"Oh yeah, one more thing: It's gonna be huge."
On the use of *oh yeah* in journalistic writing

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Abstract

This paper investigates the use of *oh yeah* in written prose found in American journalistic articles using corpus data. It demonstrates that such uses are a recent phenomenon that have risen in frequency starting at end of the 20th century. These new written functions are adapted to the written medium, but still resemble how *oh yeah* is used in speech. These developments contribute further insights to the changes occurring in journalistic writing. Furthermore, this paper concentrates on how *oh yeah* is adapted into journalistic writing to inject an interpersonal flair into the articles in which it is used. The timing of these developments also indicates a later wave of change to journalism that has been until now under-discussed.

Keywords: discourse markers, journalism, colloquialization, indexicality, (inter)subjective stance

1. Introduction

The second half of the 20th century has been identified as a crucial period for changes in English writing across various genres (cf. Mair 2006; Leech et al. 2009). One specific area in this field of research that is starting to gain traction involves the increased use of dialogical inserts, interjections, and discourse markers (DMs) in published writing (cf. Rühlemann & Hilpert 2017; Tottie 2017). This study of such phenomenon brings to light recent developments in the colloquialization of writing that past studies have largely overlooked. Through the analysis of how conversational DMs are used in written prose, questions arise about our current understanding about the spoken – written language divide. For example, the changes that have occurred in 20th and early

21st century written English appear to be blurring the border between what we see as typically written and what is typically oral language. Furthermore, this ambiguity has only accelerated due in large part to the rapid shift from a print-based to digital-based culture of writing (cf. Baron 2000; Crystal 2001; Thurlow & Mroczek 2011; Zappavigna, 2012; Barton & Lee 2013).

This paper addresses changes to writing style of American English journalistic texts from the 20th century to today by investigating the developments of the DM *oh yeah* in journalistic prose. Moreover, this paper analyzes not only the ability of DMs to be adapted and evolved in specific text-types (cf. Aijmer 2013, 2015), but it also brings to light new ways in which DMs can develop new (inter)subjective functions (cf. Traugott 2010) that have been adapted to the written medium. Furthermore, considering that this is a corpus-based study that looks at diachronic change in how *oh yeah* spreads and develops intersubjective stance taking functions, this study adopts a usage-based outlook (cf. Diessel 2017).

As a DM, *oh yeah* has been largely overlooked. However, it will be demonstrated that it is developing genre-specific functions in journalistic writing like as is the case with DMs such as *well* and *like*, and to a lesser extent *you know* as exemplified by example (1).

(1) WHICH LEAVES US WITH a final but very important question. When will the ESC promise pay off? When can we expect something more from them than arcane articles in medical journals

(though repeatedly portrayed as miracle breakthroughs in the *New York Times*)? **You know, like, well**, actually making sick people better? (COHA Magazines: American Spectator: 2007, emphasis added)[1]

Despite receiving less attention, *oh yeah* is also found in similar written prose functions in journalism, such as in (2).

(2) Still to come are the Dardenne brothers, also in search of their third Palme, along with Ira Sachs, Bong Joon Ho, Xavier Dolan, Elia Suleiman — and, **oh yeah**, that Tarantino guy, who should be taking Cannes by storm on Tuesday. (TheWrap.com: May 2019)[2]

In (2) *oh yeah* is used rhetorically in monologue writing in a way that makes the text feel colloquial-like, even though its function has been adjusted to the parameters of writing. Examples (1) and (2) indicate that DMs can be used to highlight the author's subjective stance while also indexing that one is writing casually. (1) also serves as an alignment-seeking device, in which the author shares his/her stance with the readership by exploiting common in-group language (cf. Brown & Levinson 1987).

In addressing these developments of the DM *oh yeah* in journalistic writing, this paper sets out so answer the following questions. When and in what ways does it transfer to journalistic prose? Are these written functions

[1] For the sake of clarity, emphasis has been added to all the examples provided in this chapter.

[2] This article comes from an online entertainment news article: < https://www.thewrap.com/cannes-halfway-point-how-did-elton-john-become-king-of-the-fest/>

conventionalized or just creative uses by isolated authors? What do these changes tell us about the development of DMs in general? Finally, what are the implications for the study of colloquialization as a whole?

Section 2 of this paper gives a review of relevant literature. It surveys studies of DMs in general, *(oh) yeah* specifically, and changes in 20th and 21st century journalistic writing. Section 3 gives the reasons for selecting *oh yeah* for a case study and the corpora chosen for investigation. Section 4 analyzes the concordances from the journalistic sub-corpora of the Corpus of Historical American English (COHA) (Davies 2010). It begins by analyzing its diachronic development before giving a qualitative analysis of its functions in journalistic prose. Similarly, section 5 analyzes data from the USA sub-corpus of the News on the Web corpus (NOW) (Davies 2016). It verifies whether the written functions of *oh yeah* have evolved or stayed the same in the 2010s. Section 6 contextualizes the results of this study with other findings in colloquialization. Section 7 offers the final conclusions.

2. Review of relevant literature

The following section reviews past literature that is relevant to this paper. Section 2.1 defines DMs generally and discusses the importance of looking at them in different discourse types. Section 2.2 looks at previous literature

on *oh (yeah)* specifically. Section 2.3 gives an overview of colloquialization and its effects on journalistic writing.

2.1. DMs and multifunctionality

Traugott & Dasher (2002) demonstrated the development of present day DMs (see also Traugott 1989, 2010). This includes how DMs including *in fact*, *actually* and *well*, evolved from being just adverbials to DMs also with textual functions (Traugott & Dasher 2002: 174-6). These textual DMs then developed meanings that express the speaker's attitude or viewpoint (subjectivity) as well as meanings that express the speaker's attention to the addressee's self-image (intersubjectivity), In particular, this includes hedge functions that "soften or mitigate what is said with the purpose of acknowledging the addressee's actual or possible objections" (Traugott & Dasher 2002: 174) This process in which DMs develop (inter)subjective meanings is called (inter)subjectification (Traugott 2010).

Biber et al. (1999: 1086) define present day DMs as "inserts which tend to occur at the beginning of a turn or utterance and combine two roles: (a) to signal a transition in the evolving progress of the conversation, and (b) to signal an interactive relationship between speaker, hearer, and message". Moreover, Aijmer (2002: 3) states that DMs "are different from ordinary words in the language because of a large number of pragmatic values that they can be associated with". Moreover, most research on DMs in English

find that they indeed have more than one function or at least have sub-functions (Müller 2005: 8). These multifunctional DMs are not confined to specific types of discourse, but, in many cases, have expanded into speech and writing. Moreover, Aijmer (2013, 2015) has found that DMs develop new functions as they cross over into different text-types.

When looking at the individual functions of specific DMs, it is important to make the distinction between textual and interpersonal functions. Müller (2005: 30-31) states that the textual DM functions "remain focused on lexical expressions and propositional content in units of various length, from single words or phrases to a sequence of utterances describing a particular scene". Interpersonal functions of DMs "interactionally focus on the relationship between speaker and hearer" (Müller 2005: 31). Furthermore, they are typically used to mark "a speech act, a response, an opinion, or an evaluation" (Müller 2005: 31).

