

Anyway as a Pragmatic Marker in Nigerian and Ghanaian Englishes

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Abstract

This paper examines pragmatic variation in the use of *anyway* between Nigerian English and Ghanaian English, in terms of its frequency, position, collocational patterns, pragmatic functions and occurrence in different text types. The data for the study, which are retrieved from the Nigerian and Ghanaian components of the International Corpus of English, are examined from a variational pragmatic framework. The results indicate that overall, there is no significant variance in the frequency of *anyway* between Nigerian English and Ghanaian English; however, there are significant differences in the frequency of *anyway* across different text types between the two varieties. Moreover, while *anyway* occurs most frequently at clause-initial position in Ghanaian English, it occurs most often at clause-final position in Nigerian English. *Anyway* performs different pragmatic functions in Nigerian English and Ghanaian English, including signalling affirmation, which is a function that has not been identified in other varieties of English. The study, thus, contributes to the research on *anyway* as a pragmatic marker as well as pragmatic variation in Nigerian English and Ghanaian English.

Keywords

anyway – International Corpus of English – Ghanaian English – Nigerian English – pragmatic marker – variational pragmatics

1 Introduction

The English language was brought into West African countries such as Nigeria and Ghana through slave trade and colonialism from the 16th century to the 19th century (Gut, 2012; Jowitt, 2019). In Nigeria, English co-exists with over five hundred indigenous languages and cultures, such as Efik, Nupe and Ibibio, while in Ghana, it co-exists with about seventy-three ethnic languages and cultures including Akan, Ewe and Ga (Eberhard et al., 2023). All these languages and cultures have influenced the varieties of English used in these countries, leading to national varieties including Nigerian English (NigE; Jowitt, 2019) and Ghanaian English (GhE; Huber, 2012). English functions as the *de facto* state language in these countries, as it serves official functions in the domains of law, media, administration, education and commerce, among others (Gut, 2017). Sub-varieties of these national varieties have also been identified (Gut, 2017). Based on Schneider's (2007) Dynamic model of Postcolonial Englishes, the two varieties are at the nativisation stage, while NigE has been reported to show signs of approaching the endonormative stabilisation stage (Collins, 2022).

Existing studies on Nigerian and Ghanaian Englishes have examined the phonological (Huber, 2004; Akinola and Oladipupo, 2022), lexico-semantic (Brato, 2019; Taiwo, 2024) and syntactic (Akinlotan, 2018; Brato, 2020) features of these two varieties. Previous investigations of pragmatic features in the varieties have concentrated on politeness (Adegbija, 1989; Anderson 2009), pragmatic markers (Ogoanah, 2011; Amuzu et al., 2018), and speech acts (Mustapha, 2011; Anchimbe, 2018). Corpus pragmatic studies of these two varieties are still growing, and have largely investigated stance markers (Gut and Unuabonah, 2019), interjections (Thompson, 2019; Unuabonah and Daniel, 2020), pragmatic markers (Unuabonah, 2021; Unuabonah and Anderson, 2023), speech acts (Sarfo-Kantankah, 2021; Gut and Unuabonah, 2024) and general extenders (Oyebola et al., forthcoming). Some of these studies have explored single pragmatic markers such as *even* and *still* (Fuchs et al., 2013) and *now* (Oladipupo and Unuabonah, 2021) or groups of pragmatic markers (Unuabonah and Gut, 2018; Unuabonah, 2019) in NigE.

These studies reveal that there are dissimilarities in the rate of occurrence and functions of pragmatic markers between NigE and other world varieties such as British English. For instance, using the Nigerian and Great British components of the International Corpus of English (ICE), Unuabonah (2019) reveals that NigE users employ elaborative (e.g. *and*, *in addition*) and contrastive (e.g. *but*, *although*) discourse markers less regularly than British English users, but employ inferential discourse markers (e.g. *so*, *hence*) more often than British English users. Furthermore, Oladipupo and Unuabonah (2021) explore the use of the pragmatic marker *now* in ICE-Nigeria and indicate that NigE users utilise *now* as an emphasis pragmatic marker due to the impact of Yoruba, a major ethnic Nigerian language. Unuabonah (2021) opines that the low rate of occurrence of English emphasis pragmatic markers (e.g. *indeed*, *really*) in NigE, as indicated in Unuabonah and Gut (2018), may be due to a high frequency of different kinds of emphasis pragmatic markers borrowed from ethnic Nigerian languages (e.g. *o*, *jare*). There is even less attention on pragmatic markers in GhE where few English pragmatic markers such as *actually* (Sarfo-Kantankah and Yussif, 2019) or pragmatic markers borrowed from indigenous Ghanaian languages such as *paa* and *kraa* (e.g. Unuabonah and Anderson, 2023), have been explored. In some cases, pragmatic markers in NigE and GhE are explored within studies that cover several English varieties (e.g. Mazzon, 2019; Collins, 2022), thus limiting the extent to which specific attributes of these pragmatic markers in these two varieties are studied. Overall, the studies that address English pragmatic markers have shown that there are regional and text type differences in the use of the different pragmatic markers between these two varieties and other World Englishes (e.g. Mazzon, 2019; Collins, 2022).

One pragmatic marker that has not been extensively studied in NigE and GhE is *anyway*, which is a multifunctional pragmatic marker that is largely used to perform dismissive and resumptive functions (Aijmer, 2016). Previous studies show differences in the use of *anyway* in different varieties of English in terms of its frequency, positioning, collocational patterns and pragmatic functions (Aijmer, 2022). Although previous research indicates that pragmatic markers are used differently depending on text types, past studies pay less attention to text category variation in the use of *anyway* in diverse world Englishes, thus restricting full knowledge of the use of *anyway* in diverse text categories in both varieties. It is expected that there will be variation in the use of *anyway* between NigE and GhE, as noted for other pragmatic items in both varieties (Gut and Unuabonah, 2019). Specifically, it is expected that there will be similarities in the frequency of *anyway* in NigE and GhE and that *anyway* will occur less frequently in both varieties than in other native English

