A Socio-Pragmatic Study of Multifunctional Discourse Marker i:h in Iraqi Spoken Arabic

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Abstract

In the current study, the objective is to investigate and describe the pragmatic roles of the discourse marker i:h in Iraqi Spoken Arabic, more specifically in the western region of the city of Fallujah. This piece of work is distinguished from others of its like in the Iraqi context due to the fact that it is the first of its kind to be carried out from a pragmatic point of view. There were twelve distinct cases that were included in the questionnaire, which had a total of one hundred questions in order to collect data. The pragmatic approach proposed by Fraser (1990) was modified for this study. This technique was chosen because it takes into account the distinction between content and pragmatic meaxning. The results demonstrated that the discourse marker i:h in Iraqi Spoken Arabic is multifunctional, and it conveys at least 11 different meanings. This was determined by analyzing the context in which it is used. Some of the participants recommended the addition of additional functions. At the level of both the age variable and the gender variable, there was not a substantial enough difference between the two groups to be considered significant.

Keywords

Spoken Arabic, Discourse Marker**,** Iraqi Context**,** Pragmatic Approach

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Introduction

According to Brown and Yule (1983), discourse analysis is a method that focuses on the study of language in use and investigates the manner in which linguistic forms are described, as well as their objectives and functions. In light of the fact that the primary purpose of language is to facilitate the exchange of

meanings among individuals of the speech community, it is possible to draw the conclusion that discourse can be comprehended from a pragmatic point of view. According to Yule (1996), pragmatics is the study of how meaning is communicated by the one who produces the utterance, who is the speaker or writer, and how the meaning is perceived by the person who receives it, who is the listener or reader.

Discourse markers are linguistic features that are mostly used in oral discussions in order to tie together units of discourse (Fraser, 1990; Lenk, 1998; Schiffrin, 1987). Some examples of discourse markers include: but, well, well, but, still, and, huh, okay, I mean, so, you know, and so on. The significance of discourse markers is demonstrated by two main factors. Firstly, they help maintain the coherence of spoken discourse, which is important for understanding the meaning of individual utterances (Schiffrin, 1987). Secondly, they help clarify the communicative intentions of the people involved.

Since the 1970s, researchers have been examining discourse markers as a field of study. From that point forward, they have developed into an interesting field of study within the academic field of applied linguistics (Wang, 2011). Labov and Fanshel (1977) were the ones who initially presented the concept of discourse markers. It was brought to their attention that discourse markers are regarded as linguistic components that are present in spoken speech. In their proposal, they suggested that a discourse marker, such as "well," would indicate a subject that has been discussed in the past and that interlocutors are already familiar with. In a similar vein, it could indicate a change in subject matter or an interruption.

The concept of discourse markers was later presented by Levinson in his book named "Pragmatics" (1983). In this book, Levinson believed discourse markers to be a category of linguistic phrases that should be investigated. Levinson (1983) made a similar observation to Labov and Fanshel, stating that "there are many words and phrases in English, and no doubt in most languages, which indicate the relationship between an utterance and the prior discourse" (p. 87). According to Levinson (1983), on page 87, he presented a list of discourse markers that included the following: "*but, therefore, in conclusion, to the contrary, still, however, anyway, well, besides, actually, all in all, so, after all,* etc."

It is generally conceded that such words have at least a component of meaning that resists truth-conditional treatment ... what they seem to do is indicate, often in very complex ways, just how the utterance that contains them is a response to, or a continuation of, some portion of the prior discourse". (Levinson, 1983, pp. 87-88). Every single linguistic unit is, without a doubt,

intended to work in conjunction with another unit in order to facilitate the comprehension of the meaning of discourse. Linguistic aspects assist us in comprehending the entirety of the content that interlocutors are attempting to communicate. According to Clark (1996), there are four primary pieces of evidence that demonstrate that individuals who participate in talk-in-interaction are able to comprehend the information that is being communicated: "the use of presupposition of understanding occurs when interlocutors suitably respond to each other, assertions of understanding takes place when the interlocutors produce backchannels such as huh, ah… etc, displaying of understanding, i.e., answers to questions that display how the question was interpreted, and finally, exemplification, i.e., the repetition and paraphrasing also let interlocutors check for an acceptable understanding" (Clark, 1996).

In 1993, Hockey made the observation that direct messages do not significantly contribute to the meaning of the conversation. Indeed, they are connected to the structure of the discourse that is being discussed. It has been observed that "interlocutors tend to produce backchannels, short responses usually of acknowledgement". For the purpose of keeping the flow of communication continuing, these responses give each other the impression that they have understood what was stated during the conversation.