Another essential property of DMs in communication is indexicality. In addition to the textual and interpersonal functions mentioned above, the use of DMs also indexes the speaker's "social or professional identity, social relations and activities" (Aijmer 2015: 199). In his highly influential work, Silverstein (2003) identifies different layers of *indexical order*. The first indexical order is identified as the first level of pragmatic meaning that is drawn from an utterance. In such cases, Beeching (2016: 15) states that, "a

demonstrable correlation is revealed between a linguistic usage and a sector of the population (which is, however, not overtly commented upon)". Second order indexicality concerns awareness that a particular linguistic phenomenon is associated with a particular group(s) (Silverstein 2003). Therefore, it concerns the relation between linguistic variables and the metapragmatic meanings that are encoded in them. Silverstein (2003) explains third order (or higher order) indexicality through a discussion of what he calls "wine talk", which is used by people of a certain social group (yuppies). Wine talk originates from professional wine critics who use "technical vocabulary" that is "used in prestige realms of traditional English gentlemanly horticulture and especially animal husbandry" (2003: 225). Therefore, a certain "lingo" is created for wine that indexically entails notions of prestigious social classes or subjects. Therefore, when the yuppies use this lingo in the context of drinking wine, they are indexing their social standing as "the well-bred, characterologically interesting (subtle, balanced, intriguing, winning, etc.) person iconically corresponding to the metaphorical 'fashion of speaking'" of the higher-order classes that those in yuppiedom aspire to be (2003: 226). In simpler terms, Beeching explains third order indexicality as a situation "where a creative use is made of the association to evoke a particular effect" (2016: 15). Table 2.1, which is adapted from Beeching's (2016: 16) table that applies Silverstein's orders of indexicality to DMs, demonstrates how DMs develop and come to take on social meanings that index the speaker and the hearer, social identities, and the speech event (or social activity) itself.

Silverstein (2003) Indexical order	1st order Indexicality	2nd order Indexicality	3rd order Indexicality
Overview	DM in general are used (only) in informal discourse	They come to be heard as speaking casually, informally, between friends, where meaning is implicit rather than explicit	Which comes to index, solidarity, positive politeness, 'buddyness'
Like	*Like* used in informal situations by young people	This comes to be heard as speaking casually	Which comes to index 'young (female) people'
Sort of	*sort of* is used to hesitate, express tentativeness, approximation	This comes to be heard as speaking casually, downplaying expertise	Which to index 'self-deprecating/nuancing' personality
You know	*you know* is used amongst intimates	This comes to be heard as 'sharing common knowledge'	Which comes to index 'we are intimates who share background information'

Table 1 Layering of Indexicality (adapted from Beeching 2016: 16; see also Johnstone 2010: 32)

By indexing these different levels of the context of speech, Aijmer (2013: 15) argues that DMs "express a number of new stances in interaction". Therefore, this enables one to use DMs rhetorically, thus "allowing the speaker to take up a stance of alignment or disalignment to the hearer or to what is said" (Aijmer 2013: 15). In defining stance, this paper is informed by Du Bois's definition, which states that:

> Stance is a public act by a social actor, achieved dialogically through overt communicative means, of simultaneously evaluating objects, positioning subjects (self and others), and aligning with other subjects, with respect to any salient dimension of the sociocultural field. (2007: 163)

In the case of (1) and (2), the authors used the DM in highlighting functions that resembled oral floor holding/word uses. However, the DMs were used rhetorically in order to indicate the subjective stance (reservation or irony) of the authors. The use of these DMs gives the texts a speech-like feel that also indexes plain speaking and honesty. Taking advantage of these DMs in

writing to mark one's subjective stance is operating at the 2nd order of indexicality, while using these DMs as a strategy to attempt to achieve alignment with his/her readers arguably works at the 3rd order of indexicality, as was the case with (1). The extent to which *oh yeah* functions in these ways in journalistic texts will be discussed in the following sections

2.2. Previous studies on (oh) yeah

Oh yeah is a two word DM that can also function as an adverb (affirmation) or interjection. In the Oxford English Dictionary Online (OED), it is labeled as colloquial and its definition is as follows:

> oh yeah, int. (and adj.): As an exclamation or interrogative: expressing incredulity, disbelief, scepticism, or interest; 'really?' Also as adj.

Though this definition of *oh yeah* as a face-threatening and argument-challenging interjection does indeed explain some of non-dialogical uses found in the COHA (see 3), it is far from comprehensive. Furthermore, it overlooks the majority of DM functions that will be investigated in this paper.

(3) This vile NAMBLA group was formed in 1978 and calls for the "empowerment" of youth in the sexual area. It says it does not engage in any activities that violate the law. **Oh yeah**? What about the fact that NAMBLA was involved in funding an orphanage in Thailand that allowed grown men to rape and molest the children who lived there? (COHA Non-Fiction: The No Spin Zone 2001)

In the previous linguistics literature, *oh (yeah*) is described as multifunctional, serving interjectional and DM functions. Research on *oh yeah* specifically is lacking, though it is often labeled as a variant of *oh* (e.g. Schiffrin 1987: 91;

Biber et al. 2000:1077; O'Keeffe & Adolphs 2008). The interjection *oh* is considered a complete utterance that "encodes an entire basic message typically involving the speaker's emotional state" (Fraser 1990: 391). Similarly, Schourup (1985: 25-6) calls it an "evincive interjection" that indicates that thinking is occurring or has just now occurred. As a DM with text-organizing and/or interpersonal functions, *oh* has overlaps with other DMs such as *well* and *now* (Aijmer 2002: 98). In such cases, *oh* and *oh yeah* are frequently labeled as utterance launchers (Biber et al. 1999:1076), reception markers (Jucker & Smith 1998), or information management markers (Schiffrin 1987, ch.4).

Because *oh* and *oh yeah* are highly emotive and interpersonal in nature, most of the past studies that address them concentrate on speech data.

For example, Biber et al. (1999: 1076) show that utterance launchers like *oh yeah* often mark the initial part of a speaker taking his/her turn in conversation. Furthermore, they argue that *oh*, *oh yeah* and other combinations have highly conventionalized functions that introduce or respond to utterances in a way that retains some of its core (or original) interjection characteristics that express some degree of surprise, unexpectedness, or emotive arousal (1999: 1083). Similarly, Aijmer (2002) investigated the multifunctionality of *oh* and finds that it is most frequently used in conversation and serves a variety of functions that vary depending on

its collocates, position, prosody, discourse type, and position. Overall, however, she notes an attention-getting or intensifying function that serves to emphasize the upcoming message (Aijmer 2002: 151).

Schiffrin (1987: ch. 4) designates *oh* as a marker of information management that indicates shifts in the speaker's orientation (objective and subjective) to information as the flow of information occurs during discourse. Schiffrin also demonstrates that it can serve the purpose of displaying one's subjective orientation or "evaluation" of the information being presented in the discourse (Schiffrin 1987: 95). Finally, *oh* can also display the speaker/hearer alignment toward their own discourse or the discourse of others (Schiffrin 1987: 100).

