

AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF BEIRUT

PRAGMATICALIZATION OF DISCOURSE MARKERS IN
LEBANESE CONVERSATIONAL ARABIC

by
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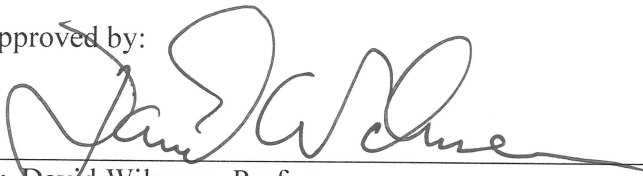
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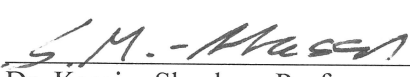
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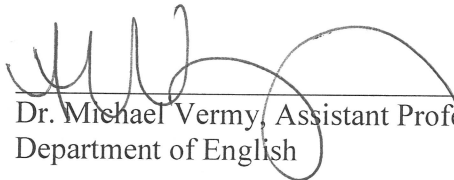
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AN ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS OF

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The present study investigates the various uses of some of the most prevalent discourse markers in Lebanese conversational Arabic through observing their use by Lebanese participants in media discourse. I include additional examples from daily life in the discussion in order to have a comprehensive view of the roles of these discourse markers. The discourse markers involved in this study are *ya 'ni*, *'innu*, *halla'*, *bass*, *hēk*, *ṭayyib*, and *ṭab*. Extracts from Lebanese talk shows are analyzed based on the functions of the discourse markers. My proposed definition for discourse markers in the present study is: Discourse markers are words that hold a pragmatic function contingent upon context, which can also derive from the word's semantic content and/or its grammatical role. Therefore, some pragmatic functions ensue as a result of pragmaticalization. My data presents some instances where pragmatic functions of *ya 'ni* derive from its meaning 'it means/that is'; pragmatic functions of *'innu* derive from its use as a complementizer; pragmatic functions of *halla'* derive from its meaning 'now', pragmatic functions of *bass* derive from its use as a conjunction (*but*) or its meaning 'only'; pragmatic functions of *hēk* derive from its meaning 'this' and 'thus/like this'; pragmatic functions of *ṭayyib* derive from its meaning 'ok'.

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Aim and Scope

Discourse markers (DMs) have been studied in a variety of languages, yet “there has been considerable debate on what counts and does not count as a discourse marker (leaving aside the terminological debates), how they should be organized into classes, the meaning of individual discourse markers, and how their meaning should be treated” (Fraser 2015: 48). In the present study, I classify the words that hold a pragmatic function contingent upon context under the term ‘discourse markers’. These pragmatic functions of discourse markers might originate from the word’s content or grammatical meaning. My proposed definition for discourse markers derives from the observation done for my present study.

In this study, I examine the functions of the following discourse markers in Lebanese spoken Arabic: *ya ‘ni*, *’innu*, *halla’ bass*, *hēk*, *ṭayyib*, and *ṭab*. I attempt to make a distinction between some common pragmatic functions and other pragmatic functions that derive from content or grammatical meaning, hence have undergone pragmaticalization.

“Pragmaticalization is the process by which a syntagma or word form, in a given context, changes its propositional meaning in favor of an essentially metacommunicative, discourse interactional meaning” (Frank-Job 2005: 397). On the other hand, some researchers believe that discourse markers have developed as a result of grammaticalization (Heine 2013: 1217). Grammaticalization is “the change whereby lexical items and

constructions come in certain linguistic contexts to serve grammatical functions” (Hopper, P. & Traugott, E. 2003: 232), thus an increase in a word’s grammatical function results in an increase in its pragmatic function (Stenström 2006). Pragmaticalization and grammaticalization are similar in that they both act upon lexical items, yet their results are different. As their names suggest, pragmaticalization brings about pragmatic markers, while grammaticalization results in grammatical operators. For the purpose of this study, I simply adopt the term pragmaticalization to refer to the development of discourse markers (Heine 2013: 1218), whether they originate from lexical or functional items.

On another note, Fraser (2005) examines the universality of discourse markers. Fraser’s hypothesis was that “the uses of primary contrastive discourse markers (CDMs) like *‘but’* are the same across languages” (Fraser 2005: 2). For testing his hypothesis, Fraser sent a survey to native speakers of different languages, including Arabic, to check if the functions of contrastive primary discourse markers are universal (Fraser 2005: 19). Fraser (2005) found that many languages share the same uses of *‘but’* as a contrastive discourse marker. However, this study will show that the use of *‘bass’*, the equivalent of the contrastive discourse marker *‘but’* in Lebanese Spoken Arabic, does not always function similarly to *‘but’*.

Therefore, the present study is expected to answer the following questions:

- 1- What functions do discourse markers serve in Lebanese spoken Arabic?
- 2- In light of the studies done on discourse markers (see Traugott & König 1991, Traugott 1995, Frank-Job 2006, Diewald 2011, Heine 2013, Degand & Evers-Vermeul 2015), do DMs in Lebanese spoken Arabic show evidence of pragmaticalization?

- 3- Do they support the claim for the universal properties of discourse markers (see Fraser)?

1.2 How Media Discourse Reflects Daily Speech

For the present study, I use Lebanese media as the source for collecting my data. I assume that the type of discourse spoken in Lebanese conversational talk shows simulates people's casual talk. Hutchby acknowledges that broadcast talk and ordinary conversation coincide in the use of some structures and patterns (2006: 24). Nevertheless, there are fluctuating views of media analysts and researchers on whether media talk is similar to casual speech or not. According to my observation, I recognize that the use of discourse markers in Lebanese media talk on Lebanese channels¹ by Lebanese people reflects its use in daily life since it has an identical style of conversation and is hardly affected by the setting.

