narrative in Burmese [FN:Alice]

Far from home – Total: 30, 167			
N°	Item	Freq.	%
1.	you	394	1.31
2.	I	323	1.07
3.	to	202	0.67
4.	it	151	0.50
5.	the	145	0.48
6.	a	132	0.44
7.	what	122	0.40
8.	that	94	0.31
9.	it's	88	0.29
10.	is	84	0.28

Table 9. Top 10 frequency list of radio drama in English [RD:FFH]

Man with hairdryer – Total: 24, 780			
N°	Item	Freq.	%
1.	I	597	2.41
2.	and	377	1.52
3.	the	373	1.51
4.	it	278	1.12
5.	to	254	1.03
6.	you	253	1.02
7.	a	215	0.87
8.	of	144	0.58
9.	that	140	0.56
10.	he	124	0.50

Table 10. Top 10 frequency list of radio drama in English [RD:MWH]

Sound barrier – Total: 36,711			
N°	Item	Freq.	%
1.	I	503	1.37
2.	the	373	1.02
3.	to	343	0.93
4.	and	290	0.79
5.	she	187	0.51
6.	a	174	0.47
7.	of	163	0.44
8.	it	153	0.42
9.	was	135	0.37
10.	that	134	0.37

Table 11. Top 10 frequency list of radio drama in English [RD:SB]

SBCC:Stories – Total: 18,327			
N°	Item	Freq.	%
1.	and	555	3.03
2.	the	398	2.17
3.	I	332	1.81
4.	to	256	1.40
5.	was	221	1.21
6.	a	204	1.11
7.	you	186	1.01
8.	it	169	0.92
9.	in	152	0.83
10.	of	152	0.83

Table 12. Top 10 frequency list of narratives in English [N:Stories]

SBCC: Jokes – Total: 12, 518			
N°	Item	Freq.	%
1.	and	250	2.00
2.	the	160	1.28
3.	I	139	1.11
4.	to	120	0.96
5.	was	99	0.79
6.	a	95	0.76
7.	that	91	0.73
8.	of	77	0.62
9.	you	73	0.58
10.	it	72	0.58

Table 13. Top 10 frequency list of narratives in English [N:Jokes]

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