In their investigation to what they refer to as "reception markers" Jucker & Smith (1998) also observe the conversational functions of *oh.* Furthermore, this study analyzes the similarities and differences between the two separate DMs *oh* and *yeah* respectively. In the discussion of the most common reception markers in their study (*yeah*, *oh*, and *really*), they identify differentiated meanings between them in terms of the integration of new information. *Yeah* marks information that fits easily with preexisting assumptions; *oh* marks information that requires some extra processing in order to be integrated; and *really* is used to indicate that the hearer needs further confirmation before the information can be integrated (Jucker & Smith 1998: 182). Interestingly, despite stating that these two DMs have specialized

functions vis-a-vis the ease of processing new information, no explanation is given that explains the function or reason for the fusion of *oh* and *yeah*. *Oh yeah* is, in fact, found in their table of DMs that were used in their conversational data (Jucker & Smith: 176), but there is no detailed discussion of it. However, the fact that they both independently serve reception marker functions could explain why *oh* and *yeah* were able to fuse together.

Based on the analysis of transcribed speech in the COHA and NOW data, other noteworthy speech functions were found. For example, there are utterance launchers that mark one remembering (or pretending to remember) something (4). Moreover, interpersonal functions such as *oh yeah* functioning as a hedging device (e.g. *oh yeah, I meant to tell you)* that downplays the potential face-threatening act of not having informed the collocutor of something earlier (5) are also present.

(4) A guy came out of the restaurant and spotted Eddy Folson. He gave his name as Tommy Condon and reminded Folson that they had worked together up at Seabrook about two summers ago. "**Oh yeah**," Folson remembered. "How you been doing? " (COHA: Boston Globe 1982)

(5) About that time, the late Archbishop Coleman Carroll called Walsh, asking if he knew why "someone from the State Department is trying to reach you about taking in 200 children." "**Oh yeah**, I meant to tell you about that, "stammered Walsh." I have made a commitment in our behalf," thinking to himself that "saving 200 children from communism is worth my career." (COHA: Washington Post 1998).

Therefore, a question that arises is why we find such examples in writing such as (2) or even as challenging interjections as (3)? Ironically, when Schourup

(1999: 234) argues that DMs are not as allied to speech as many claim, he argues that this unjustified association of DMs with orality exists because "early work on DMs focused predominantly on conversational items like *well* and *oh*". Despite this association with oral speech, Taavitsainen (1998) looks at the interjection *oh* used in 18th and 19th century writing and finds that *oh* functioned differently in writing than in dialogue sequences. These specialized written functions include a peak-marking function (intensifying emotions or making a change in the tone), and a foregrounding function that directs the reader's expectations. In contemporary writing, however, the study of *oh (yeah)* in written prose is lacking. In Rühlemann & Hilpert's (2017) study of *well*, which shares some functions with *oh yeah*, they find that some of its oral textual functions such as word-searching or self-correcting are adapted to function in written prose to mark important lexical items or even wordplay. Such uses indicate the subjective stance of the author or even acts as a hedging or affiliation device that serves to make the writing style of the article feel more colloquial as well as spontaneous-like. The question to be addressed in sections 4 and 5 is if *oh yeah* shows similar developments? Moreover, if so, how could the typical functions of *oh yeah* be expanded and adapted to serve rhetorical functions in writing?

2.3. Changes to modern journalistic texts

In order to understand how and why written functions of *oh yeah* enter into journalistic texts, more general changes occurring with journalistic writing

must be taken into account, especially from the mid-20th century to today. In discussing the differences between spoken and written language, Koch & Oesterreicher (1985, 1990) give a dichotomy between the phonetic and graphic mediums on one hand and between the language of immediacy and distance on the other. Among the characteristics of the language of immediacy are features such as physical immediacy, privacy, familiarity (intimacy) of partners, high emotionality, deictic immediacy, dialogue, communicative cooperation and spontaneity. The opposite features would characterize communication distance (see also discussion in Kytö 2010: 49; Jucker 2000: 19-24). In investigations of how colloquial elements are progressively used in writing, many studies found evidence to suggest that the trends toward colloquialization in "popular written registers" such as letters, fiction, and essays have influenced change in more formal genres of writing later on (cf. Westin 2002; Westin & Geisler 2002; Mair 2006: 185). When looking specifically at changes occurring in the 20th century, Mair (2006:188f) as well as Leech et al. (2009: 239ff) demonstrate changes to genres of writing particularly fiction and the press at the micro and macro-structural levels. At the macro level, these works show that fiction and the press progressively incorporates more quotations, real or fabricated, for the stylistic effect of making "the texts appear more dramatic, interesting, and accessible and, presumably, also to involve the reader emotionally" (Mair 2006: 188). When discussing the changes at the micro level, they demonstrate the growing preference for informal over formal options where both are

available, such as the use of verb contractions, negative contractions, the progressive form, and semi-modal verbs. One reason that the colloquialization effect has been observed more in fictional and journalistic prose is probably due to the growing social and cultural pressures felt by the authors in these genres to appeal to a more informal and general audience (Mair 2006: 188).

Moreover, using Biber's (1988, 1995) multi-dimensional framework, Westin & Geisler (2002: 150) found that British up-market editorials became more persuasive, argumentative, and less dependent on referential elaboration, which ultimately results in more informal language. Moreover, these changes were found to take place more saliently during the latter part of the 20th century. In addition to these overall changes in the British newspaper editorials, they also found that one newspaper (The Guardian) showed stronger changes in its linguistic and stylistic shifts toward informality than the other two (The Daily Telegraph and The Times). The Guardian was found to be "more involved and less explicit and abstract, in other words, more informal" (Westin & Geisler 2002: 150). Their hypothesis is that this stronger shift in the Guardian is probably due to the different audiences to whom these papers cater.

However, despite these shifts towards more oral-like writing styles, there are still limitations to how oral-like writing can become. Such limitations include

the lack of being able to use prosody, facial-expressions, gestures, and conventions of body posture etc. (Crystal 2001: 47). Moreover, the most obvious difference between writing and speech is the phonic and graphic mediums of producing language. Therefore, even in cases where genres of writing are becoming more like speech, the fact of the matter is that the two can never become identical. In terms of connecting this study to colloquialization, this approach focuses its attention on how oral-like phenomena can be adapted into written prose in fashions that gives the text a spontaneous and informal-like feel. Since DMs serve indexical functions, it will also be key to identify to what extent these DMs are being used by authors rhetorically to highlight their subjective stance in a fashion that indexes speaking casually (second order indexicality). Moreover, this paper will also address the anecdotal observations of cases in which DMs are used in affiliation seeking stances that also take advantage of their informality to index the language of intimates or friends (third order indexicality). In the pages that follow, it will be determined whether these interesting cases represent written conventions or just creative uses by a handful of authors.

3. Selection of *oh yeah* and selection of corpora for a case study

Oh yeah has been selected for this case study because of anecdotal observations of its use in journalistic texts in recent times. Though only *oh yeah* specifically has been selected for this case study, there are many

situations in which it occurs in the near vicinity with other DMs or other colloquial phenomena. Therefore, comparisons with other DMs and inserts will be made to show that the changes occurring with *oh yeah* are, in fact, part of broader changes occurring in written journalistic prose.