(ENL) varieties, based on previous studies on pragmatic items in NigE and GhE (Unuabonah and Gut, 2018; Gut and Unuabonah, 2019). It is also likely that there will be variations in relation to the positioning and collocational patterns of *anyway* in the two varieties, as noted in previous studies on *anyway* in different varieties of English (Aijmer, 2022). It is also expected that *anyway* will perform similar functions found in other world varieties since the different varieties belong to the same language. However, it is also probable that there are distinctive functions of *anyway* in NigE and GhE, not mentioned in ENL varieties due to the impact of ethnic languages and cultures on both varieties. In addition, it is likely that there is text type distinction in the usage of *anyway* in NigE and GhE, based on prior research (Gut and Unuabonah, 2019). As such, this study aims to extend pragmatic marker research in NigE and GhE by examining the pragmatic marker *anyway* in the two West African Englishes, which is imperative because pragmatic markers, including *anyway*, contribute to nativisation and endonormative stabilisation processes in postcolonial Englishes (Unuabonah and Gut, 2018). The following are the objectives of this study:

- (a) to examine similarities and differences in the frequency and position of *anyway* between NigE and GhE;
- (b) to explore similarities and dissimilarities in the collocational patterns and pragmatic functions of *anyway* between NigE and GhE;
- (c) to investigate text type distinction in the use of *anyway* in NigE and GhE.

In this section, we have provided the background on NigE and GhE, reviewed previous studies on the two varieties, and presented the aim and objectives of the present paper. In Section 2, we explore general pragmatic marker research and variational pragmatics, which is the perspective from which this study has been investigated. In Section 3, we review prior research on *anyway* and explain the research method in Section 4. Thereafter, we provide the results in Section 5 and discuss the findings in Section 6. We then conclude the paper in Section 7.

2 Pragmatic Markers and Variational Pragmatics

Pragmatic markers, equally referred to as discourse connectives and pragmatic particles, amongst others,¹ are syntactically optional lexical items including *well*, *you know*, and *certainly*, which signal the connection of an utterance to its linguistic and/or situational context (Buysse, 2012). Although they do not

¹ See Aijmer and Simon-Vandenberg (2011) for other names.

significantly add to the basic propositional meaning of an utterance, they are required in interpreting the utterance (Fraser, 1996, 2009). Pragmatic markers possess great meaning potential as new functions may emerge from the basic functions of the markers (Aijmer, 2013). They accomplish diverse kinds of textual and interpersonal roles such as indicating interruption, elaboration and contrast, and expressing attitude, politeness and affectivity (Brinton, 1996, 2008; Aijmer, 2013). As such, different types of pragmatic markers have been well examined in different varieties of English, including ENL such as British English (e.g. Torgersen et al., 2018), Australian English (e.g. Mulder et al., 2019), American English (e.g. Izutsu and Izutsu, 2022) and Irish English (e.g. Aijmer, 2022). These studies confirm that there are distinctions in the frequency, structure and roles of different pragmatic markers across different varieties of English. Despite the large volume of research on pragmatic markers in ENL varieties, there is less attention on varieties where English is primarily used as a second language (ESL). The few studies on ESL varieties explore English pragmatic markers such as *shame* in South African English (Huddleston and Fairhurst, 2013), *basically* in Singapore English (Lange 2021), and comment clauses such as *I guess* and *I believe* in Sri Lankan and Indian Englishes (Degenhardt, 2024). These studies show variation in the use of English pragmatic markers, some of which may be based on the impact of local languages on the use of English pragmatic markers in these varieties. Others explore pragmatic markers borrowed from local languages such as *si* (*you know, right*) in Kenyan English (Muro and Unuabonah, 2022), *mara* (*but*) in South African English (Unuabonah and Mtembu, 2023) and *sia* (an intensifier, a marker of youth identity) in Singapore English (Hafiz et al., 2024), which indicate the multilingual nature of postcolonial English varieties.

One popular approach that has been utilised in examining pragmatic markers in world Englishes is variational pragmatics. Variational pragmatics operates at the intersection between pragmatics and variational linguistics (Schneider and Barron 2008; Schneider 2021), necessitated by the need to understand language in use based on different social factors. It enables a “systematic analysis of the effects of regional and social factors on language in action and interaction” (Schneider and Barron, 2008: 1), as it allows the investigation of pragmatic variation in geographical and social spaces. The approach recognises two aspects of pragmatic analysis, which include types of language variation and levels of pragmatic analysis. In terms of the former, it distinguishes five macro-social variables of language variation such as region, ethnicity, social class, gender, and age, and their impact on language use. For the latter, it presents five levels of pragmatic analysis, which include the formal (e.g. pragmatic markers), the actional (e.g. illocutions), the interactional

(e.g. adjacency pairs), the topic (e.g. propositions) and the organisational levels (e.g. interruptions) (Schneider, 2012: 348). Besides these, text or discourse types (e.g. speech or writing) and social situations (e.g. chat, dispute), among others, have been included as important factors that could influence the variation of pragmatic features (Aijmer, 2013: 3). The current article focuses on the formal level of pragmatic analysis, which enables form-to-function mappings of the pragmatic marker *anyway* in two West African varieties of English across various spoken and written text types. In line with the principles of empiricity, contrastivity and comparability within variational pragmatics, the study examines the use of *anyway* in the Nigerian and Ghanaian sections of the International Corpus of English, with a view to exploring the impact of regional variation on its form and function across various text categories.

Variational pragmatics itself is subsumed under cross-cultural pragmatics as cross-cultural pragmatics encompasses comparative as well as pragmatic variation of linguistic elements across lingua-cultures, and provides a framework for “understanding the relationship between language and cultures from a strictly linguistic pragmatic point of view” (House and Kádár, 2021:3). Cross-cultural pragmatics comprises three major units of analysis: expressions (e.g. lexical or multiword units), speech acts (e.g. declarative, directives) and discourse levels (spoken, written or computer-mediated). It allows the use of both naturally occurring and elicited data, with its analytical procedure based on the principle of comparability. The present study contributes to the field of cross-cultural pragmatics as it analyses linguacultural variation in the use of the lexical (pragmatic) expression *anyway* in spoken and written GhE and NigE texts.