Markers and pragmatics

The term 'discourse marker' could be seen as a 'fuzzy concept' (Jucker & Ziv, 1998, p. 2) due to the variety of labels applied by scholars, 'cue phrases' (Knott & Dale, 1994), 'cue words' (Horn et al., 2001), 'discourse connectives' (Blakemore, 1987; Blakemore, 1992), 'discourse operators' (Redeker, 1990; Redeker, 1991), 'discourse particles' (Aijmer, 2002; Hansen, 1997; Hansen, 1998; Schourup, 1986), 'pragmatic connectives' (Stubbs, 1983; Van Dijk, 1979), 'pragmatic markers' (Anderson, 2001; Brinton, 1996; Fraser, 1996), and 'discourse markers' (Fraser, 2006; Müller, 2005; Schiffrin, 1987; Algouzi, 2014). Due to the fact that the latter appears to be the term that is more commonly recognized and employed, it has been chosen in this study.

Fraser's (1990, 1998, 2006, 2009a) perspective on discourse markers is situated inside a larger framework that has an impact on the analysis of markers. This is similar to the approach that Schiffrin takes. To be more explicit, Fraser's theoretical framework is concerned with the meaning of sentences, and more particularly, how a certain sort of pragmatic marker in a phrase might tie the message that is delivered by that sentence to the message that was conveyed by a sentence that came before it. Fraser's starting point is the classification of types of pragmatic meaning, and within that classification, the description of how some pragmatic commentary markers (discourse markers) "signal a relation between the discourse segment which hosts them and the prior discourse segment" (Fraser 2009a: 296). This means that in contrast to Schiffrin's (1987a) approach, which began with the intention of taking into account the use and distribution of markers in everyday discourse, Fraser's approach begins with the classification of pragmatic meaning.

A distinction between content and pragmatic meaning is essential to the paradigm that Fraser has developed. The meaning of the content is referred to as the referential meaning, which can be defined as "a more or less explicit representation of some state of the world that the speaker intends to bring to the hearer's attention by means of the literal interpretation of the sentence" (1990: 385).

According to Andersen (2001), discourse markers are "a class of short, recurrent linguistic items that generally have little lexical import but serve significant pragmatic functions in conversation" (p. 39).

Blackmore (1987) made the discovery that "discourse markers do not have a fixed meaning, but rather there is a procedural meaning that comprises of different instructions on how

to modify the conceptual meaning of a given utterance." This discovery was based on the Relevance Theory Framework that Serper and Wilso (1986) developed. In addition, she asserts that the act of communicating information through a speech might be significant for some functions, as will be demonstrated in the following:

a. It enables the creation of contextual implications through the use of words such as "also, *therefore*, *so, too.*"

b. It supports the formation of assumptions using words like "*moreover*, *furthermore*, *after all.*"

c. It presents a contradictory statement in relation to a prior presupposition such as "*nevertheless*, *however, but*, *still*"

d. The purpose of an utterance in the discourse can be identified by discourse markers such as "by the way, finally, incidentally, and anyway."

Regarding the method in which this particular category of linguistic phrases ought to be characterized, researchers have consistently been in disagreement. Take into consideration the following remarks regarding Levinson's approach to the treatment of speech markers in English:

"...there are many words and phrases in English, and no doubt most languages, that indicate the relationship between an utterance and the prior discourse. Examples are utterance-initial use of *but, therefore, in conclusion, to the contrary, still, however, anyway, well, besides, actually, all in all, so,* after *all,* and so on. It is generally conceded that such words have at least a component of meaning that resists truth- conditional treatment […] what they seem to do is indicate, often in very complex ways, just how the utterance that contains them as a response to, or a continuation of, some portion of the prior discourse". (Levinson, 1983, p. 87 et seq.)

Irrespective of the various labels assigned to discourse markers, they possess certain distinct identifying qualities. Discourse markers are a characteristic of spoken language rather than written language (Brinton, 1996; Lenk, 1998; Schiffrin, 1987). In addition, they establish connections between consecutive and non-consecutive utterances (Halliday, 2004; Lenk, 1998; Schiffrin, 1987). Furthermore, the use of discourse markers significantly contributes to the order and coherence of speech (Lenk, 1998; Schiffrin, 1987). Furthermore, they frequently appear at the beginning of sentences since they typically introduce the following sentence (Aijmer, 2002; Fraser, 1990, 1993; Lenk, 1998; Redeker, 1991; Schiffrin, 2001). In addition, they can also occur in the middle and at the end of an utterance (Fraser, 1993; Lenk, 1998). Discourse markers are classified as multifunctional, as indicated by Lenk (1998), Fraser (1990), and Schiffrin (1987).