The corpora for this study were selected on practical grounds. The aim of this study is to observe diachronic change in how *oh yeah* is used in American journalistic writing. Therefore, the journalistic sub-corpora – which comprises the newspaper and magazine corpora – of the COHA were selected. At the time of extraction, the COHA had data ranging from 1810-2009. This makes it useful resource to observe diachronic trends in American journalistic writing. Moreover, it also provides a well-balanced representation of different newspapers and magazines. There are over 100 different magazines sampled in the COHA with, according to the website, "a good mix (overall and by year) between specific domains (news, health, home and gardening, women, financial, religion, sports, etc.) (Davies 2010)".[3] A balanced representation of newspapers and article types are also well represented in the COHA. Overall, ten newspapers from across the U.S., including *USA Today*, *New York Times*, the *Atlanta Journal Constitution*, and the *San Francisco Chronicle* are sampled. Furthermore, and according to the

[3] Information on the composition of the corpora can be found in the link below: https://www.english-corpora.org/coha/ (accessed 01.01.2021).

website, “there is a good mix between different sections of the newspaper, such as local news, opinion, sports, financial, etc.” (Davies 2010).

For a detailed analysis of data from the 2010s, the NOW corpus is consulted in section 5. The data for this paper was extracted in July of 2018. The NOW corpus is an interesting resource to use for a comparison with the COHA because many of the traditional news sources found in it (such as TIME magazine, the Wall Street Journal, and USA Today) are the same as in COHA. However, the NOW also includes many news sources that are available online only (such as *BuzzFeed*, *TV.com*, and *Vulture*). Therefore, the comparison of these two corpora allows one to not only observe further changes that may be occurring in journalism in the 2010s, but it also allows one to check whether the shift from traditional print journalism in the 20th century to hybrid print/web and web-only journalism in the 21st century is leading to any new dramatic changes in certain areas over others. Table 2 provides the details pertaining to these two corpora.

Corpus	Size of Corpus	Fixed or Monitor Corpus?	Composition	Text-Types	Period of Time
COHA	• 400 Million Words (total) • 137 Million Words (Journalism)	Fixed	• Fiction • Non-Fiction • Magazines • Newspapers	Published Print Texts	1810-2009
NOW	• 9 Billion Words (total) • I Billion Words (USA)	Monitor	• Magazines • Newspapers	• Print & Web • Web only	2010-today

Tab 2 Makeup of COHA and NOW corpora

All concordances of *oh yeah* were extracted from the COHA using a special search string designed to weed out its non-DM uses, such as adverbial utterance launching affirmations.[4] All other cases of adverbial affirmations that were found among the extracted data were removed after the manual editing process. This search sting is designed to catch only the uses of *oh yeah* that are surrounded by punctuation. Past works such as Tottie (2017) and Rühlemann & Hilpert (2017:109) discuss how DMs and inserts are offset from the "neighboring co-text by topographical means". The need to offset DMs from the neighboring text with the aid of punctuation is undoubtedly due to their syntactical independence from the sentence structure (such as their tendency to occur sentence initially, finally, or between clausal/syntactic borders). Moreover, these punctuation markers are used as a typographical device to act similarly to the prosodic features that surround DMs such as pauses and stress in spontaneous speech (cf. Aijmer 2013: 27f).

[4] |(|.|,|:|?|!|... oh yeah .|,|:|?|!|...|)|

For the COHA data, the occurrences of *oh yeah* were then annotated for position, function, and for the article type that they were taken from. The article type was identified by looking at the expanded context option of each example as well as researching the individual articles online. Most importantly, each concordance was labeled as occurring in transcribed speech or written prose. Only the concordances from written prose are included in the analysis of the written functions of *oh yeah.*

There were only a few differences in how the NOW data was annotated. There cases in which *oh yeah* occurs in parenthetical comments where it is placed to the immediate right of a parenthesis. These parenthetical comments were analyzed as a separate function because they are offset from the main text. It also became apparent that a sizable amount of the NOW data came from the comment sections of articles. As comment sections are open to the public, all concordances coming from these parts of articles were annotated as coming from a comment section text-type regardless of the type of article to which it was connected. Also, each concordance was labeled as coming from either a print-and-web or web-only news source since NOW includes both.

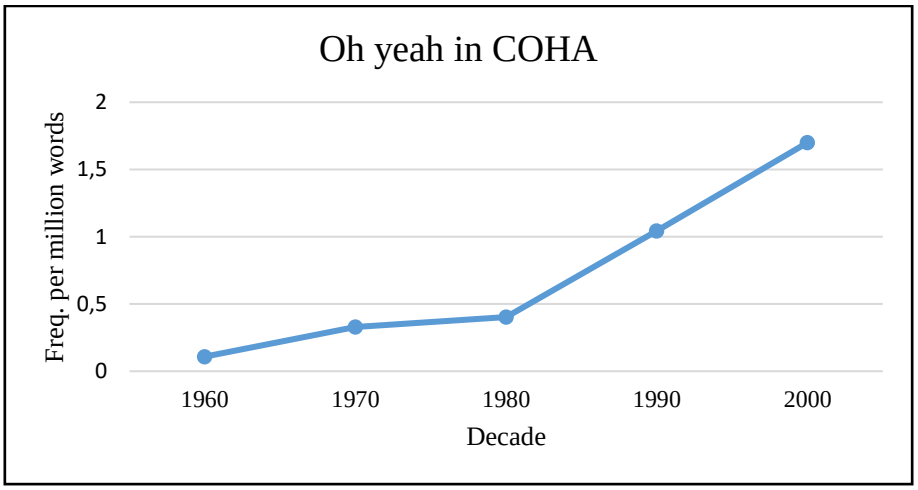
4. Oh yeah in the COHA

This section begins with the quantitative analysis of the use of *oh yeah* in the COHA data in 4.1. This is followed by section 4.2 that gives a qualitative

analysis of how *oh yeah* is used in written prose and in what text-types it is used the most.

4.1. Frequency of *oh yeah* in COHA

Figure 1 shows the frequency of usage per million words of *oh yeah* that includes cases from transcribed speech and written uses. Interestingly, this indicates that *oh yeah* is not used as a DM in any case until the 1960s. Furthermore, though its usage does indeed grow in the following decades, it is still not used at a high frequency. In fact, it never exceeds 2 instances per million words.



Decade	Written	Transcribed Speech
1960s	0	1 (100%)
1970s	0	3 (100%)
1980s	2 (50%)	2 (50%)
1990s	5 (42%)	7 (58%)
2000s	8 (40%)	12 (60%)

Figure 1. *Oh yeah* in COHA

Moreover, figure 1 also demonstrates that *oh yeah* is only used in transcribed speech in the 1960s and 1970s, before it appears in written prose in the 1980s. These initial cases where *oh yeah* is found only in transcribed speech is indicative of the fact this DM is a stereotypical element of casual oral discourse. Moreover, this transition period in which *oh yeah* is used in transcribed speech first before it us used in written prose is in line with findings in past studies on the colloquialization of journalistic writing. These changes started to take place from the middle 20th century before developing more dramatically at the end of the 20th century. For instance, Mair (2006: 188) and Leech et al. (2009: 249) found that journalistic texts include an increasing amount of transcribed speech since the second half of the 20th century. The data here therefore suggests that it is likely that this increased use of transcribed speech first introduced the use of the DM *oh yeah* to journalistic texts. From this point, *oh yeah* is then slowly introduced to written prose by authors before a sharper rise occurs from the 1990s. As already mentioned, the development of text-type specific DM functions is a well-documented characteristic of DMs (Aijmer 2013, 2015). In her studies of this phenomenon, she argues that the salient conventionalized meanings of DMs can be "adjusted to the demands of a new situation" (Aijmer 2015: 202). In the case of *oh yeah* in journalistic prose, such a process appears to be taking place from the 1980s, though more so in the 1990s.