3 *Anyway* in Prior Research

Anyway has been widely explored in spoken and written texts, and described in terms of its position in utterances, communicative functions, grammaticalisation and variation across text categories and regional varieties. For instance, Ferrara (1997) examines three variants of *anyway*, two adverbials and a discourse marker, in recorded conversations of Texan speakers of English and finds a preponderance of the discourse marker *anyway* in the recorded speeches. She finds that the discourse marker *anyway* was either a teller or listener-trigger, the former being the predominant one, used to manage self-digression in discourse, and serve resumptive or topic-shift functions. The study also finds sociolinguistic variables such as region, education and rurality significant for the realisation of variants of the discourse marker in the study.

Park (2010) finds that *anyway* repairs conversational impasse especially where it stands alone in a Turn Construction Unit (TCU).

Fairhurst (2013) explores the use of *anyway* in East African Englishes (Kenyan and Tanzanian Englishes) and South African English, and opines that *anyway* in both varieties can function as a mitigation marker, a conversational management marker and a resumptive marker. She notes, however, that *anyway* occurs more frequently in South African English than in East African Englishes. Haselow (2015) introduces the notion of left and right periphery as a major determinant of the functional value of the pragmatic marker in utterances. According to him, *anyway* in the left periphery shows the end of an ongoing conversational activity and the beginning of a new one. He calls *anyway* on the right periphery a TCU, which reinforces the illocutionary force of an assertion and downtones the value of the information in the preceding conversation. On the left periphery, *anyway* frames an utterance before it is produced. He suggests that the functional classification of *anyway* in the peripheries is based on its structural position.

Aijmer (2016), in a comparative study, examines the meaning potential of *anyway* in Canadian, New Zealand and Philippine Englishes. She finds that *anyway*, as an Outside the Clause construction, has both formal and functional properties and suggests that the meaning potential of *anyway* must project information about “its position in the clause and the turn sequence, collocation, specific function based on activity types and regional specialisation” (Aijmer, 2016: 53). She finds that *anyway* can occupy the left (e.g. But uhm *anyway* I’m just about uh seeing the light) or right (e.g. No well we don’t need scales *anyway*) periphery and can stand alone. In the left periphery, it is resumptive, closes a turn sequence or marks a transition from one stage of discourse to another. On the right periphery, it is dismissive, restrictive or can be used as part of an interrogative clause, while in stand-alone position, it marks the close of an unresolved topic.

Ranger (2018) identifies four main functional values of *anyway* in spoken and written texts, and finds that it marks additive (e.g. and *anyway* we like being the underdogs), concessive (e.g. I was just going to stroke it, but it flew off *anyway*), resumptive (e.g. No that’s what I thought. [pause] *Anyway* she said I can see her) and corrective values (e.g. further outside appointments. [pause] Appointment *anyway*, and possibly appointments), (Ranger, 2018: 105–121). He further discusses other less frequently mentioned ones such as topic change (e.g. *Anyway*, I’m going to change the subject again), closure/conclusion (e.g. *Anyway*, Alf, thank you very much indeed er, for your call), and interrogative values (e.g. Well where did you go on the evening *anyway*?). He submits that the “parameters that contribute to determining the values of *anyway* from an

underdetermined schematic form concern essentially the position of *anyway* and the surrounding linguistic forms” (Ranger, 2018: 130).

Aijmer (2022) extends her previous findings on *anyway* as she compares the pragmatic marker in the Irish component of the International Corpus of English (ICE) with six other components of ICE (British, Australian, New Zealand, Canadian, Philippine, Singapore) and the Santa Barbara Corpus of American English. She finds that *anyway* is more frequent in Irish English followed by Canadian English. She confirms the flexibility of the pragmatic marker across all varieties examined and corroborates existing findings that *anyway* has a distinctive pragmatic profile based on its position in the periphery. In Irish English, the study finds that *anyway* favours the left periphery and collocates with other particles such as *and*, *but*, *so* and serves other specific functions apart from being resumptive. In the right periphery, on the other hand, it marks politeness, hedging and an emphasising function when used in *wh*-questions.

These studies have shed light on the forms and functions of *anyway* in many ENL varieties and a few ESL varieties (e.g. Philippine and Singapore Englishes). They have all established the significance of macro-social factors in the pragmatic analysis of the forms and functions of the marker across geographical and social spaces. They have also demonstrated the place of text types and communicative situations in determining the functions of the markers which have been characterised as “flexible and context-bound elements” whose “meaning potentials must contain information about their position in the clause, and the turn sequence, collocation, specific functions depending on the activity type and regional specialisation” (Aijmer, 2016: 52–53). The present study aims to extend existing research on *anyway* as it examines the impact of region and text type on the use of *anyway* in Nigerian and Ghanaian Englishes. This is to account for specific pragmatic realities of the use of *anyway* in the two West African English varieties.

4 Methodology

The data for this article involve tokens of *anyway* with its surrounding contexts retrieved from the International Corpus of English-Nigeria and Ghana (ICE-NIG and ICE-GH). Both corpora involve the English language usage of citizens of the respective countries who are 18 years and above and who at least have a secondary school education in the early 21st century (Wunder et al., 2010; Huber and Dako, 2013). Both corpora contain about a million words

of spoken texts, comprising monologues (e.g. unscripted speeches, broadcast news) and dialogues (e.g. conversations, broadcast interviews) as well as written texts, involving printed texts (e.g. news reports, academic writing) and non-printed texts (e.g. student examinations, student essays). However, legal presentations in ICE-NIG were excluded since these had not been collected for ICE-GH.