In her study, O'Keeffe compares the frequency and distribution of multi-work discourse markers in casual conversation and media discourse (2006: 124). She finds that political interviews are the less similar to everyday discourse, compared to celebrity interviews" (O'Keeffe 2006: 125). In this study, on the other hand, conversational Lebanese Arabic is used abundantly in both political and entertainment talk shows. Typically, when the host starts his introduction in a political talk show, he begins with a formal register, however this shifts directly to conversational Lebanese Arabic as the host and the guest

¹ The channels considered for this study are LBCI, MTV, and Al-Jadeed.

start their discussion. Thus, in the data collection process, the introduction of the political talk shows is disregarded.

1.3 Overview

This study examines the usages of the discourse markers *ya 'ni*, *'innu*, *halla' bass*, *hēk*, *ṭayyib*, and *ṭab* in Lebanese conversational Arabic through observing and analyzing them in Lebanese media discourse. The accessibility of the considered discourse markers in media discourse facilitated the analysis of their functions. These discourse markers were analyzed qualitatively based on their pragmatic functions and how they have arisen as a result of pragmaticalization.

Utterances preceding and following the discourse marker utterance were transcribed and transliterated if necessary for understanding the context. Utterances were transliterated according to Brill's simple Arabic transliteration system and they were glossed according to a modified version of Leipzig glossing rules.

This chapter introduced the present study with reference to some key definitions that I follow. In chapter 2 I provide the definitions that researchers have used in defining discourse markers. I also review studies done on discourse markers and address the concepts of pragmaticalization, grammaticalization, and semantic bleaching. Chapter 3 describes the methodology adopted for the present study. Chapter 4 presents the findings of this study, where I sort the functions of each discourse marker. This is followed by a discussion that demonstrates these functions clearly and adds more examples of the uses of the considered discourse markers in order to give a wide-ranging analysis of their functions.

Finally, in chapter 5, I include an overview of our findings and some ideas for future studies.

Chapter 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Several definitions have been used for describing discourse markers. In 2.1, I start by introducing the definitions of discourse markers that linguists use. In 2.2, I distinguish between the semantic meanings and the grammatical roles that discourse markers serve, along with their pragmatic functions.

As stated earlier, the present study examines the functions of discourse markers in Lebanese spoken Arabic. Some of these functions overlap with functions of discourse markers in other Arabic dialects. Thus, in 2.3 I discuss the functions of discourse markers in some Arabic dialects (Lebanese, Syrian, and Cairene Egyptian), and in English in order to offer a wider understanding of the functions of discourse markers. I continue further in 2.4 targeting the issues of pragmaticalization and grammaticalization, and how researchers associate these two terms in order to track the development of discourse markers.

2.1 Discourse Markers

Linguists have used a variety of terms to refer to discourse markers. Some of the terms are: discourse connectives, discourse particles, discourse operators, pragmatic markers, and others (Fraser 1999: 931). However, the most widely used term is ‘discourse markers’. Several definitions of discourse markers have arisen as well. To begin with, Fraser defines a discourse marker as a pragmatic class that signals relationships between prior and upcoming utterances and holds a meaning determined by context (Fraser 1999: 950). Stenström (1994: 63) agrees with Fraser and suggests that “discourse markers are

used to organize and hold the turn and to mark boundaries in discourse.” Similarly, Schiffrin (1982: 35), who conducted the earliest of the studies we are dealing with, defines discourse markers as “linguistic elements which bracket utterances and whose use is sequentially dependent on characteristics of both prior and upcoming talk.” Schiffrin states, “linguistic elements used as discourse markers usually have semantic and/or lexical meanings, and grammatical functions, in sentence grammar” (1982: 1). However, in the conclusion of her book, Stenström notes that discourse markers should be analyzed as pragmatic terms instead of considering them as grammatical items (1994: 209). The above definitions acknowledge that discourse markers primarily have a pragmatic significance, however some controversy emerges on whether these pragmatic items can be treated as grammatical or semantic items simultaneously or not.

2.2 Pragmatic, Semantic, and Grammatical Meanings of Discourse Markers

Many studies on discourse markers examine discourse markers’ pragmatic functions, but most of them do not recognize that there is a distinction between their semantic meanings and grammatical roles. Schiffrin (1982) is one of the linguists whose study involves these distinct functions of discourse markers, yet Degand & Vanderbergen’s (2011) more recent scale of relationality elucidates this distinction on a different level.

“Discourse markers contain items which are not only multifunctional but also very different from one another with regard to the extent to which they are relational in the traditional grammatical sense” (Degand & Vanderbergen 2011: 290). Discourse markers can have a content or a grammatical status in a sentence. Degand & Vanderbergen (2011) put discourse markers on a scale that ranges from ‘non-relational’ to ‘strictly relational’

depending on whether they have a semantic meaning or linking function in a sentence (ex. connectives). When discourse markers have content meaning but serve no grammatical role, hence have no linking function, they are non-relational, according to Degand & Vanderbergen's (2011) scale. "At the non-relational end we have *I think, I guess, I suppose, I believe, I realize*. These have little or no linking function" (Degand & Vanderbergen 2011: 289) i.e. the absence of these makes a sentence lose some of its meaning, yet the sentence stays grammatical.

Conversely, discourse markers that hold grammatical meaning have a linking function. They are what Degand & Vanderbergen (2011) call "relational" since they are essential for linking between two parts of an utterance. These include connectives such as the conjunctions *and, because, but*, and others. The presence of connectives is essential in maintaining the grammaticality of a sentence.

Nonetheless, according to Schiffrin, the use of what she calls "conjunctive markers" *and, but, so*, and *because* adds content meaning to the sentence and have a grammatical status as well (1982: 166). "*And* acts as an additive marker which marks sequential continuity" (Schiffrin 1982: 239). "*But* acts as an adversative marker which marks sequential contrast. Its use could be equivalent to *however* or *anyway*" (Schiffrin 1982: 240). "*So* acts as a resultative marker of sequential development. *So* anticipates a next item or a next action, and can be used to mark an utterance as an inference or outcome of a prior utterance" (Schiffrin 1982: 240). The use of *because* indicates the occurrence of causality as well (Schiffrin 1982).