4.2. Written functions in COHA

This section turns its attention to the written prose examples of *oh yeah* only. Figure 2 demonstrates a steady rise in use from the 1980s into the 2000s, though its overall frequency of use remains low. The remainder of this section will discuss the particularities of how *oh yeah* is used in written prose.

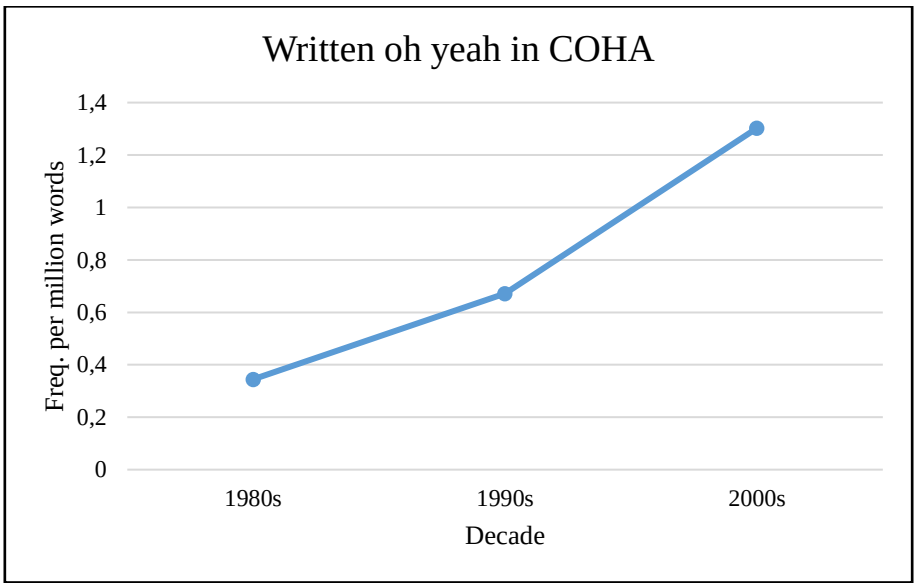


Figure 2. Written *oh yeah* in COHA

Oh yeah is used in a few different ways. For the most part, it serves rhetorical subjective stance taking functions, though one example appears to also seek alignment with the readership. In the he majority of examples in the COHA, *oh yeah* marks the end of a list where the most obvious or important item is given last (see 6). This resembles the use of *oh yeah* to mark one remembering something, as if the last element is an afterthought, even though the last element is, in fact, the *big* item of the list. Coincidentally, a similar journalistic prose function of *well* was found in Bourgeois (2020: 101f). These similarities are possible because of the functional overlaps that exist between *well* and *oh*

yeah. These end of list markers will henceforth be called “faux spontaneous additives” because they expand on the dialogical function of *oh yeah* that marks the speaker spontaneously remembering something. A few other functions were also found. One marks the beginning of a “faux quote” in which the imaginary speaker is remembering something (see example 7). Another example involved *oh yeah* acting as a rhetorical challenge interjection (see 8). In (9), *oh yeah* is used rhetorically by the author to respond to the reader’s potential/imagined retort to what had just been read.

(6) The Three Great Sins Against Children -- those that invoke the law, bring down the wrath of the community and the hounds of child protective services agencies -- have an unwritten hierarchy: Physical abuse and sexual abuse come first, and then, **oh yeah**, there’s that neglect thing. (COHA Magazines: Mother Jones 1999)

(7) In the here and now he is Frederick Lenz, 37, of Malibu, Calif., and Stony Brook, N.Y. Lenz is known to his followers as "Zen Master Rama" and to the public as **Oh yeah,** that guy--the one who advertises his meditation seminars with stylish two-page ads in The New York Times, the Los Angeles Times, and Vanity Fair; the one who plastered his face on giant posters in Times Square last fall, the one who looks like Richard Simmons. (COHA Magazines: Newsweek 1988)

(8) Ski resorts put a lot of energy into trying to convince you and me that skiing is a “family sport.” **Oh yeah**? When I start toting up the costs for, say, a family of four, the figures flabbergast me, and I think of skiing as an expensive sport for a family of one. Many resorts do offer free skiing and/or lodging for kids six and under, which helps, but what about skiers older than six? (COHA Magazines: Skiing 1994)

(9) Because what they almost never show in the magazines is pictures of people out there actually buying the food. **Oh yeah**, I know. What about those charming photos of pretty young chefs choosing fresh strawberries and placing them in a wicker basket at the open-air farmers' market? Get real, girlfriend. I mean, it would be nice and all. But since when can you buy Pampers and tuna fish at the farmers’ market? (COHA Newspapers: Washington Post 1994)

The breakdown of the categories of these different functions of written *oh yeah* can be observed in Table 3. The faux spontaneous additive function is clearly used the most. It also appears to be the most conventionalized. It follows a very predictable pattern. It is to the left of the final (lexical) element of a list and surrounded by punctuation. The apparent sudden appearance and fast growth of *oh yeah* in this way is reminiscent of how slang terms enter the lexicon (Adams 2009: 15). It will therefore be important to verify if this function loses its dominance later in the 2010s. The other three functions of *oh yeah* are used sparingly and resemble more directly its interpersonal speech functions. Overall, the analysis of the uses of *oh yeah* in written prose demonstrates that authors use it to display their rhetorical subjective stance. It also appears to be an anti-formality device that, when used in written prose, creates an allusion of spontaneity and informality. It is also notable that this is a low frequency phenomenon that has only just begun to transfer into journalistic writing.

Function	Frequency	Percentage
Faux Spontaneous Additives	10	67%
Faux Utterance Launchers	3	20%
Challenging Interjections	1	6.5%
Readership aligning Comment	1	6.5%

Table 3: Function distribution of written *oh yeah* in journalism COHA data

Having analyzed the uses of *oh yeah* in journalistic prose and having compared it to the oral uses from which the written functions have expanded, it is now time to address in what type of articles *oh yeah* is utilized.

Article Type	Frequency	%
Entertainment	4	27%
Lifestyle	4	27%
Sports	3	20%
Other	2	13%
Parenting	1	7%
Culture/Culinary	1	7%