The corpora were searched with AntConc 3.4.4 (Anthony, 2015), while a manual search of the retrieved tokens was done so as to delete samples in which *anyway* surfaced in Pidgin utterances, as exemplified in (1), where it did not function as a pragmatic marker, as depicted in (2), or where it was repeated, as seen in (3):

- (1) na one cave but the thing dey interesting *anyway* (ICE-NIG_con_04)
- (2) Mr Issahaku's departure will not affect the bank in *anyway* and is confident (ICE-GH_S2B_019)
- (3) anyway *anyway anyway anyway* eh garri you've had garri sha (ICE-NIG_con_45)

To code *anyway* in the data in terms of its position, collocational patterns with other discourse-pragmatic features² (DPFs) and its function, insights were drawn from Ferrara (1997), Aijmer (2016, 2022) and other related literature. In terms of its position, *anyway* was coded as occupying the clause-initial position if it occurred before the subject. *Anyways* was at clause-medial position if it appeared anywhere within the clause and after the subject, while *anyways* was at clause-final position if it appeared at the end of the clause. *Anyways* occurred alone if it was not attached to any clause as in Example 7, section 5.1. *Anyways* could collocate with connectives such as *but*, *and*, *so*, or *well* or other DPFs such as *uh*, *ah*, *erm* amongst others; these too were coded alongside the forms and functions. The functions were coded based on functions established in previous studies (Ferrara, 1997; Aijmer, 2022) as well as those found in the data. Nine functional types were identified and coded: additive, resumptive, affirmative, dismissive, emphatic, mitigating, conversational impasse, topic change and topic continuation. These are discussed with their examples in Section 5.

² "Discourse-pragmatic features" is an umbrella word for a group of lexical items that perform textual and interpersonal functions (Pichler, 2016). They include pragmatic markers, question tags, interjections, intensifiers, quotatives, vocatives and general extenders.

5 Results

The results show that *anyway* has 133 tokens (138.7 pmw)³ in ICE-GH and 159 tokens (160.6 pmw) in ICE-NIG. Although the number of tokens of *anyway* is slightly higher in ICE-NIG than in ICE-GH, the difference is not significant at 0.21, based on log-likelihood tests. The following subsections present the results for positions, collocation patterns, pragmatic functions and text type variation.

5.1 *Position and Collocational Patterns of Anyway in GhE and NigE*

Figure 1 shows that *anyway* occurs in the initial and final positions of utterances in both ICE-GH and ICE-NIG. On very rare occasions, it may occur alone in both corpora. It is only in ICE-NIG that *anyway* occurs in the medial position; however, its frequency in that position is extremely rare.

As Figure 1 shows, there are differences in the positioning of *anyway* in both corpora. *Anyway* occurs more often at clause-initial position in ICE-GH than in ICE-NIG while it occurs more frequently at clause-final position in ICE-NIG than in ICE-GH. While the difference at clause-initial position of *anyway* in ICE-GH and ICE-NIG is not significant, the difference at clause-final position

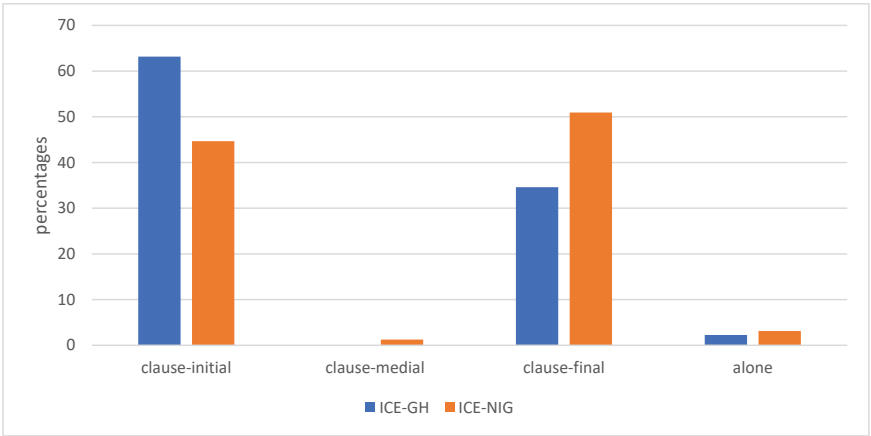


FIGURE 1 Position of *anyway* in ICE-GH and ICE-NIG

³ Per million words.

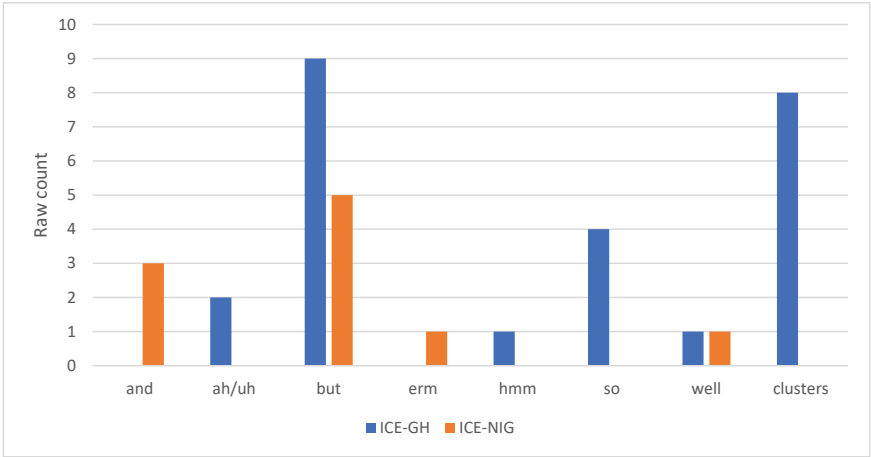


FIGURE 2 Collocational patterns of *anyway* in ICE-GH and ICE-NIG

in ICE-GH and ICE-NIG is significant at 0.01, based on log-likelihood tests. *Anyway* in initial, medial and final positions are cited in (4), (5) and (6), respectively; its appearance alone is shown in (7):

- (4) *But anyway* it's good especially for the young ones Ok so that their time would not be wasted (ICE-Gh_S1A_009).
- (5) erm what we expect from them what we seeing but I have to get the the the true name *anyway* of erm this wrestlers erm that are presently wrestling (ICE-NIG_com_30).
- (6) that there is nothing sacrosanct about a presidential assent on a bill since a president can refuse to sign *anyway* (ICE-NIG_com_03)
- (7) Speaker 2: you know I have limited time to read
Speaker 3: *anyway*
Speaker 1: I know please ANON help me out (ICE-NIG_con_03)

Figure 2 shows the kinds of DPFs that *anyway* collocates with as well as their frequencies.