Schiffrin's conjunctive markers lie on the strictly relational end of Degand & Vanderbergen's scale since they serve as grammatical connectives. An example of a

discourse marker that holds a relational meaning in French is *parce que*, which is analogous to *because* in English (Degand & Vanderbergen 2011: 289) (see example 1):

(1) Je	ne	suis	pas	allé	à	l'école	parce que
I	not	am	(not)	go	to	school	because
	je	suis	malade.				
	I	am.PST	sick				

‘I did not go to school **because** I was sick.’

By contrast, the use of the discourse markers *y’know* and *I mean* shows that they can hold a semantic meaning. Excluding *y’know* and *I mean* does not make an utterance ungrammatical; thus, they are not said to have a linking function in discourse. Schiffrin finds that “*I mean* is a marker of personal stance through which the speaker displays either distance from, or commitment to, what is being said” (1982: 328). She adds:

Y’know marks changes in information, status, repairs in which the repaired information is in hearer-targeted exchanges, generalizations and truths towards which speakers propose for their hearers a shared sensibility, and the main point of a discourse as a sequentially relevant response” (Schiffrin 1982: 329).

Y’know can also be used after the current word has come to completion to delay the next word (Fox 2010: 1). These discourse markers have little or no linking function, which places them at point 1 (non-relational) on the scale of Degand & Vanderbergen (2011). The following example from Schiffrin (1982) shows how *y’know* fits the non-relational scale of Degand & Vanderbergen (2011) since it serves no linking function in the utterance. In example 2, “the speaker is defending her belief in fate” (Schiffrin 1982: 3).

(2) I believe...that...**y'know** it's fate (Schiffrin 1982: 4).

Schiffrin states that the function of *y'know* here is to catch the attention of the hearer and make him agree that indeed it is fate (Schiffrin 1982: 5-6). However, *y'know* does not have a grammatical function, thus the sentence would stay grammatical if *y'know* is removed, though it would lose some pragmatic or content meaning.

Similarly, the use of the discourse markers *now* and *like* shows that they chiefly serve a pragmatic function and might hold semantic meaning as well. According to Schiffrin, “*now* marks progression through discourse, marking changes in topic, and in speaker's relationship to what is being said” (Schiffrin 1982: 247). Speakers also use *now* to highlight certain parts of their discourse (Schiffrin 1982: 286). Aside from that, “*like* marks comparison and restriction, and might also be used to mark delay in speech” (Schiffrin 1982: 287).

Furthermore, Schiffrin finds out that *well* acts as a response marker (Schiffrin 1982: 122). “It could add to the cohesion of the conversation in utterances produced by one speaker or more, in addition to adding cohesion to one’s own utterances in repairs, reported responses, reflexive responses” (Schiffrin 1982:163). However, according to Schiffrin, “*well* is the only discourse marker that has no semantic or grammatical equivalent in an utterance” (Schiffrin 1982: 40).

Moreover, Schiffrin’s (1982) ‘conjunctive markers’ are also discussed in Fraser’s study. Fraser lists three types of discourse markers, Contrastive Discourse Markers (ex. *But*), Elaborative Discourse Markers (ex. *And*), and Inferential Discourse Markers (ex. *So*)

(2009: 296), yet his 2009 study elaborates on the uses of the contrastive discourse marker *but*, which signals a direct or an indirect contrast between two sentences (Fraser 2009: 300). Explicit interpretation indicates “direct contrast” and implicit interpretation indicates “indirect contrast” (Fraser 2009: 308). Fraser uses the term ‘Semantically Contrastive Sets (SCS)’ in his study to describe the sets preceding (S1) and succeeding (S2) the discourse marker *but* (Fraser 2009: 309).

Fraser provides us with many examples on the implicit and explicit functions of *but*. Explicitly, *but* can be used to challenge the accuracy of S1, to correct S1, to show that something is more or less likely to happen than another, or to add any information that makes S1 special (Fraser 2009). *But* can also be used as an equivalent to *in contrast*, *in comparison*, *conversely*, and *whereas* (Fraser 2009: 310). In example 3, *but* is used to correct S1.

- (3) A: I see you brought your niece with you today.
B: She’s not my niece **but** my daughter. (Fraser, 2009, 311)

On the other hand, in the implicit uses of *but*, it might be used to contradict S1, to consider S1 flawed, to compensate for S1 with S2, to prefer S2 to S1, to challenge S1, and sometimes S1 and S2 might be vague, so *but* might be used to hint a contrast (Fraser 2009: 309). *But* can also be used as an equivalent to *also*, *in addition*, *too*, *as well*, and *neither*, to serve as an elaborative marker (Fraser 2009: 311). Example 4 below shows how the speaker contradicts the first part of his utterance.

- (4) It’s very cold in here. [Please turn up the heat] **but** please don’t turn up the heat.
(Fraser, 2009, 311)

In the first segment, the speaker says that it is very cold which could implicitly be a request to turn up the heat, however the speaker uses *but* to contradict this by saying ‘please don’t turn up the heat’.

Fraser’s study focuses on *but*, however Fraser (2009) suggests examining the same uses of different discourse markers across different languages, hence developing his study further and attesting the universality of primary discourse markers (*and, but, so*). Fraser claims that the results from over 20 languages show that some universal functions of the discourse marker *but* include indicating direct contrast to S1, correcting S1, and adding information to S1 (Fraser 2009: 318). The present study responds to Fraser’s suggestion by studying discourse markers in Lebanese Arabic. These discourse markers include *bass*, an analogous to *but*. Our examination of the discourse marker *bass*, which corresponds to the English discourse marker *but*, will cast Fraser’s claim of universality into doubt.