Table 4 Types of articles where *oh yeah* is used in journalism COHA data

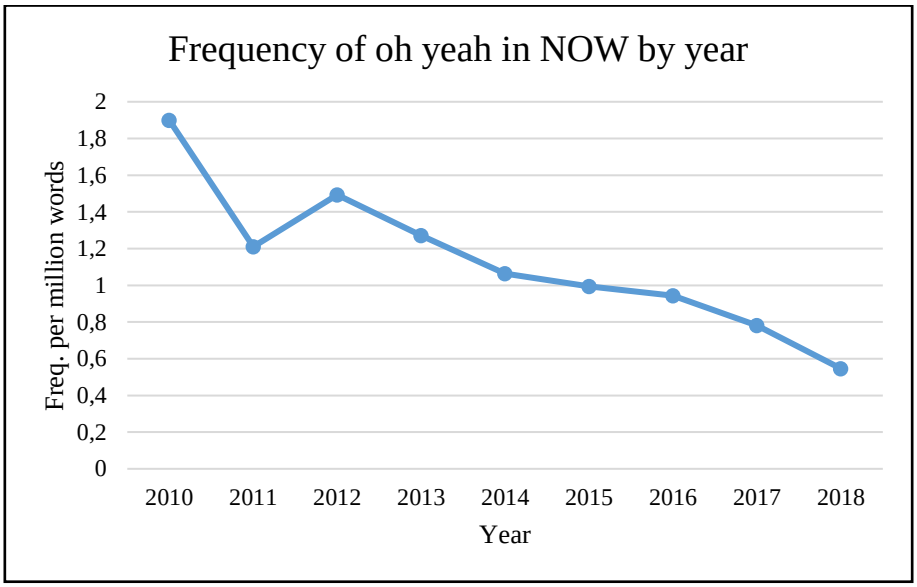
Table 4 demonstrates that *oh yeah* is used most often in entertainment, lifestyle, and sports articles. These categories are considered "soft news", and they are more prone to include colloquial and informal language than other types of articles (cf. Claridge 2010: 593; Schneider 2002). However, due to the extremely low frequency of written *oh yeah*, it will be necessary to look at how it is used in NOW, to verify if its use in written prose is truly niched in "soft" news categories as the COHA evidence suggests.

5. Oh yeah in NOW

This section analyzes data from the U.S.A. sub-corpus of the NOW ranging from 2010 – mid 2018. Section 5.1 looks at the frequencies of *oh yeah* generally. Section 5.2 then gives the qualitative analysis of *oh yeah* in written prose.

5.1. Frequency of use in NOW

In the NOW data, *oh yeah* starts at just below 2 instances per million words before steadily dropping down to well below 1. This drop is in opposition to what occurred with the COHA data.



Year	Written	Transcribed Speech
2010	87 (54%)	74 (46%)
2011	51 (48%)	55 (52%)
2012	59 (44%)	76 (56%)
2013	71 (66%)	37 (44%)
2014	51 (58%)	37 (42%)
2015	52 (56%)	40 (44%)
2016	112 (70%)	48 (30%)
2017	97 (62%)	60 (48%)
2018	30 (60%)	20 (40%)

Figure 3. Frequency of *oh yeah* in the NOW by year

However, as in the 1980s – 2000s, *oh yeah* continues to be used in written and transcribed speech. Moreover, in all but 2011 and 2012, *oh yeah* is used

in written prose in the majority of the data. Therefore, though the use of *oh yeah* as a DM is not on the rise in NOW, the written functions are still in use.

5.2. Discussion of written functions in NOW

This section looks at the use of *oh yeah* in written prose only. Figure 4 shows that the use of the written functions is also declining. In terms of how it is used in written prose, the same written functions of *oh yeah* that were found in the COHA data are also present in the NOW data with the addition of a new and more salient meta-textual function. This will be explained further in. 5.2.3.

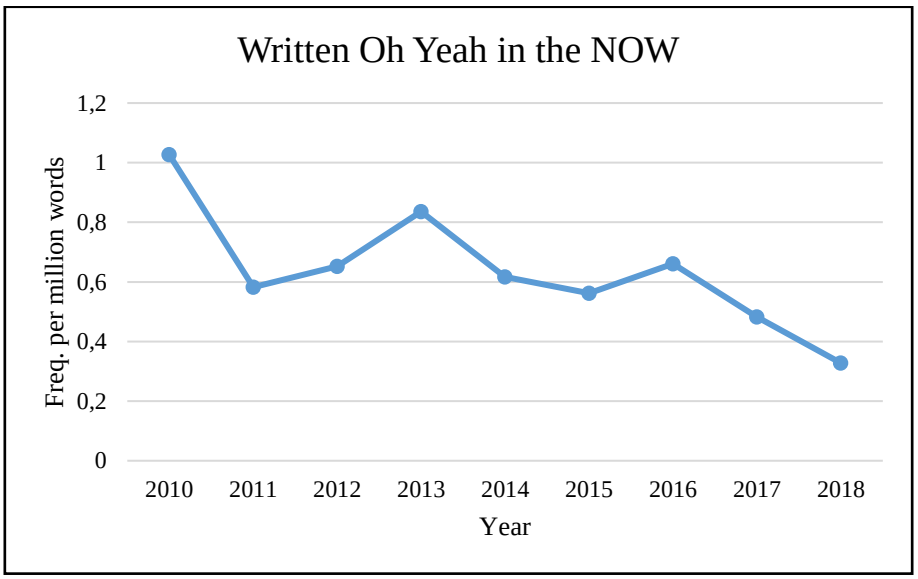


Figure 4. Written Oh yeah in the NOW

The written functions of *oh yeah* are broken down as follows: faux spontaneous additives, faux utterance launchers, meta-textual comments, and other. The other category includes a list of rarely used functions ranging from

challenge interjections, excitement showing interjections, and topic shift markers. The figures on how much each function is used is given in Table 4. The faux spontaneous additive is once again the most frequently used category. Of this group, the most frequent and the most conventionalized form is the same end of a list marker that was observed in COHA. Other sub-categories of faux spontaneous additives will be discussed in 5.2.1.

Functions	Frequency	%
Faux Spontaneous Additive	403	66%
Faux Utterance Launchers	147	24%
Meta-Textual Comments	37	6%
Other	23	4%

Table 4: Functional Categories of non-dialogical *oh yeah*

5.2.1. Faux spontaneous additive *oh yeah*

When looking at the totality of the spontaneous additive markers, the majority have *and* immediately to its right or left (see Table 5). Furthermore, 233 (58%) of them are the same end of list markers that were found in the COHA (see example 10). This remains the single most used form of written *oh yeah*, though it is no longer as dominant as it was in COHA.

Combination	Frequency	%
And, oh yeah	155	39%
Oh yeah, and	122	30%
Combined	277	69%

Table 5. Oh yeah collocating with *and* in faux spontaneous additive functions

(10) If you need a refresher, Rhaegar is Dany's older brother, the son of the Mad King Aerys and, **oh yeah**, Jon Snow's daddy. (NOW: Huffington Post 2016)

In the other 170 (42%) of the faux spontaneous additives, *oh yeah* serves similar rhetorical subjective stance functions. For example, (11) highlights an essential piece of information in a text as if it were an afterthought or something that the author had nearly forgotten. In this example, the author mimics remembering something and intentionally interrupts the normal flow of the sentence.

(11) Also, there was a nice moment when Hayden pep-talked the ghost of the Black Dahlia (Mena Suvari) because, **OH YEAH**, the Black Dahlia was in this! (NOW: TV.com 2011)

In this example, the author expresses his/her subjective attitude about the plot of an episode of the series "American Horror Story" by utilizing *oh yeah* to stress that a character based on the real-life murder victim, the Black Dahlia, makes an appearance in the episode. The author does so by using *oh yeah* in a way that resembles the interpersonal speech information management function. This is done to convey to the reader that there is a significant twist in the episode's plot.

5.2.2. Faux utterance launcher *oh yeah*

The second most frequent function of written *oh yeah* is the faux utterance launcher function. There are two main executions of the function. The more frequent one involves the author setting him/herself up with a rhetorical question to which *oh yeah* marks the response. Example (12) is one such example. This case is notable because it also occurs near an example of *well* that is used in a similar rhetorical word choice highlighting function. This

situation in which these dialogical DMs are used in written functions in the near vicinity of each other is something that will be discussed more in 5.3.