Figure 2 shows that *anyway* occurs more frequently with *but* than other DPFs in both varieties, followed by *so* in ICE-GH, and *and* in ICE-NIG, as exemplified in (8), (9) and (10), respectively:

- (8) *but anyway* he scored a goal i learn he scored the only goal (ICE-GH_S1A_024)

- (9) *so anyway* <,> you are right <,> #00:26:20-9# But last time I heard something (ICE-GH_S1A_053)
- (10) *And anyway*, he's got his hands full for some time now with a sizzling affair of his own (ICE-NIG_nov_09)

It is only in ICE-GH that *anyway* co-occurs with a cluster of more than one DPF, as depicted in (11).

- (11) Is it because of the way you dress or what Is a casual something you have to put on something casual *uh but anyway* it's not it's not it's not bad either (ICE-GH_S1A_010)

5.2 *Discourse-Pragmatic Functions of Anyway in GhE and NigE*

Table 2 shows the nine functions that *anyway* performs in ICE-GH and ICE-NIG with their frequencies. The table indicates that *anyway* performs additive, resumptive, continuative, mitigation, affirmative, dismissive, and emphatic functions; it can also signal topic change and conversational impasse. *Anyway* is additive when it adds to an ongoing conversational turn; it is resumptive and continuative when it resumes a topic after an interruption. However, the resumptive function is slightly different from the continuative in the sense that topic continuation *anyway* is used by the speaker after a digression not instigated by the co-interactant. The resumptive *anyway*, on the other hand, is the result of a digression that was initiated by the other speakers in the conversation. *Anyway* may also signal topic change. It is mitigating when used to soften the effect of expressions in a turn on the co-interactant. Here, it indicates the speaker's awareness of the co-interactant's emotions and face wants. The affirmative *anyway* marks the speaker's confirmation of or agreement with the preceding comment while the dismissive is used to 'reject the potential inference' (Aijmer, 2022: 15). *Anyway* is emphatic when it features at the end of an interrogative sentence typically to express the speaker's negative emotions, and it can signal conversational impasse when interactants cannot reach an agreement on a topic of discourse and rather decide to change the topic or end the discussion.

Figure 3 shows that NigE users largely utilise *anyway* to perform additive, dismissive and resumptive functions, which are illustrated in (12), (13) and (14), respectively:

- (12) definitely erm Nigerians have got erm good prospects in erm wrestling and erm we've got erm best wrestlers *anyway* the two wrestlers are on the floor now and erm the referee started counting (ICE-NIG_com_30)

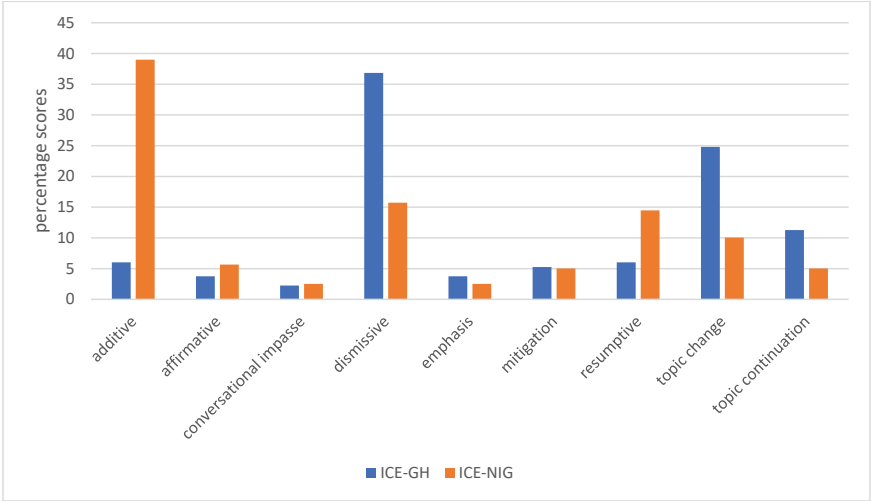


FIGURE 3 Functions of *anyway* in ICE-GH and ICE-NIG

- (13) Speaker: 1 erm because I don't want you to start telling me you stay in VI because you don't stay in VI I know you stay in Mushin you are a Mushin brought up
Speaker 2: oh well but you know that I'm polished *anyway* (ICE-NIG_con_06)
- (14) Speaker 2 that is why this national assembly is here to seek justice for everybody
Speaker 1 order please order please honourable colleagues order
Speaker 2 *anyway* Mister Speaker what I'm trying to say is that we all want justice (ICE-NIG_parl_02)

In (12), *anyway* signals an addition to a sports commentator's earlier comment in a wrestling match. The sports commentator, who after commenting on the chances of Nigerians in the competition, adds that Nigerians had the best of wrestlers, with *anyway* signalling the addition at clause-final position. In (13), *anyway* is dismissive in a statement where Speaker 2 indicates that they are polished despite being brought up in Mushin which is regarded as a low-brow area in Lagos, compared to VI (Victoria Island), which is a highbrow area in Lagos. *Anyways* is resumptive in (14) in a parliamentary debate where the addresser was interrupted by the Speaker of the House of Representatives due to some disturbance from other members of the parliament. He then uses *anyway* to signal the resumption of his earlier talk.

On the other hand, GhE users of English mainly employ *anyway* to perform dismissive, topic change and topic continuation functions, as exemplified in (15), (16), and (17), respectively:

- (15) Speaker C: only uhm those who know they would be coming out very soon or in the near future who are interested in distance education
 Speaker B: *But anyway* it's good especially for the young ones mm Ok so that their time would not be wasted (ICE-GH_S1A_009)
- (16) Speaker A: some feelings are for men only
 All speakers: <O>laugh<O/>
 Speaker A: i'm serious i wish you were in my shoes you will understand
 Speaker D: oh sorry eh
 Speaker B: *anyway* i was thinking when i give birth i want four kids right mhm i will
 name the first one Mercedes (ICE-GH_S1A_022)
- (17) some facebook girl like that oh hmm uhuh (omission) serious graduation I met this girl oh actually the girl was not <ugly?> *anyway* she was ugly/uglyyy yeah we all understand ugly/uglyyy (ICE-GH_S1A_034)

In (15), *anyway* signals a concessive tone; it dismisses the Speaker C's impression about distance learning, which Speaker B says may be beneficial or appealing to the younger generation. *Anyways* in (16) signals a topic change from a previous topic where other speakers were laughing and discussing love relationships to a new one initiated by Speaker B on the number of children they would like to have. In (17), it marks the speaker's continuation of their subject of discourse after a brief pause, possibly to ponder briefly on the accuracy or appropriateness of the adjective with which they described the subject.