2.3 Functions of Discourse Markers in Arabic

Some researchers have examined the usage and function of discourse markers in Arabic, most of which were concerned with the pragmatic functions of discourse markers (see Ghobrial 1993, Alkhalil 2005 & Adams 2012) To my knowledge, very few studies on Arabic discourse markers demonstrate the grammatical function that certain discourse markers serve or their semantic contribution to discourse.

Germanos (2010) is one of the researchers who plainly shows that the Lebanese Arabic discourse marker *'innu*² can have a grammatical role besides its pragmatic function. In Germanos's study, tokens of *'innu* were collected from interviews conducted in Lebanese Arabic. Germanos focuses on the use of *'innu* as a complementizer and as a discourse marker. In Lebanese Arabic, “*'innu* functions on the syntactic level when it is used as a complementizer, however when used as a discourse marker, *'innu* functions on the pragmatic level” (Germanos 2010: 161). Germanos distinguishes between the pragmatic and the grammatical use of *'innu*, stressing that *'innu* as a complementizer is not placed under the discourse marker category (2010). By contrast, in the present study, *'innu* and other discourse markers that serve grammatical roles are still placed under the category of discourse markers. The example³ below from Germanos (2010) presents the use of *'innu* as a complementizer:

(5)	'anā	b-šūf	' innu	'iza	l-wāḥad	b-yi' dar..
	I	PROG-see	that	if	the-one	PROG-can.m..
	yihki	l-luḡa	l-fuṣṣa	l-mubassata	ḡiddan	
	speak.m	the-language	the-fuṣṣa	the-simplified	very	

‘I find **that** one can speak the very simplified fuṣṣa’

Furthermore, Germanos (2010) discusses the functions of *'innu* as a discourse marker. *'Innu* could reinforce or correct a speaker's previous utterance, and it could also be

² Germanos (2010) spells the filler word *'innu* as *ʔenno* in “From Complementizer to Discourse Marker: the functions of ʔenno.”

³ Transliterated according to Brill's simple Arabic transliteration system

used to hold one's turn (Germanos 2010: 152). Germanos observes that “*’innu* always introduces what is felt as necessary for the completion of the meaning of the discourse, and for the conversation to go on without a risk of misunderstanding- or incomplete understanding” (Germanos 2010: 141). Example 6 from Germanos’s study shows the use of *’innu* as a discourse marker inside the sentence.

(6) G:	l-Français	ktīr	‘am	biḥif	la-daraḡi	ktīr	
	the-French	very	PROG	decline	to-extent	very	
	’aweyyi						
	strong						
E:	‘am	biḍarib	‘le	l-’inglīze	aw	l-‘arabi	
	PROG	compete	on.it	the-English	or	the-Arabic	
	kamen						
	also						
G:	l’ bass	l-’inglīze	’ innu	l‘arabi	‘āde	’ innu	
	no but	the-English	’ innu	the-Arabic	normal	’ innu	
	leḡa	maḡbūr	l-waḡad	yiḡki-ya	bass	yrūḡ	hun
	language	forced	the-individual	speak-it	when	go	here
	b-libnen						
	in-Lebanon						

‘G: French is declining a lot to a very low level.

E: English is competing with it or Arabic too.

G: No, only English **’innu** Arabic, it is normal **’innu** it is a language one has to speak when he goes (anywhere) in Lebanon.’

In this example, G utters the first *’innu* since he realizes that he has made a slip (l-’inglīze), but then he corrects it by saying ‘l-‘arabi’. Moreover, the second *’innu* signals the explanation of the idea in the preceding sentence (Germanos 2010: 148).

Ghobrial (1993) examines the use of discourse markers in Cairene Arabic, a colloquial variety spoken in Egypt. He studies the pragmatic functions of some discourse markers in spontaneous Cairene discourse through unstructured interview⁴ conversations (Ghobrial 1993). Ghobrial starts by studying the discourse marker *ya 'ni*⁵. *Ya 'ni* might hold both pragmatic and content meanings where its pragmatic function might be directly drawn from its semantic content (Ghobrial 1993: 235). Ghobrial states that the discourse marker *ya 'ni* derives from the classical term *ma 'na* (*meaning*); however, he notes that *ya 'ni*'s functions are more similar to those of the discourse marker “*well*” (Ghobrial 1993: 45-46).

When the discourse marker *ya 'ni* holds a propositional meaning, it might be used for signaling a speaker's assessment of prior talk; however, other functions of *ya 'ni* do not derive from its propositional meaning (Ghobrial 1993: 47). These functions include “lending coherence to a given text, signaling relevance when a respondent diverges from the options for coherence offered in the preceding discourse, and lessening the face-threatening acts associated with various moves” (Ghobrial 1993: 47). *Ya 'ni* can also be used to signal uncertainty in a polite manner (Ghobrial 1993:49). This use of *ya 'ni* is demonstrated in the following example.

- | | | | | | | | |
|--------|-------|------------|-----------|---------------|------|----------|------|
| (7) A: | 'imta | 'araḏ | 'aleek | il-'arḏ | da? | | |
| | when | offered | you | the-offer | this | | |
| B: | min | šahreen | t'rīban,. | ya 'ni | miš | mut'akid | 'awi |
| | from | two.months | almost.. | well | not | sure | very |

'A: When did he offer you this?

B: Almost two months ago .. **well** I am not sure' (Ghobrial 1993: 68).

⁴ In unstructured interviews, questions can be added or missed, and they don't have to follow a certain order.

⁵ Ghobrial (1993) spells *ya 'ni* as *yaʕne*

Here the speaker does not have an answer to the question so he pauses then uses *ya 'ni* followed by “I am not sure” in order to not give an inaccurate answer to the interlocutor.

Moreover, in example 8, Ghobrial presents the use of *ya 'ni* to show disagreement but in a polite manner.