(12) Every meal looks like my undoing. Salt looks like lye. Oil looks, **well**, really oily. We eat that why? **Oh yeah**, because it's a thick golden pleasure-delivery system. (NOW: GQ Magazine 2013)

In many ways, this function resembles what has been seen with *oh (yeah*) when it is used in speech. In such cases, *oh yeah* would be an utterance launcher because it is used when a speaker takes their turn in response to the question posed by their collocutor (e.g. Biber et al. 1999: 1076). The difference between examples from oral conversation and the usage of *oh yeah* in (12), however, is that they come from monologue texts. Therefore, this indicates that certain conventions are being utilized in monologue journalism articles by authors to indicate their stance to their readership in a way that is engaging and interpersonal like oral speech. Furthermore, they can also rhetorically flag upcoming metaphorical wordplay, such as oils being "a thick golden pleasure-delivery system".

Other faux utterance launchers, though considerably less frequent and less conventionalized, concern cases like (13).

(13) Flying in the 60s. What Air Passengers Did Before In-Flight Entertainment. **Oh yeah**, this looks a lot like my last flight, minus the woman with the hacking cough in front of me, and the screaming kids behind me, and the mystery stains on my tray table. (NOW: Minneapolis Star Tribune 2015)

In (13), the author starts the new sentence with the use of *oh yeah* that resembles a spontaneous reaction to the sentence that precedes it. Furthermore, it intensifies his/her sarcastic comment that follows, which lists all the things that make the photos of flying in the 1960s different from the experience one has in commercial airliners today.

In sum, these uses of *oh yeah* resemble the spontaneous conversation conventions of *oh yeah* as an utterance launcher. However, the examples from the NOW data come from monologue texts in which turn taking does not occur. Therefore, these uses are a rhetorical innovation of the prototypically utterance launcher function in speech. The other written functions of *oh yeah*, the faux utterance launchers often also serve to flag special lexical items or even wordplay.

5.2.3. Meta-textual comments

The meta-textual comments are unique to the NOW data, though there was one similar alignment seeking example of *oh yeah* from the COHA data. These meta-textual comments that start with *oh yeah* are also the most intersubjective (e.g. Traugott 2010) of any other cases discussed in this chapter because they appear to address the imagined reactions of the readership. Moreover, they are also the most salient because they are offset from the main text with parenthesis.

These meta-textual comments are constructed as indicated in (14). *Oh yeah* is preceded by a parenthesis and then followed by a comment which is then followed by the closing parenthesis.

(14) "First of all, Miss Thing," she began (**oh yeah**, we're not kidding), "does your man not have a mouth of his own with which to speak?"(NOW: E! Online 2016)

The example above is particularly pertinent because the author of the article is using this offset comment to interrupt a quote from a video posted online from a celebrity in which she attacks another celebrity for speaking on behalf of her husband. It is also clear that the author is displaying his/her personal attitude toward this very confrontational video post, in particular the utilization of the term "Miss Thing".[5] The fact that the comment is offset from the regular text also indicates that the author is doing so in order to make it clear that he/she is addressing the reader(s) themselves. Moreover, the interpersonal style of such a parenthetical comment in a written text makes the text both appear more like spontaneous dialogue while also indexing the author's attention to the reader and desire to align him/herself with the reader and share this the moment of amusement together.

[5] Urban Dictionary gives the following definition for the utilization of Miss Thing: "A sarcastic term for haughty, puffed-up women (especially women of color) who think that they are really something when, in fact, they are not". Urban Dictionary can be consulted online at:
<https://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=Miss%20Thing&utm_source=search-action >

In many ways, the use of these meta-textual comments resembles the style of writing found in digital discourse such as blogging and micro-blogging. Hilpert & Bourgeois (2020), for example, found that the "sarcastic much?" construction (see 15) has also recently began appearing in parenthetical comments while also serving highly intersubjective alignment-seeking functions.

(15) Still I kept at the classic literature because it was important to me that others respect my intelligence (**damaged by high school much? :-P**). Naturally when I decided to write a novel, it came out as literary fiction. (taken from Hilpert & Bourgeois 2020: 99)

Considering the colloquial and informal style of these metatextual comments, it is important to note that examples (14) as well as (16) come from "soft news" articles. In these two cases, they come from entertainment news.

(16) After the death of Oberyn Martell last season, Cersei is concerned about her daughter Myrcella (**oh yeah,** remember her? More on her below) who has been living in Dorne since season two. (NOW: USA Today 2017)

The appearance of this salient and intersubjective alignment seeking function of written *oh yeah*, is just the latest example of the rapid development occurring with *oh yeah* in journalistic prose. These functions make the texts appear more conversational-like by utilizing an informal and interpersonal DM. However, as this paper has shown, the ways in which *oh yeah* is used in journalistic prose has been adapted to serve rhetorical functions that are specifically suited to the written medium.

5.3. Discussion of written NOW data

There were some notable similarities in how *oh yeah* was used in written prose in the COHA and NOW data, but there are also some clear differences. For example, though its frequency per million words does not rise but drops in the NOW data, the number of functions in which *oh yeah* is used is more complex. Moreover, though the end of list function of *oh yeah* is still the single most used function in the NOW data, its dominance has notably been weakened.

Whatever the reason for its drop is usage in the 2010s, it does appear that its development into written functions in the 1990s encouraged the usage of *oh yeah* in other written functions later on. Moreover, the fact that they all resemble emotive arousal, such as a speaker suddenly remembering something, gives support to past assertions that DMs adapt their functionalities as they are transferred into different text-types. In addition to calling attention to important items in a list, answering rhetorical questions, or attempting to align one's stance with the readership, the use of *oh yeah* operates to give the texts in which they appear a certain feel. In such cases in which the author is marking his/her subjective stance, they are operating at the second order of indexicality because the author is intentionally using a linguistic device that represents speaking candidly and honestly. In cases such as the meta-textual comments, it is argued that *oh yeah* is operating at the third order indexicality because the use of *oh yeah* is also seeking alignment

with the readership by making the illusion that they are addressing them directly as confidants by using a linguistic element of language that represents closeness and intimacy.

Another important factor to consider is the appearance of *oh yeah* near other DMs such as *well*. DMs occurring in sequences or in the near vicinity of each other is a common feature of DMs (e.g. Maschler 1994; Aijmer 2004; Koops & Lohmann 2015; Lohmann & Koops 2016). In this study, *well* and *oh yeah* appear prone to occur near each other, but in separate yet similar functions, such as in the (17).