Brinton (1996) classified the functions of discourse markers down into two distinct categories: textual and interpersonal. This classification was based on the research conducted by a large number of academics. The textual category encompasses a variety of purposes, including but not limited to the following: attracting the attention of the listener, starting discourse, ending discourse, marking a transition in topic, acting as a filler or a turn holder, repairing discourse, indicating previous or new information, and emphasizing sequential reliance. Interpersonal communication, on the other hand, refers to the process of achieving collaboration through activities such as confirming shared assumptions, expressing understanding, requesting confirmation, expressing politeness, and expressing a reaction to the speech that came before it.

Iraqi Spoken Arabic contains a segment known as "i:h" (Yeah), which is a discourse marker that is commonly used by people in everyday conversations. It is possible to interpret it in a number of different ways depending on the context in which it is used. It is important to let you know that we referred to the expression that was just mentioned as a discourse marker because it fulfilled at least one of the characteristics that Schourup (1999) proposed. She made the

observation "….the typical DM referred to in the literature is a syntactically optional expression that does not affect the truth-conditions associated with an utterance it introduces and is used to relate this utterance to the immediately preceding utterance" (Schourup, 1999, p. 234). Optionality, non-truth-conditionality, connection, connectedness, weak clause association, initiality, orality, and multi-categoriality are the characteristics that make up these characteristics.

In the Arabic language spoken in Iraq, the primary objective of this research is to investigate the various pragmatic functions that the discourse markers "i:h" provide. In addition, we intend to investigate two variables, namely age and gender, and to investigate the ways in which these variables can have an impact on the manner in which the pragmatic functions of this discourse marker are presented.

When it comes to ""their basic starting points, their definition of, and their method of analysis" different people have different points of view on DMs (Schiffrin, 1987, page 31). Not only is discourse a unit of language, but it is also a process of social interaction, according to the sociolinguistic perspective. Discourse markers are non-obligatory utterance-initial objects that act in connection to continuing discussion and text, according to Schiffrin's definition (Schiffrin, 1987, page 31). Discourse markers are defined as "sequentially dependent elements which bracket units of talk" According to this point of view, discourse markers can be classified into different word classes. These word classes include conjunctions (and, but, or), interjections (oh), adverbs (now, then), and lexicalized phrases (know, I mean).

Fraser's pragmatic approach is yet another viewpoint that might be considered. His framework is dependent on distinguishing between the meaning of content and the meaning of pragmatic aspects. "a more or less explicit representation of some state of the world that the speaker intends to bring to the hearer's attention by means of the literal interpretation of the sentence". (1990, page 385) is an example of the referential meaning of the term "content meaning."

The notion of pragmatic meaning pertains to the communicative intention of the speaker, which refers to the direct (not implied) "message the speaker intends to convey when uttering the sentence" (Fraser, 1990, p. 386).

Literature Review

Numerous studies have been conducted in regard to the subject of discourse markers. A good instance of this is Kanakri and Al-harahsheh (2013), who conducted research on the pragmatic functions of the word "ʔa:di," which, in Jordanian Spoken Arabic, indicates the concept of normally. The twenty discussions that were recorded on video were analysed. A theoretical framework was developed by them through the use of discourse analysis, conversation analysis, and translation theory. Through the use of the pragmatic strategy, the translation of the meanings of ʔa:di was carried out. Furthermore, the results of the study demonstrated that the discourse marker ʔa:di was used 105 times and served a variety of responsibilities. To ask for permission, to express the sense of disapproval, and so on are all examples of situations in which the pragmatic meaning of a time depends on the context in which it was used.

A further research project on discourse markers was carried out by Kanakri and Al-Harahsheh (2013). Particular attention was paid to the Jordanian context in their research. The researchers conducted an investigation of the pragmatic functions of the Arabic term "ṭayyib" and the equivalent, "ṭaab." This research takes a variety of methods to the problem. Participants in the study include thirty-six Jordanian Arabic speakers who are native speakers and are currently enrolled in higher education. Their research revealed that this particular discourse marker is functional in Jordanian Spoken Arabic, and that it serves ten different pragmatic roles. Among

these, we may point out: *to show a break of a certain discourse to show objection to what has been said so far, an introduction of a new topic, f challenge or confrontation,* and others.