- (8) A: yabdu 'inaha ḥitta kwayyisa
 seem it plan good
- B: **ya 'ni** 'ana baḥtalif ma 'āk bass bardu fiha ganib
well I differ with.you but still in.it aspect
- ma 'ūl
 reasonable

‘A: It seems like a good plan.

B: **Well** I disagree with you but there is something reasonable about it, though.’
 (Ghobrial 1993: 87)

Ghobrial argues that “in the context of an argument, *ya 'ni* is often accompanied or replaced by *bass* (*but*). The item *bass* is especially useful in introducing counter-arguments, challenges, contrasts, and sometimes qualified acceptance of a proposition. As an adversative conjunction, it suggests that what follows is an idea which contrasts with what has preceded” (1993: 82).

Ghobrial also investigates the uses of the discourse marker *ṭayyib* and its variant *ṭab* in his study. Ghobrial sees that *ṭayyib* and *ṭab* - often glossed as *well* or *so* - are not based on propositional properties” (Ghobrial 1993: 93), unlike *ya 'ni*. Ghobrial sees that *ṭayyib* and *ṭab* are mostly used to take the floor and express one’s opinion in a polite manner

(Ghobrial 1993: 236). If a speaker wants to add information, contradict the interlocutor's speech, act on a request, or signal compliance to the interlocutor's utterance, s/he might use *ṭayyib* or *ṭab* (Ghobrial 1993: 173). "*Ṭayyib* and *ṭab* also preface a wide range of important and delicate interactional tasks such as opening and closing conversations, beginning a turn at talk, resuming a conversation after some interruption" (Ghobrial 1993: 96).

In example 9, Ghobrial shows how the speaker uses *ṭayyib* to comply with the interlocutor's request (1993: 101).

(9) A:	'ana	'ārif	'inak	mašğul	'awi	bass	law	t'dar
	I	know	you	busy	very	but	if	able.you
	twassalni		liil	kār	dīlar			
	drive me		to.the	car	dealer ...			
B:	ṭayyib..	ḥādir	'awi	'awi	ya.sitti	bass	'iddini	sā'a
	ok ..	sure	very	very	lady.my	but	give.me	hour
	waḥda	bass	w	'ana	'afdālik			
	one	only	and	I	free.for.you			

'A: I know you are very busy but if you can give me a ride to the car dealer...

B: **ṭayyib..** sure darling but just give me one hour only and I'll be free' (Ghobrial 1993: 101).

In this example, *ṭayyib* signals the speaker's acceptance of the interlocutor's request willingly (Ghobrial 1993: 102).

In contrast to Ghobrial who focuses on pragmatic functions of discourse markers, in his study, Alkhalil (2005) also refers to the semantic meaning of the items that can be used as discourse markers, besides their pragmatic functions. Alkhalil's (2005) study

investigates the uses of *halla'*, *ya'ni*, *ṭayyib*, and *lakan*⁶, which are glossed as *now*, *it means*, *well*, and *so* respectively, through observing naturally occurring conversational data in Syrian Arabic (Alkhalil 2005).

Alkhalil states that the word *halla'* is used in Colloquial Syrian Arabic only, which is the reason why it is not found in Standard Arabic dictionaries (2005: 82), however *halla'* is also a common discourse marker in Lebanese conversational Arabic. The data used in Alkhalil's study indicates two uses of *halla'*; the first as an adverb and the second as a discourse marker (Alkhalil 2005: 131).

In Syrian Arabic, "the discourse marker *halla'* signals topic shift, where, it denotes that the succeeding utterance will be more important than the utterance preceding *halla'* (Alkhalil 2005: 270). *Halla'* can also indicate support or assess prior utterances (Alkhalil 2005). In Alkhalil's study, "it was seen that the speakers used *halla'* to accept the change and go on to produce additional talk related to the newly introduced topic (Alkhalil 2005: 270). Besides its pragmatic function, "*halla'* can function as an adverb of time. Like *now* in English, *halla'* can have one of four different meanings: '*at this particular moment*', '*in a minute*', '*just now/ a little while ago*', and '*these days*'" (Alkhalil 2005: 86).

Moreover, Alkhalil (2005) finds that *ṭayyib* is used to ask for explanation and request information (Alkhalil 2005: 271). "It also appeared in situations when speakers asked someone to do something as a suggested solution to a problem they were having, and request action" (Alkhalil 2005: 273). Alkhalil also discusses the semantic uses of *ṭayyib*

⁶ Alkhalil (2005) spells *halla'*, *ya'ni*, and *ṭayyib* as *halla'?*, *yacnē*, *ṭayyeb*.

where in Standard Arabic it means ‘good’ or ‘delicious’ (2005: 190) However, these are not used as discourse markers in Alkhalil’s study; they are adjectives instead.

Alkhalil also investigates the uses of the discourse marker *ya ‘ni*. “The marker *ya ‘ni* seems to signal explanations of intentions, expansion of ideas, mitigation, summing up, and check on understanding, assessment, and word search” (Alkhalil 2005: 271). Alkhalil states that “*ya ‘ni* can be translated as *well*, *you know*, and *I think* in examples where speakers offer suggestions or present their opinions, and it can also be translated as ‘*so*’ when speakers use it to sum up arguments and make transitions from background information to narrative action” (Alkhalil 2005: 183).

2.4 Pragmaticalization vs. Grammaticalization

Some researchers (see Farghal 2010 & Diewald 2011) indicate that certain functions of discourse markers derive from others. Farghal (2010: 161) argues that “pragmatic meaning departs from denotative or dictionary meaning, which stems from compositional sentence meaning, toward an attitudinal import that overrides the linguistically encoded message.” In written Arabic the term *ya ‘ni* holds the content meaning ‘*it means*’ which derives from the noun *ma ‘na* (*meaning*) in Standard Arabic (as stated in Ghobrial 1993 & Alkhalil 2005). The noun *ma ‘na* is still used in both written and spoken Arabic as *meaning*. *Ya ‘ni* might also act as the verb ‘*mean*’ in written Arabic, and can be used in the same way in spoken Lebanese Arabic as well. In example 10 in Standard Arabic (fuṣḥā), *ya ‘ni* functions as the verb ‘*mean*’.