(17) Now America's favorite speed-rapping, profanity-spewing, button-pushing Caucasian continues his incredible streak with a fourth solo album-and the product is under tighter security than the Bush twins. But according to sources in the Shady secret service, Encore will sound a lot like, **well**, Eminem: crude wit, intricate rhymes, and once again a disc produced by Marshall himself and Dr. Dre. **Oh yeah**, one more thing: It's gonna be huge. (COHA: Magazines, Entertainment Weekly 2004)

When looking at these written uses of *oh yeah* in journalism, it is also important to consider what type of articles that they come from. As already discussed in the analysis of the COHA data, there are certain categories of journalism in which *oh yeah* is used more than others. Table 6 gives the types of articles in which *oh yeah* was used in journalistic prose in NOW. As can be seen, the top four categories make up for 79% of all the data. Furthermore, these top four categories come from "soft news" subjects or the comment sections of articles. Intriguingly *oh yeah* is still used the most in entertainment

news. The second biggest category is the comment section, in which anyone can write down a reaction to an article much in the same way as the letter to the editor section of a newspapers or magazines. Closely behind that is sports news. The preference to use *oh yeah* in "soft news" categories is similar to what was found in the COHA data. It is curious that the comment section is not the largest category since the authors of these comments are not professional writers and perhaps would be more prone to use colloquial and informal written language. The fact that entertainment news still represents the largest category even with the inclusion of private comments indicates that such uses of *oh yeah*, and other similar elements for that matter, are highly conventionalized in these types of articles. The same can be said of sports news, which only has three fewer examples than the comment section category.

Categories of Journalism	Frequency	%
Entertainment	213	35%
Comment Section	118	19%
Sports	115	19%
Columns/Op-eds	34	6%
Traditional News	32	5%
Lifestyle	26	4%
Business/Finance	22	4%
Tech/ and other Specialized Technology	22	4%
Culture/Restaurants	13	2%
Womanhood/Parenting	7	1%
Fashion	4	0.5%
Other	4	0.5%

Table 6: Types of articles in NOW data where non-dialogical *oh yeah* is used

The next characteristic of *oh yeah* that must be checked is whether the term is used more frequently in web-only based news as opposed to traditional media. Table 7 shows that *oh yeah* is used the most in web-only news sources, though not overwhelmingly. Traditional news sources still include a noteworthy number of examples. Other sources include articles from television channels and radio stations that also feature written articles on their websites.

Source	Frequency	%
Web only	278	46%
Print & Web	235	38%
Television & Web	90	15%
Radio & Web	7	1%

Table 7. Journalism source distribution for non-dialogical *oh yeah* in NOW

The combined evidence of Tables 6 and 7 indicates that the written functions of *oh yeah* are niched in "soft news" and that they are more often used in online-only news sources. Though the preference for *oh yeah* to be used in certain news categories is clear, its preference to come from web-only sources is not. The data shows that the preference for its usage in web-only sources is not overwhelming and a sizable chunk of the data still comes from traditional sources. It is important to recall that the journalism sources of the COHA are all from print-based sources, and these sources were already using *oh yeah* in written prose before the explosion of web-only news outlets.

6. Discussion of *oh yeah* in relation to other colloquial phenomena

It is important to stress that the changes to the use of *oh yeah* in journalistic texts are not occurring in a vacuum. These specific changes are occurring in parallel with other general shifts in the writing style of journalistic texts. These shifts in the way the DM *oh yeah* is used in writing is also joined by the increased use of other colloquial features. When discussing colloquialization, Leech et al. (2009: 247) state that of the various factors in which writing is becoming more oral-like, an informal style that includes interpersonal linguistic elements "is the one that is most centrally involved in colloquialization".[6] In their discussion of how an informal style is facilitative to the inclusion of colloquial elements in writing, Leech et al. (2009: 247-8) give the following example in which the first and second person pronouns, *I* and *you* are utilized by the author to set up "a personal rapport with the reader". Furthermore (18) also displays its colloquial flavor by using the negation contractions (*don't*), scare quotes ("literary"), and, finally, short sentences.

(18) Don't worry. Editors don't want school compositions or essays. All you need do is tell it like it is, write as though you were talking to your neighbour over the garden fence. The more simply you write, the better it is. [. . .] The basic rule is to write concisely and simply. Don't waste words; don't use a long word where a short one will do and don't try to be "literary". Write the way you talk. Use varied, but fairly short, sentence-lengths: and keep the paragraphs short – maybe 50–60 words, three or four sentences only.

[6] The other factors listed are its avoidance of elaboration or specification of content; its shared addresser/addressee context, and its interactive nature.

The uses of *oh yeah* in written prose shows yet another way to inject a colloquial-feel into texts, which, in turn, also gives them a more interpersonal and friendly rapport.

However, the use of dialogical DMs in journalistic prose is also different from what is seen in (18). Unlike elements such as pronouns or negation contractions, DMs like *oh yeah* are functioning differently in writing than they do in speech. The use of scare quotes (cf. Predelli 2003), however, is one such feature that appears to be increasingly used in writing in ways that serve rhetorical functions that are comparable to what was seen with *oh yeah*. Scare quotes involve the use of quotation markers around a particular word or phrase that the author wishes to use ironically. Scare quotes can also be used because the author wishes to disassociate him/herself from the word or phrase being quoted. In a television review from a New York Times article (19), the author uses a scare quote to note the irony of the use of the word "liberating" by a character in a television series.

(19) The mix of highborn and low was meaningful, and combined with the depictions of the Targaryen Regime — the Nurembergish rally, the tyrannical doublespeak about **"liberating"** people who had just been butchered — it unsubtly hammered home the show's main themes: Power corrupts. Working together is our only hope.[7]

[7] This quote comes from a New York Times article that can be consulted via the link below: <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/05/19/arts/television/game-of-thrones-series-finale-recap.html>

This practice also exists in spontaneous speech where one signifies the quotation marks either with their hands or by saying, “quote/end quote” before and after the word or phrase that one wishes to highlight. Scare quotes are similar to the uses of *oh yeah* in that they are used to highlight a particular word/phrase as well as indicate their affective stance towards its usage. While scare quotes typically indicate the author’s desire to distance his/herself from the usage of the word or phrase, there is also a strong intersubjective element to their usage. For example, the author positions not only his/her stance toward to use of the term in question, but also attempts to get the reader to align themselves with them.

Such changes in journalistic writing all point to the development of a writing style that is progressively emulating certain aspects of the spontaneity of interpersonal speech. However, what they actually do is index casualness and closeness for the purposes of marking their (inter)subjective stance in the text. Despite these observations, however, it would be incorrect to assume that these articles read like transcribed speech. Instead, what is occurring is that certain salient linguistic features that index oral speech are increasingly used in writing for certain rhetorical purposes that make the written text feel more informal, personal, and easy to process.

7. Conclusions

Through the analysis of data from the COHA and NOW, this paper has demonstrated that *oh yeah* has gone through remarkable changes in how it is used in journalistic prose. Despite being a prototypically interpersonal speech DM, *oh yeah* has progressively been used in functions that have adapted to the written medium. Moreover, when used in written prose, it indexes casual discourse, and in some cases even in-group language which further allows the authors to seek alignment with the readership by making the readership "feel" close to the author (cf. Silverstein 2003; Du Bois 2007; Jaffe 2009).

The emergence of these written functions of *oh yeah* have some significant implications on colloquialization research because they demonstrate how colloquial elements can also adapt to the different nature of the writing. The timing of these developments, from the 1990s especially, also coincides with the rapid shift from a print-based writing culture to a digital one (cf. Baron 2000; Crystal 2001; Barton & Lee 2013). The fact that the written functions of *oh yeah* have continued to expand into the 2010s, the time of the development of web 2.0 (cf. Crispin & Mroczek 2011), also shows indications that these conventions may continue to change in the years to come.

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