In (18) and (19), both speakers use *anyway* to signal affirmation, a function that has not been identified for users of other varieties of English. Here, *anyways* is used to mark confirmation of or agreement with preceding comments.

- (18) Speaker A: it won't affect your academic
 Speaker B: it's true *anyways* it's true (ICE-NIG_con_46)
- (19) Speaker A: and sometimes they become(omission) even greater than those who seem to know everything or be so confident
 Speaker B: *anyways* you have a point there
 Speaker A: i do i do have a point (ICE-GH_S1A_041)

In (18), speaker B uses *anyway* to signal the confirmation (*it's true*) of Speaker A's utterance that an action will not affect the academic work of Speaker B, and in (19), Speaker B employs *anyway* to indicate their agreement (*you have a point there*) with Speaker A's opinion.

Other functions such as emphasis, conversational impasse and mitigation are illustrated in (20), (21) and (22), respectively:

(20) to be despised, unless he joined their Club and together they exploited the masses. What else was an education good for, *anyway*? In words, he could either join the elite or die. (ICE-GH_W2F_018)

(21) Speaker A: How do I give you the money <laughs>

Speaker A: *anyway* ...

Speaker B: To go to go begging for money from elsewhere For* Cause all along you (ICE-GH_S1A_003)

(22) Speaker B: wow but i said i've got an offer for you oh uh/what if dey/they like your buttocks *anyway*

Speaker A: well you know me I am a very good Christian I come from a very good Christian home my mum is a deaconess my grandfather is an elder a church elder for that matter so my a we were not brought up like that and well I I won't do anything for money (ICE-GH_S1A_008)

Example (20) exemplifies *anyway* at the end of a *wh*-interrogative which has been described as polemic, emphatic and known to project a negative connotation (Ranger, 2018; Aijmer, 2022). In the example, it expresses the speaker's critical view of the elite and their exploitative tendencies and conveys a negative perception of education and the educated class as people who dominate politics. The interrogative clause was not uttered to demand an answer but to express the speaker's exasperation on the subject of the conversation. In (21), *anyway* stands alone and it is used to manage the conversation as the speaker does not seem to know how the issue discussed will be resolved. Speaker B needs financial assistance and engages Speaker A for possible assistance. Speaker A responds (*how do I give you the money*), laughs and uses a stand-alone *anyway* to manage the turn from being misinterpreted and from ending in a gridlock. *Anyway* in (22) has a mitigating effect; it is used by Speaker B to weaken the negative effect of the taboo word in the utterance (buttocks), which Speaker A might find unacceptable. The response from Speaker A confirms that they did not pick offense but rather went ahead to establish the fact that their religious and moral orientation did not permit promiscuity for any personal gains.

5.3 *Variation in the Use of Anyway in GhE and NigE Text Types*

The use of *anyway* in spoken and written text categories as well as in the individual text categories in the ICE corpora was also examined. Overall, *anyway* occurred more frequently in ICE-GH (N = 94; 178.5pmw) and ICE-NIG (N = 141; 239.3pmw) spoken texts than in ICE-GH (N = 39; 90.2pmw) and ICE-NIG (N = 18; 44.9pmw) written texts. *Anyway* occurred in 15 ICE-NIG text categories and 12 ICE-GH text categories, as shown in Table 1, out of the 25 text categories that were examined in the corpora. This indicates that there is a bit more spread of *anyway* in ICE-NIG text types than in ICE-GH text categories.

Table 1 indicates that *anyway* occurred most frequently in ICE-NIG demonstrations, conversations, and phone calls, while it occurred most frequently in ICE-GH social letters, phone calls, and conversations. *Anyway* is largely used to perform additive functions in ICE-NIG demonstrations (N = 9; 75%) and phone calls (N = 6; 75%), as in (23) and (24), respectively. In ICE-NIG conversations,

TABLE 1 Variation in the use of *anyway* across ICE-NIG and ICE-GH text categories

Text categories	ICE-NIG (pmw)	ICE-GH (pmw)	Log-likelihood (Based on raw count)	Sig.	
Demonstrations	582.7	0			
Conversations	531	249	13.33	< 0.001	***
Phone calls	387.9	405	6.46	0.011	*
Commentaries	220.6	49.8	5.98	0.014	**
Novels	199.9	163	0.04	0.844	
Social letters	199.1	924.5	17.18	0.000	***
Skills/hobbies	149.9	0			
Broadcast discussions	148.9	107.7	0.06	0.803	
Broadcast interviews	98.3	85.9	0.00	0.975	
Unscripted speeches	81	0			
Parliamentary debates	49.6	0			
Cross-examinations	48.8	0			
Broadcast talks	24.9	71.4	0.00	0.982	
Classroom lessons	24.2	241.1	10.07	0.002	**
Popular writings	12.5	23	0.37	0.542	
Non-broadcast talks	0	149.3			
Reportage	0	19.7			
Total	160.6	138.7	1.57	0.210	

anyway is often employed to fulfill additive (N = 29; 30.2%), resumptive (N = 18; 18.8%) and dismissive functions (N = 15; 15.6%), as in (25), (26) and (27), respectively.