(10) haḍa l-kalām lā **ya ‘ni** šay’

this the-talk does.not **mean** anything

‘This talk does not **mean** anything.’

This use of the verb *ya ‘ni* may be present in spoken Lebanese Arabic discourse as well. (see example 11)

(11) haɪða l-kalém ma b-yi‘ni ši
 this the-talk does.not **mean** anything

‘This talk does not **mean** anything.’

In contrast to *ya ‘ni* which retained its meaning, semantic bleaching occurs when a word loses its original semantic meaning. Esseesy provides an example of the semantic bleaching of the word *bi-sababi* (*because*) where it used to mean a ‘tent rope’ originally, however it lost its original content meaning and started to be used as the conjunction ‘*because*’ (Esseesy 2010: 122).

Furthermore, many researchers discussed the concepts ‘grammaticalization’ and ‘pragmaticalization’ in the literature (see Traugott & König 1991, Traugott & Heine 1991, Traugott 1995, Hopper & Traugott 2003, Esseesy 2010, Diewald 2011, Degand & Vanderbergen 2011, & Degand and Evers-Vermeul 2015). Grammaticalization occurs when ‘categorical change from lexical to grammatical or from less grammatical to more grammatical is often concomitant with the creation of new morpho-syntactic constructions’ (Esseesy 2010: 48) (see the literature cited in Esseessy 2010). Degand & Evers-Vermeul argue that the development of discourse markers falls within the scope of

grammaticalization (see Diewald & Traugott) and that pragmatic functions are grammatical functions (Degand & Evers-Vermeul 2015: 73) “since pragmatic phenomena are no less constrained by language specific rules than grammatical phenomena such as syntactic word order, agreement in number, gender and case, tense, etc.” (Degand & Evers-Vermeul 2015: 75).

Degand & Evers-Vermeul presented examples of the development of the word *alors* (*at that time, then, so, now*) from Degand and Fagard’s (2011) study to track its development as a discourse marker (Degand & Evers-Vermeul 2015: 75). “Degand and Fagard (2011) have shown how *alors* developed from a sentence adverbial with temporal meaning, to a connective marking temporal, causal or conditional relations, and eventually to a discourse-structuring marker with conversation management uses” (as cited in Degand & Evers-Vermeul 2015: 75). (see examples 12, 13, 14)

(12) Temporal sentence adverbial:

Mais le soir tomba sans que la pluie eût cessé. **Alors**, la Comtesse commit une imprudence ... (Degand and Fagard 2011: 31)

But the night fell and the rain still hadn’t stopped. **Then**, the countess got careless ... (Degand & Evers-Vermeul 2015: 75)

(13) Causal connective:

ah il adore ça / **alors** ben tu penses bien avec moi euh il était aux aux anges hein (Degand and Fagard 2011: 34)

[oh he loves it / **so** well you’ll guess that with me he was in seventh heaven] (Degand & Evers-Vermeul 2015: 75)

(14) Structuring discourse marker:

mais alors ce qui était marrant c'est que euh / tout à coup il s'arrêtait / et **alors** euh / assez vite **alors** xx se disait maintenant vous vous dirigez vers telle porte // mais **alors** (Degand and Fagard 2011 : 35)

[but **now** the funny thing was that er / suddenly he stopped / and **now** er / quite quickly alors xx was saying now you go towards the door // but **now**]
(Degand & Evers-Vermeul 2015: 75)

In example 12, *alors* acts as an adverbial that holds the temporal meaning *then*, then the use of *alors* developed to include functioning as the causal connective *so*, and eventually *alors* started to be used as the discourse marker *now*.

Diewald (2011) relates the terms pragmaticalization and grammaticalization, classifying the former as a subcategory of the latter since pragmaticalization seems to function in the same manner as grammaticalization where words go from containing more content to becoming more functional. However, pragmaticalization is distinguished from other subtypes of grammaticalization processes by specific characteristic traits including the pragmatic functions that the word holds and having a lower degree of syntactic integration (Diewald 2011: 365).

“Traugott and König argue that in its early stages grammaticalization actually often involves an increase in pragmatic meaning (though semantic content, strictly speaking, may be reduced as pragmatic meaning increases)” (as cited in Traugott & Heine 1991: 5).

Therefore, with the development of discourse markers, they tend to gain a wider pragmatic meaning. Traugott states that discourse markers allow the speaker to understand an utterance beyond its content meaning, hence discourse markers function on a metatextual level (1995: 6). The following two examples from Diewald's study (2011) show how discourse particles in German add meaning to a sentence beyond its content meaning:

(15) Das ist **aber** keine gute Idee.
That is **aber** not a good idea.

‘That is a good idea — someone may think this; it is not true’ (Diewald 2011: 380)

(16) Das ist **ja** keine gute Idee.
That is **ja** not a good idea.

‘That is not a good idea — you and I already knew this’ (Diewald 2011: 380)

In example 15, the discourse particle *aber* (*but*) acts as an adversative connective where it adds to the utterance’s basic meaning ‘this is a good idea’ the meaning that ‘someone might think that this is a good idea but this is not true’. On the other hand, in example 16, *ja* (*yes*) holds an affirmative meaning. *Ja* adds the pragmatic meaning that ‘the speakers already knew that this is a good idea’ (Diewald 2011: 380). The use of these pragmatic markers change the whole meaning of the same utterance.