Naoum (2013) examined the inferential role of "I mean" and its Arabic equivalents in literary discourse, together with translation, in order to highlight one of the fundamental characteristics of an interactive spontaneous speech. One of the findings of their research was that: *"I mean* is another way of saying things. It identifies the process of deducing implicatures from the speaker's preceding utterances which are (mostly) thought to convey weak and indeterminate implicatures. 'I mean' is not always associated with logical consequences (i.e. inferences); therefore, the effect that 'I mean' has on an utterance is to make things clear by identifying the intended implicatures of the speaker through making use of the unconscious (and sometimes conscious) shared cognitive environment between the speaker and the he". (Naoum, 2013, p. 25)

In 2015, Al Rousan did a study that focused on the online interactions among young Saudis. In this study, he made an investigation into the usage of the discourse marker known as "maʕ nafsak" in Saudi Arabic. This marker literally means "with yourself." The data acquired for the study consisted of 262 natural online discussions that were collected from 17 young Saudi students through user-diaries. Additionally, there were 132 occurrences of "maʕ nafsak" that took place. The examination of the data revealed a total of twelve pragmatic functions that are associated with the discourse marker maʕ nafsak in Saudi Arabic. According to Al Rousan, the discourse marker known as "maʕ nafsak" plays a significant role in facilitating the production and comprehension of processes relevant to a particular oral interaction.

In his 2017 study, Buysse investigated the pragmatic functions of the discourse marker "you know" in both native English speakers and English language learners. The purpose of the research was to provide a description of the various pragmatic interpretations of the discourse marker used in speech. There are nine pragmatic uses that are attested for the phrase "you know," according to the results of the research. Some of these functions include introducing a proposition, expanding on a prior topic, highlighting significant points in the discourse, and so on.

A descriptive qualitative study was carried out by Al-Rawafi and Gunawan (2019) on the topic of the term "Insha'Allah" in the context of teachers' conversations during everyday school activities. In the name of Allah, the purpose of their research was to investigate the illocutionary acts of the conditional pragmatic marker (CPM) that are used in the conversations of teachers. According to the findings of the study, the CPM, insha'Allah, is responsible for a variety of illocutionary forces when it is used in the discourse of teachers. In addition to being expressive, they are also assertive, directive, and commissive. "CPM is a multi-purpose expression in different contexts of teachers' talks and the possibility of the illocutionary force is varying according to the speakers' faith background and the understanding of the expression itself" they believe (Al-Rawafi & Gunawan, 2019, p. 522). This is according to these authors. In their statement, they mentioned that if the conditional pragmatic marker Insha'Allah is used inappropriately between the interlocutors, it could lead to a face-threatening act, such as failing to promise something.

During the analysis of the interchangeable Syrian Arabic DMs /yaʕni/ and /ʔinnu/, which signify "I mean," Habib (2021) utilized both quantitative and traditional variationist sociolinguistic approaches. She conducted an analysis of the speech of 72 individuals, including 22 adult couples, 50 kids, and 72 individuals from the town of Oyoun Al-Wadi in Syria. In this particular study, age and gender were both taken into consideration as independent variables. The use of the /ʔinnu/ was more prevalent among females and children. Females were more likely to use the /ʔinnu/ than males, whereas males were more likely to use it than females.

Alqahtani (2023) conducted an investigation into the uses of the colloquial Arabic discourse marker /bʕdın/. The purpose of this investigation was to assist communicators in being

aware of pragmatic functions in their communication and to prevent any sorts of misunderstandings from occurring. Due to the fact that social media platforms offer natural communication situations, the research evaluated a total of one hundred and five posts that used the word "bʕdın." These tweets were sent by native Arabic speakers of various nationalities. According to the findings, which were guided by the relevance theory, it was discovered that the /bʕdʤn/ was utilized as a temporal adverb in English, with a similar meaning to "then" and "later." Additionally, it served seven pragmatic functions, including "a marker of orientation shift," "a marker of result," "a conditional marker," "a marker of disagreement," "a coordination marker meaning "but," a marker of agreement, and a marker of reason" (Alqahtani, 2023, p. 58).

Methodology

For the purpose of this study, a mixed method approach was used in order to investigate the manner in which Iraqi make use of pragmatic functions contained within discourse markers. The researcher adopted a qualitative methodology in order to ascertain and examine the participants' respective interpretations concerning the different multi-functional applications of the DM "i:h." Additionally, the quantitative technique is helpful in determining the extent to which the researched DM is utilized, as well as the frequency with which it conveys different meanings.