- (23) I need to erm let me quickly search for a pink stud yes I found one erm okay I'm gonna mix it with fuchsia pink *anyway* to make it look trendy and more attractive (ICE-NIG_dem_11)
- (24) Speaker 1: pres – present Goodluck Jonathan as being incapable of managing the problem
 Speaker 2: oh
 Speaker 1: erm we we erm the whole world knows that *anyway* (ICE-NIG_ph_04)

In (23), while demonstrating how to add accessories to a client's temporary henna hand tattoos (*laali*), the speaker informs the audience that she would select pink studs, and uses *anyway* to signal additional information that she would do so to make the design look more trendy and attractive. Since demonstrations involve teaching and illustrating different phenomena, the addresser will likely have many reasons to provide the audience with additional information; such additional information may be marked by different discourse markers, including *anyway*. In (24), Speaker 1 indicates that former Nigerian President Goodluck Jonathan is incapable of managing the crisis in the country and uses *anyway* to signal additional information that the whole world knows he can.

- (25) Speaker 1: hey that's what I'm saying that all politicians they're fraudster they are liars they're robbers they are anything I can call them
 Speaker 1 see that is why I hate politics
 Speaker 2 they are even killers *anyway* (ICE-NIG_con_34)
- (26) Speaker 2: what has always been my challenge about Jonathan even after Yar'Adua had been sick
 (...) ⁴
 Speaker 1: maybe we should even have three vice presidential vice presidents representing the various geographical zones and one President so that if a particular president dies

4 There was a long discussion by the interactants on different past potential vice-presidential nominees and the system of government in Nigeria.

Speaker 2: or perhaps we need to go back to a confederal system but *anyway* my whole concern with Jonathan which I hope that he has been smart enough (ICE-NIG_con_28)

(27) Speaker 1 but what's the what's the concept Alliance

Speaker 2 mhm

Speaker 2 I don't really know

Speaker 2 I know it's a French school *anyway* (ICE-NIG_con_22)

Conversations involve different kinds of informal interactions during which interlocutors may discuss different kinds of topics, indicating contrasting opinions on topics, sometimes moving onto different topics, and then returning to previous topics. To sustain the discourse, interactants may also provide additional information to contribute to ongoing talk, clarify statements or provide reasons for certain actions (Thornbury and Slade 2006); *anyway* may sometimes be employed to signal some of these functions. In (25), Speaker 1 indicates that politicians are fraudsters, liars and robbers; Speaker 2 adds to this list by indicating that the politicians are also killers and uses *anyway* to mark this additional information. In (26), Speaker 2 talks about their grouse with the former President, Goodluck Jonathan; however, the discussion goes into other related topics such as previous potential vice-presidential nominees and the system of government in Nigeria by the interactants. Speaker 2 then utilises *anyway* to signal their return to their previous complaint about Goodluck Jonathan. In (27), Speaker 2 employs *anyway* to signal the contrast between what they do not know (the concept of Alliance française) and what they know (it's a French School).

In ICE-GH social letters, out of the 29 instances of *anyway* in the text type, 14 were used to indicate topic change (48.3%), as in (28), while in ICE-GH phone calls, *anyway* largely performs both dismissive (N = 6; 28.6%) and topic change (N = 5; 23.8%) functions, as in (29) and (30), respectively; in ICE-GH conversations, *anyway* is largely used to perform dismissive functions (27 out of 50 cases; 54%), as in (31).

(28) Dear <@>Ekwo</@>, Very sorry for not writing you early. *anyway* how is life in Germany? (ICE-GH_W1B_004)

(29) Speaker B: but they have their different arguments about that <,> and they do make sense but *anyway* I figured out what each of them wanted so <,> we're on the same side now (ICE-GH_S1A_097)

- (30) Speaker B: I am Thomas Nana Poku <unclear>word</unclear> Kwashie
 Speaker A: Ok uhm when did you start using your full name mmh/hmm
 uhm *anyway* how are you (ICE-GH_S1A_096)
- (31) Speaker B: oh oh okay but they used to say this thing and I mean at school
 back at school I mean we all ate the rice and the gari but/*anyway* I didn't
 seem to have any beriberi (ICE-GH_S1A_011)

Social letters are written informal correspondence between interlocutors in which writers inform their recipients of different personal issues as well as enquire about matters that affect the interactants. As such, *anyway* may be employed to signal a change from one topic to the other, as in (28), where the writer apologises to the addressee for not writing sooner, and then uses *anyway* to signal a topic change that focuses on enquiring about the addressee's welfare. While ICE phone calls involve informal non-face-to-face-interactions, conversations are informal face-to-face-interactions during which interactants express different opinions and move from one topic to the other. As such, *anyway* may perform dismissive functions, as in (29), where the speaker on a phone call uses *anyway* to signal the speaker's identification of arguments raised by different people despite the differences in the arguments, and signal topic change, as in (30), where the speaker switches from asking when the addressee started using their full name to asking after the addressee's welfare. In (31), the speaker uses *anyway* in a conversation to signal a concessive situation: they did not get beriberi despite eating a lot of rice and gari (which lack Vitamin B1) while in school.

Table 2 also shows that *anyway* occurred more significantly in ICE-NIG conversations and commentaries than in the ICE-GH counterparts, while it occurred more significantly in ICE-GH phone calls, social letters and classroom lessons than in the ICE-NIG equivalents. The table also shows that *anyway* did not appear in ICE-NIG non-broadcast talks and reportage, neither did it appear in ICE-GH demonstrations, skills/hobbies, unscripted speeches, parliamentary debates, and cross-examinations. There was also a low preference for *anyway* in ICE-NIG broadcast talks, classroom lessons and popular writings and in ICE-GH popular writings and reportage.

6 Discussion

This study set out to (a) examine similarities and differences in the frequencies and positions of *anyway* between NigE and GhE; (b) explore similarities and

dissimilarities in the collocational patterns and pragmatic functions of *anyway* between NigE and GhE; and (c) investigate text type distinction in the use of *anyway* in NigE and GhE. In this sub-section, we discuss the effects of the outcomes for the pragmatics of GhE and NigE and relate the findings to the use of *anyway* in other world Englishes.