2.5 Summary

In this review, I discuss some functions of discourse markers in English and Arabic. Studies on Arabic discourse markers are directly relevant to this study since in some occasions overlapping results between these studies and the present study might emerge. The dialects of the Arabic discourse markers included in the present study are, Syrian Arabic (Alkhalil 2005), Lebanese Arabic (Germanos 2010), and Cairene Arabic (Ghobrial 1993).

I also target the issues of pragmaticalization and grammaticalization since in some instances discourse markers tend to retain their content meaning, whereas in others they lose it, or gain other meanings.

The next section will discuss the methodology adopted in the present study.

Chapter 3

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Data and Participants

This study about discourse markers in Lebanese spoken Arabic was carried out through observing Lebanese media discourse. The entertainment talk shows involved in this study are *Ḥadīs Lbalad* (حديث البلد) ‘Talk of the Town’ on MTV, *Ba’dnā Ma’ Rabi’a* (بعدنا مع رابعة) ‘We are Still With Rābi’a’ on New TV (Al-jadeed), and *’Ahlā Ğalseh* (أعلى جلسه) ‘Nicest Gathering’ on LBCI. Moreover, the political talk shows involved in this study are *Kalām El-Nās* (كلام الناس) ‘People’s Talk’ and *Nhārkom Sa’īd* (نهاركم سعيد) ‘Good Day to You’ on LBCI and *’Al ’Osbū’ Fī Sā’a* (الأسبوع في ساعة) ‘The Week in an Hour’ on Al-Jadeed. Each program has been airing for more than five years. The longest-running of them is *Nhārkom Sa’īd* (نهاركم سعيد) which first aired in 1992 on LBCI; the latest two are *’Ahlā Ğalseh* (أعلى جلسه) and *Ba’dnā Ma’ Rabi’a* (بعدنا مع رابعة), which started airing in 2011 on LBCI and New TV (Al-jadeed) respectively. Each of the talk shows runs from one to two hours.

’Ahlā Ğalseh, *Talk of the Town*, and *Ba’dnā Ma’ Rabi’a* are hosted by Tony Baroud, Mona Abou Hamzeh, and Rabi’a Zayat respectively. *Kalām El-nās* is presented by Marcel Ghanem, *’Al ’Osbū’ Fī Sā’a* by George Salibi, and in the present study Bassam Abou Zeid presents *Nhārkom Sa’īd*.

In considering television talk shows as a source of data, the decision was made to focus on programs that are long running. The reasons for this are that, in the first place, some talk shows come and go quickly. With long running shows, however, researchers

wishing to compare the data from this study with their own can be reasonably confident in finding these programs continuing in their broadcast schedules for years to come.

These television talk shows were chosen since it was expected that these would serve as a good representation of conversational speech in Lebanon in a variety of subjects. *'Ahlā Ġalseh*, *Talk of the Town*, and *Ba'dnā Ma' Rabi'a* host guests from all walks of life. On the other hand, *Kalām El-nās*, *'Al 'Osbū' Fī Sā'a*, and *Nhārkom Sa'īd* are political talk shows that host politicians and political analysts. Guests of different nationalities like Syrian, Egyptian, Jordanian, etc. appear in these talk shows, however the participants in the study are limited to the Lebanese guests and hosts since the study is about discourse markers in Lebanese spoken Arabic.

The choice of the two sets of programs was based upon the assumption that the conversation in entertainment programs would display a more casual, unguarded register of speech, and the political talk shows would be conducted at a higher, somewhat more formal register. As it happened, the differences in register were hardly perceptible, and, in any case, they did not affect the use of discourse markers. This became apparent, during the data collection and observation. In both sets of programs, the register is that of educated speakers of Lebanese Arabic.

For this study, the transcribed speech includes that of six Lebanese hosts and twelve Lebanese guests of the talk shows considered.

3.2 Procedure and Method of Analysis

The data analysis for the present study consists of three stages. First, I collected the data by harvesting episodes of the talk shows from You Tube. At that point, I transcribed

twenty minutes of each talk show making up a total of two hours of transcribed recordings. The political talk shows comprise entire episodes. Some of the entertainment programs consist in segments of the program and not the entire episode. This proved to facilitate the data collection process. For the political talk shows, I disregarded the opening segments and introductions of the guests to begin observation with the first twenty minutes of the conversation. The You Tube clips of the entertainments programs actually begin with the conversations.

After transcribing the data, I located the discourse markers. Utterances that precede and/or follow the discourse marker utterance were transliterated⁷ and included in this paper if needed for understanding the context in which the discourse marker occurs. However, in certain instances, the function of the discourse marker would be clear from its use in the discourse marker's utterance itself without referring to the bordering utterances. After all the essential data on the discourse markers became available, the use of discourse markers was analyzed in terms of the pragmatic functions they serve and the possible semantic and/or grammatical roles that they might hold.

⁷ The data for this study is transliterated according to Brill's simple Arabic transliteration system.

Chapter 4

ANALYSIS

Discourse markers pervade Lebanese conversational speech; the focus of this study will be on seven of them. These discourse markers are commonly occurring, and many of them have been examined by other researchers (see Ghobrial 1993, Albatal 1994, Alkhalil 2005, & Germanos 2010). The discourse markers in the present study include *ya 'ni*, *'innu*, *halla'*, *bass*, *hēk*, and *ṭayyib/ṭab*.

The findings of the present study will show that the considered discourse markers might have a grammatical role or hold content meaning in addition to their pragmatic function. Some of the pragmatic functions that the discourse markers serve derive from their grammatical or content meaning, hence they have been subject to pragmaticalization; other pragmatic functions are irrelevant to the grammatical or content meaning of the discourse marker.

4.1 *Ya 'ni*

Ya 'ni is a discourse marker that serves several functions. It can hold pragmatic and content meaning, but not a grammatical one. The pragmatic functions of *ya 'ni* include digression in speech, indicating a change of mind, turn-taking, floor holding, interruption, expanding on one's ideas, and signaling uncertainty. By another token, *ya 'ni* holds a content meaning analogous to '*it means/that is*'. Some pragmatic functions of *ya 'ni* derive from its content meaning; these functions include: regulating the conversation, signaling

acquiescence, and clarifying/requesting clarification. *Ya 'ni* regulates speech, signals acquiescence, and clarifies/requests clarification as a result of pragmaticalization.