A. Instrument

The data required for this investigation was gathered through the use of a questionnaire. Additionally, the questionnaire was divided into two parts. In the first part of the report, the information that was concerned with age and gender was presented. In the second part of the report, the authors discussed the purpose of the research. In this part of the paper, there are a variety of cases in which the discourse marker "i:h" was applied in a way that was completely distinct from one circumstance to the next. Its extensive application was the primary consideration that led to the selection of this particular discourse marker. It is essential to point out that the researcher was the one who constructed the scenarios in which the various functions were introduced, and then showed them to specialized individuals in order to ensure their validity. Asking the participant about any additional functions that have not been stated by the researcher for this discourse marker is the final instruction that is included in the questionnaire.

B. Participants and Variables

There were a total of 80 Iraqis; both males and females participated in this study. There were two primary factors that were taken into consideration, and those were age and gender. The method of sampling that was utilized for this particular group of participants was the convenience sampling method. Take the following into consideration:

Table 1 Sample Summary

	A	B
1	20 females (younger than 25 years old)	20 females (older than 25 years old)
2	20 males (younger than 25 years old)	20 males (older than 25 years old)

Taking a closer look at Table 1 reveals that this research was conducted by four primary groups, with each of the two groups focusing on a different variable. First, there were forty Iraqis, both males and females, who were younger than 25 years old. This group was designated as group A. There were forty Iraqis, both males and females, who were older than 25 years old and were members of Group B. These two groups were responsible for conducting the research that looked into the usage of the multifunctional discourse marker /i:h/ at the level of the variable concerning

age. On the other hand, there is group 1, which is made up of forty Iraqi females and males. The second group is made up of forty male Iraqis. The purpose of Group 1 and Group 2 was to provide assistance for the examination of the gender variable.

C. **Analysis of the Data**

The researcher began the process of analyzing the data by collecting all of the responses from the participants. The researcher also took into account the degree to which the participants agreed or disagreed with the pragmatic interpretations that were offered for the DM i:h. After that, she investigated the frequency with which the participants reported using it, as well as the pragmatic meanings of each word. When conducting the analysis of the data, any pragmatic implications that were given by the participants were also taken into consideration.

D. **The framework approach**

Several various techniques have been taken in order to debate about discourse markers. One of these approaches is the pragmatic approach that Fraser (1990) took. In his article, Fraser emphasizes that "discourse markers should be analyzed as having distinct pragmatic meaning". The framework developed by Fraser takes into account the distinction between an individual's content and their pragmatic meaning.

Results and Discussion

In Iraqi spoken Arabic, the discourse marker i:h performs a collection of pragmatic roles, as we discovered after conducting a thorough study of the data that we had collected. The word "Yeah" is the literal translation of the phrase "i:h." Both the i:h form and its equivalent form, hi:h, are examples of its forms. As a result of the investigation, twelve separate pragmatic meanings were discovered, each of which was defined by the context in which it was found. The results of our research are presented below, along with a discussion of the conclusions drawn from the study.

A. **Agreement**

Context: a guy asking his girlfriend to play tennis with him. In response, his girlfriend answers:

[Arabic Text]: ايه نلعب سويه

[English Translation]: Yeah I'll play with you.

Although the guy wished for his girlfriend to play with him, he was unsure as to whether or not she would actually do it. Then, he inquired. Through the use of the direct message i:h, his girlfriend conveys her consent. Each and every one of the participants in our survey selected "agree" as their response to the function that was offered in this context. In addition to that, they selected "Usual" as the frequency with which they would use this pragmatic function. At the level of the variables age and gender, there was no evidence that would be considered significant.

B. *Understanding*

Context: A group of three college-aged girls, one of whom is informing the others that she would call them after she has finished her classes. The other girls answers, "So!" The first one makes it clear that he will phone following the lesson to confirm that they will meet. Then, her friends reply:

[Arabic Text]: إيه ...افتهمتك، تمام

[English Translation]: Yeah, I understand you. Get it!

At first, the friends were confused about the purpose of the call that they received. After receiving explanation, they understood what her friend were trying to convey to them. By using the i:h symbol, the speaker is attempting to convey that she has comprehended the meaning of the

sentence. When it came to the pragmatic function that was supplied, participants expressed complete agreement. And every single one of them stated that they typically make use of it. Consequently, the supposition that the discourse marker "i:h" serves a pragmatic purpose was demonstrated to be correct on this occasion. In this particular case, the variables did not hold any significance.