With regards to the frequency of *anyway* in the two varieties, the study shows that there is no significant variance in the frequency of *anyway* between GhE and NigE. The similarity in the frequency of *anyway* is expected since NigE and GhE share linguistic similarities such as in the use of syntactic features and stance markers (Bamiro, 1995; Gut and Unuabonah, 2019). However, the frequency of *anyway* is lower in NigE and GhE compared to ENL varieties such as British English, at least when considering face-to-face interactions and phone calls (see Aijmer, 2022). The lower rate of occurrence of *anyway* in these varieties compared to ENL varieties may be linked to the influence of ethnic languages, where equivalents from indigenous languages are sometimes used in place of the English forms in ESL varieties. This can be seen in the case of *sha* in NigE (Unuabonah and Oladipupo, 2018). *Sha*, which is the shortened form of Yoruba *amosha*, is similar to *anyway* and performs similar functions with *anyway* in NigE. Moreover, Fairhurst (2013) also confirms that *anyway* occurs less frequently in East African Englishes, which are ESL varieties, than in South African English, represented by ICE-South Africa that captures White South African English, which is an ENL variety (Jeffery, 2003). As previous studies have shown, a number of English stance markers and pragmatic markers occur less frequently in these two varieties than in ENL varieties (e.g. British English; Unuabonah and Gut, 2018; Unuabonah, 2019; Gut and Unuabonah, 2019), and this is also confirmed for *anyway*.

In relation to the positioning of *anyway* in the clauses, the study shows that *anyway* occurs more frequently at clause-initial position in GhE, and this is similar to what obtains in American English, Canadian English, Philippine English and Singapore English (Aijmer, 2022). This preference for the clause-initial position in GhE may indicate a greater influence of American English on GhE, at least in relation to the positioning of *anyway*. The opposite is the case for the position of *anyway* in NigE where there is the preference for *anyway* at clause-final position. The preference for the clause-final position of *anyway* in NigE is similar to what obtains in Irish English, British English, Australian English and New Zealand English (Aijmer, 2022), which may reflect a greater influence of British English on NigE, at least in relation to *anyway*. It is also probable that the preference for the clause-final position of *anyway* in NigE is tied to the preference for the clause-final position of *sha*, which shares similar functions with *anyway* (Unuabonah and Oladipupo, 2018).

Regarding the collocation of *anyway* with other DPFs, the frequency of *but* as the highest collocating DPF with *anyway* is similar to what obtains in other varieties (Aijmer, 2022). *But* may have been preferred since it reinforces the dismissive function of *anyway*. What is also noticeable is that when *and* co-occurs with *anyway*, *anyway* is used to perform additive functions. This confirms the suggestion that the functions of *anyway* may be influenced by the item it collocates with (Aijmer, 2022). In terms of the discourse-pragmatic roles of *anyway* in the two West African varieties, *anyway* performs functions that have been identified in other varieties, which is to be expected since they are varieties of one language. However, this study confirms the use of *anyway* in signalling affirmation, a function that has not been identified in other varieties. Thus, the affirmative function may be a distinctive function of *anyway* in West African English varieties. Furthermore, there seems to be some variation in the functions of *anyway* between the two varieties. While GhE users largely utilise *anyway* to perform dismissive and topic change functions, NigE users mainly employ *anyway* to perform additive functions. It appears this variation is due to NigE users' utilisation of *sha* (Yoruba *anyway*) to perform, not only additive functions, but also dismissive functions (Unuabonah and Oladipupo, 2018). Thus, it seems NigE users rely less on *anyway* to perform other functions since they can utilise *sha* to perform other roles such as dismissive and mitigation functions.

In relation to the use of *anyway* across different spoken and written text categories in GhE and NigE, the study reveals that overall, *anyway* occurs more often in spoken text types (which is typical of many pragmatic markers) than in written text categories except in GhE social letters, which may be linked to the informality of social letters. In both varieties, *anyway* generally occurs more often in informal spoken texts, represented by conversations and phone calls. However, in NigE, *anyway* also occurs very frequently in monologues, represented by demonstrations and commentaries, which confirms previous studies that NigE users utilise pragmatic markers very commonly in monologues (Unuabonah, 2019). The frequent use of *anyway* and other pragmatic markers in NigE monologues may be linked to a need to make the monologues more engaging for the addressees, and indicate how different pieces of information fit into one another in the interactions. On the other hand, *anyway* does not occur very often in GhE monologues, which might indicate that pragmatic markers do not generally occur very frequently in GhE monologues; however, this latter point needs to be investigated further to confirm this. For GhE, *anyway* features more often in social letters and novels which contain informal interactions; this foregrounds the connection of *anyway* to informality. In addition, there seem to be some links between a few text types

and the functions of *anyway* within individual varieties. For instance, speakers in NigE monologues and phone calls largely employ *anyway* in performing additive functions while speakers in GhE phone calls mainly utilise *anyway* in carrying out dismissive and topic change functions. While speakers in NigE conversations utilise *anyway* in carrying out additive functions, speakers in GhE conversations use it for performing dismissive functions. This might indicate that regional variety has a greater influence on the use of *anyway* than text type, at least, in African Englishes.

7 Conclusion

This study has examined the use of *anyway* in two West African English varieties: GhE and NigE. The similarities in the use of *anyway* between GhE and NigE may be based on their similar socio-historical development and demographic proximity while the differences may be based on communicative preferences in the genres. The study also identifies an affirmative function of *anyway* in the two varieties that has not been discussed in previous studies. Notwithstanding, it appears that GhE shares some structural features with American English in terms of positioning, while NigE shares some structural features with British English. Thus, this study contributes, not only to the examination of *anyway* as a pragmatic marker, but also, to pragmatic variation between these two West African varieties and between these African varieties and other world Englishes. However, this study has utilised corpora that contain only offline interactions; hence, further studies may explore the use of *anyway* in corpora that contain online interactions which are sites where users increasingly interact with one another. This might reveal other functions of *anyway* among speakers of African varieties of English. Moreover, this study has focused on only two varieties; thus, further studies on *anyway* are still required in other African varieties of English so as to endorse or negate some of the findings of this article. In addition, it is also necessary to examine other discourse-pragmatic features in African Englishes, which will further contribute to the pragmatics of African Englishes.

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Biographical Notes

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