C. *Memory*

Context: A young boy is reminding his older brother about their plan to sell the car they previously discussed, but the younger brother has forgotten about it. When his younger brother provides additional information. A brother responds:

[Arabic Text]: إيه، تذكرت.هذا الاسبوع انا مشغول، شتكول يوم الاثنين نروح؟

[English Translation]: Yeah, I remember now. This week, I am busy, how about Monday?

Previously, the brothers have discussed a car that they had seen in a car showroom and admired, and the younger brother ultimately made the decision to purchase the vehicle. When he requests his brother to accompany him for the purpose of purchasing it, the older brother is unable to remember which car. Upon his brother's mention of the car they observed at the car dealership, he indicates his remembering of the car by employing the memorized method "DM i:h." Subsequently, he proceeds to respond to the initial inquiry regarding their plans for this week. The discourse marker (DM) was present at the onset of the utterance, providing support for the subsequent statement "I recall at this moment." All participants selected the option "agree" for the function of remembering. Once again, all of them selected "usual" as the frequency of their use for this particular function. No variations were observed in the variables of age and gender.

D. *Surprise*

Context: a man telling hir brother that Ahmed, a neighbor's son, is graduated from college, the brother says:

[Arabic Text]: إيه كبر احمد وتخرج

[English Translation]: yeah, Ahmed is now an adult and has graduated from college!!!

The individual was unaware of whose graduation it was when he was informed about the forthcoming event. It was obvious that he was taken aback by the fact that the young boy had already grown up and graduated after his brother had informed him of this. A new function that is surprise was evidently assigned to the DM, as it was explicitly labeled. As a result of the context in which it is used, the same direct message might have a variety of different meanings. Everyone who took part in the study selected "agree" as their response to the function that was demonstrated in this example. On the other hand, 75% of respondents selected "usual" as their level of use, while 25% selected "often." As for the gender variable, 85% of the females reported that they use this feature frequently, while 15% claimed that they use it frequently. On the other hand, 75% of males selected "usual." When using this function in its typical manner, a difference of 25% was seen. 85% of the group of people less than 25 years old selected "usually," while 15% selected "often." On the other hand, 73% of the group that was older than 25 years old selected "usually," while 27% selected "often." It was found that there was a difference of 13% between the two groups.

E. *complaint*

Context: A student saw his colleague needs help from him to understand a unit, he says:

[Arabic Text]: إيه، هذا كل يوم يجي . البارحة كان هنا

[English Translation]: yeah, he gets here every day! Yesterday, he was present here.

In this particular context, the student observed that his fellow student need assistance from him in order to comprehend a unit. is perpetually in need of assistance with relation to lectures. This became a really bothersome condition. Due to the fact that they were both upset and annoyed, the speaker picked the expression i:h to show some form of nagging. "agree" is the response that each and every participant has selected for the function that is offered for this context. Considering this, it is clear that the DM i:h possesses a pragmatic multifunctionality. In terms of gender, 44 females, which is equivalent to 87%, stated that they utilize this function a lot. 13% of respondents have selected "often." 81% of males have said that they choose "usual," 14% have chosen "often," and 5% have chosen "never." The data revealed a difference of 6% between the two groups. In terms of age, those who were younger than 30 years old selected "usual" the majority of the time, while only 7% selected "often." 73% of the older students in the sample selected "usual," 19% selected "often," and 5% selected "never." There is now a variation of 20%.

F. Get Rid of anybody due to insistence on something

Context: a girl asking her mate, again and again, to play tennis with her. The mate declined to confirm his departure, and in response to the girl's insistence, the mate replies:

[Arabic Text]: إيه إيه تمام

[English Translation]: yeah, yeah Ok

The context in the case above was significant in modifying the meaning of the DM i:h. The girl's mate declined to confirm his departure when she first suggested that he was going to play tennis with her. Following that, the mate persisted in wishing to go somewhere together for some time. The girl understood that they were going together when the mate replied by using i:h twice. It is important to note that the DM exhibits some degree of agreement in this situation as well, which is the first interpretation discussed above. The girl was aware that her partner was accompanying her, of course. But from the DM user's point of view, it's evident in this instance that she just wanted her friend to quit nagging and stop being so insistent.

This example has the advantage of having two meanings inside the same context; yet, they are derived from two different points of view, which demonstrates once more the essential impact that context has on the process of constructing a meaning when it comes to communication. All of the participants have reached a consensus regarding the pragmatic function that has been shown for this circumstance. The fact that context reveals new pragmatic meanings is demonstrated once more by this. As a means of addressing the gender variable, 87 % of females selected "usual" on the scale of use, while 7% selected "often" and 6% selected "never." On the other hand, according to the results, 85% of males selected "usual," 11% selected "often," and 4% selected "never." When it comes to the age variable, 7 % of the young group has selected "often," while 93% of the young group has selected "usual." Furthermore, 76 % of the older group has selected "usual," 19 % has selected "often," and 4 % has selected "never." In spite of the fact that a number of participants have stated that they never utilize the DM i:h to describe this pragmatic function, it is important to note that they have reached a consensus regarding the pragmatic function. It may be deduced from this that the context has made the significance of the situation and the function that is intended by this DM clearer to them.

G. Praising

Context: a man saw his wife well-dressed says:

[Arabic Text]: شنو هذا اللبس الجميل

[English Translation]: yeah, you are beautiful today.

In the example above, the man saw that his wife was attractively dressed and appeared to be in good health; hence, he used the term "i:h" into his sentence in order to convey some form of praise. This particular context did not contain any instances of the meaning of i:h as yes; however, a different new meaning was highlighted. That constitutes praise. All of the participants reached a consensus regarding the pragmatic function that was utilized in this setting. Additionally, each and every one of them has selected "usual" as the scale of use. There is no discernible difference between the ages of the participants and the genders on this basis.

H. *Advice to Follow Up*

A pupil has told his colleague the story of a car accident that occurred at the school, leading to a significant chaos in the library. He is informed by his friend:

[Arabic Text]: إي

[English Translation]: yeah

The teacher said that there was a student who injured at school. His colleague says again

[Arabic Text]: أي وشصار بعد ذلك

[English Translation]: yeah, what occurred after that?

Due to the fact that the instructor was absent from school, he is unaware of the incident. The narrative was told by the student because he was aware of what took place, and he is the only person who had knowledge of it. He was in the process of narrating what he had seen when his friend interrupted him by using the direct message i:h to indicate that he wanted to follow up on the matter. First, the witness provides some background information regarding what happened. Once more, his friend makes use of the direct message that is currently available to indicate a wish to follow up. The friend continues to relate the narrative, offering further information with each use of the direct message "i:h" that he makes. This marks that he was able to understand that he was being asked to follow up with the incident as he was telling it.

In the present case, the requirements of both interlocutors were achieved. This illustrates how the context provided the DM with a new meaning, which contributed to the successful completion of the conversation. On the pragmatic function that was indicated in the example that was mentioned earlier, 91 participants were in agreement. 9% of respondents had no strong feelings about this matter. While this is the case, it is clear that this pragmatic function is correct. If we consider the gender variable, we find that 94% of females selected "agree," whereas only 6% selected "neutral." According to the scale of use, 92% of respondents stated that they typically use this direct message (DM) to express this pragmatic purpose, whereas 2% selected "often" and 6% selected "never." In addition, 90 percent of males selected "agree," while ten percent selected "neutral." When asked about their level of use, 88 percent of males selected "usually," 2% selected "often," and 10 selected "never." With regard to the age variable, the same percentage of respondents appeared for both groups at the level of agreement on the offered pragmatic function. This means that 92% of respondents chose the "agree" option, while 8% chose the "neutral" option. As for the young individuals, 88% of them indicated that they use this pragmatic function on a regular basis, while 4% said that they use it frequently, and 8% said that they never use it. 92% of the older group selected "usually" as their response, whereas 8% selected "never" as their response.

I. *Sorrow*

Context: There are two colleagues who are working together, and one of them adds that he went by the college that they are attending. This is what the second says:

[Arabic Text]: اي، كانت أيام قديمة ممتعة. أتذكر اللحظات التي لا تُنسى.

[English Translation]: Yeah, yes, fun old days. I remember those unforgettable moments.

In college, a girl and a guy were classmates, and now they are working together in the same company. Her success on the test was something that she shared with him. Through the use of the DM i:h, the speaker is attempting to convey a sense of sorrow regarding the joyful times they had in the past while they were attending college. Within the context of this situation, all the participants reached a consensus regarding the pragmatic function of expressed sorrow. All of them stated that they make use of it on a regular basis. It can be concluded that there was no evidence of significance at the level of the variables.

J. Motivation

Background: A seven year kid trying to ride a bike for the first time, his father says:

[Arabic Text]: ...إيي ايي يله وليدي....تعالي

[English Translation]: My son come on, come to me now, yeah yeah

A father watches as his child experiences the joy of riding a bicycle for the first time. As a result of his excitement, the father wanted to be there for his son so that he might succeed. In the beginning, he stated that he should begin with a balance bike, and then he repeated the direct message twice in order to provide some kind of encouragement to his kid regarding cycling. Without a doubt, in a circumstance like this, any father will be really enthusiastic about the experience, and as a result, he will make an effort to provide support for his kid. Within the context of this particular illustration, the father utilized the DM i:h to validate an additional interpretation of the DM i:h, which is optimistic. The pragmatic function that was recommended in this situation was found to be acceptable by 99% of the participants, whereas 1% of them chose the "neutral" option. On the scale of use, 92% of respondents selected "usual," while just 8% selected "often." It is obvious that the DM i:h is multifunctional in a pragmatic sense, taking into account the situation. When it came to the factors of gender and age, the two groups had comparable percentages, with 90% of them agreeing with the offered pragmatic function and 10% being neutral. When asked about their frequency of use, 88% of respondents selected "usually," 2% selected "often," and 10% selected "never."

K. Intellectual Excitement

Context: Two girls are bored. One of them says when the exams are over, we will go on a trip for a month. The second says:

[Arabic Text]: إيه هذاك وش لازم

[English Translation]: yeah, that is exactly what we want.

Two girls are experiencing busy and stressful days as they study and prepare for their exams. Due to the fact that they have not participated in any outdoor activities for some time, they are experiencing feelings of boredom. During the time that the examinations are over, one proposes going on a journey. The second girl uses the direct message (i:h) to communicate her excitement about the possibility of going on a journey, particularly once the examinations have been completed. 100 and 99 % of the participants accepted the pragmatic function that was proposed in this context. 1% of people selected "neutral." On the scale of use, 92% of respondents selected "usual," while just 8% selected "often." When taking into account the gender variable, all of the females were in agreement about this pragmatic function. 94% of them selected "usual" as their scale of use, whereas 6% of them selected "often." 98% of the males in the study indicated that they agreed, while two percent indicated that they were neutral. Among the males in this group, 98% of them selected "usual" as their level of use, while only 2% selected "never" as their level of use. In terms of the age variable, all of the participants in the younger group were in

agreement with the pragmatic function that was presented, but the older group had a response of "agree" from 98% of them and a response of "neutral" from 2% of them. When it came to the frequency of use, both groups had the same percentages: 92% of them chose "usual," while just 8% chose "often."

L. Schadenfreude

Context: a girl telling her sister that she witnessed a thief stealing a man's bag and running. As he was crossing the street, he stumbled and caught by police. Her sister says:

[Arabic Text]: أي يستاهل هذا

[English Translation]: yeah, he deserves it

It was the girl who witnessed the event, and she informed her sister about it. In spite of the fact that the girl thought the story of taking a bag from a guy seemed unpleasant, she was glad to hear that the thief had been captured, and she expressed her happiness by using the direct message in the hour to gloat at him. Within this pragmatic function, all 100 % participants were in agreement, and they stated that they typically make use of it. Gender and age are therefore irrelevant in this context because they are not significant. There are more roles that the discourse marker that was explained before can do, according to the suggestions made by the participants. boredom, mocking, confirming, and nostalgia are the four types of emotions.

Conclusion

A socio-pragmatic approach was taken in order to examine and describe the various meanings of the DM i:h in Iraqi Spoken Arabic. This was done with the intention of improving the language. Based on the results of our research, we discovered that the DM i:h is a pragmatically multifunctional system that can perform a wide range of functions. According to the results of the research, there are at least twelve distinct meanings and usages of the word: Understanding, memory, Surprise, complaint, Get Rid of anybody due to insistence on something, praising, Advice to Follow Up, Sorrow, Motivation, Intellectual Excitement, and Schadenfreude. The researcher made several suggestions about the meanings, and the findings lend support to those suggestions. Moreover, it has been discovered that the functions that are utilized the most frequently are those of agreement, Understanding, memory, Surprise, Sorrow, and Schadenfreude. Furthermore, neither gender nor age were found to be significant in this particular research investigation. There was a very little divergence observed. A number of other interpretations have been proposed by the participants; these include the following: complaint, ridiculing, confirmation, and nostalgia.

We hope the study motivates other scholars to tackle such similar linguistic issues in the Algerian context.

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