4.1.1 The semantics of the discourse marker *ya 'ni*

Ya 'ni's meaning can be equivalent to 'it means' or 'that is'. Kaye (2008) states that the Arabic discourse marker *ya 'ni* 'that is' serves the function of elaboration in 84% of the cases of recorded university lectures in Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, and the Sudan.

In example (17), speaker A uses *ya 'ni* as 'that is' to regulate the conversation. She illustrates her question since speaker B could not answer the first time. Speaker A uses *hēk* as a turn-taking device followed by *ya 'ni* to explain her question.

- (17) A: b-ti- 'tibr-i sinit 2011 ken-it sint-ik
 HAB-you-consider-f year 2011 was-f year-your.f
- b- 'imtiyez?
 with-distinction?
- B: hmm.. ma-b-a 'rif ma-b-a 'rif
 hesitation marker not-HAB-I.know not-HAB-I.know
- A: hēk **ya 'ni** inti 'am ti-talla 'i 'al 2011,
 hēk **that.is** you.f PROG you-look-f PREP 2011,
- b-it 'il-i-la (↗) =
 HAB-say-f-it (↗) =

'A: Do you consider 2011 a great year for you?
 B: 'Hmm, I don't know, I don't know.
 A: hēk **that is** when you look at 2011, you say..,'

Similarly, in example (18), the use of *ya 'ni* is equivalent to ‘that is’. In this example, A and B share the same opinions and keep assenting to each other’s utterances. Therefore, in this case *ya 'ni* is used at the end of an utterance to signal acquiescence. There is also an occurrence of the discourse marker *bass* in this example where its use is analogous to ‘but’.

- (18) A: la’ bass fī nēs b-libnēn ḥatta
 no but there.are people in.Lebanon even
- ’ēḥd-īn ’aktar min ḥa’’-un.
 taking-pl more than right-their
- B: ’ēh mīyi bil-mīyi ma-hūwi haida miš ḥa’’-un
 yes hundred in-hundred RES-it this not right-their
- hinni ’am yeḥd-u ’aktar mimma
 they PROG take-them more than
- b-yi-stéhl-u.
 HAB-they-deserve-pl.
- A: mazbūt se’ita ma-hada b-yeḥud ḥa’’-u **ya’ni.**
 right then no-one HAB-take right-his **that.is.**

‘A: No, but there are some people in Lebanon who are being overrated.
 B: Yes 100%, but this is not their right, they are taking more than they deserve.
 A: **That is** no one takes their right.’

In example (19), speaker B uses *ya 'ni* (*that is*) to clarify his point and refute that of speaker A. Speaker B takes the floor and initiates his utterance with *ya 'ni* in his response to speaker A.

- (19) A: šabbah-ak ’al-ba’d bi-tarazan ’al-hārib
 compared-you the-some PREP-Tarzan the-escaping

bi l- 'adġāl min wuḥūl l-siyesi. 'ila
in the-underbrush from mud the-politics. until

mata w šu šāyir ma ' -ak?
when and what happening with-you?

B: **ya 'ni** bi-l- 'aks 'ana mawġud bi-l-siyese
that.is PREP-the-opposite I present in-the-politics

w 'am b-itla '
and PROG HAB-show.up w 'am
and PROG

b-ihki.
HAB-speak.

'A: Some people compared you to Tarzan escaping into the underbrush from the mud of politics. Until when and what is going on with you?
B: **That is** the opposite, I am present in politics and I am showing up and giving speeches every now and then.'

Example (20) presents *ya 'ni* (*that is*) as a device for adding information. The speaker uses *ya 'ni* to close her second utterance where she adds that she calls 'Yousif' by the nickname 'Wassouf' as well.

(20) ma-biftikir mi-n-šawwir wa 't l-tuswīr 'aktar šī
not-I.think PROG-we-shoot time the-filming most thing

wa 't y-kun mawġud Yūsif 'ana kamen
when him-be present Yūsif I also

b- 'ayyiṭ-l-u Wassūf **ya 'ni ..** wa 'ta Wassūf y-kūn
HAB-call.I-to-him Wassūf **that.is ..** when Wassūf him-be

mawġūd kil l-wa 'it dīḥik.
present all.of the-time laughing.

'I do not think we shoot at the time of filming, especially when Yousif, **that is**, 'Wassouf' is there. When Wassouf is there, the whole time [is spent] laughing.'

Another function of *ya 'ni* is requesting clarification. In example (21), speaker B interrupts speaker A with three consecutive uses of *ya 'ni* in order to request a quick answer before speaker A proceeds with his speech. In this context, *ya 'ni* retains its verbal force, where it literally means ‘*it means*’.

(21) A: niḥna miš bi-ḥāḡi lā li-mušērakit
 we not in-need not for-involvement

Ḥizbullāh wala li-ḡayr
 Lebanese.political.party nor for-other

Ḥizbullāh ‘ala-l-‘aks min al-ḥikma
 Lebanese.political.party on-the-contrary from the-wisdom

‘an lā y-ušērik Ḥizbullāh =
 that not FUT-get.involved Ḥizbullāh =

B: = ‘ah
 = filled pause

ya ‘ni (1) **ya ‘ni (2)** **ya ‘ni (3)** ‘al-ḡayš
it.means **it.means** **it.means** the-army

l-lubnani qadir ‘ala ḥimayat l-balad
 the-Lebanese able to protecting the-country

min al-‘irhāb?
 from the-terrorism?

‘A: We do not need the involvement of Hizbullah or any other party [in defending Lebanon]. On the contrary, it is wise for Hizbullah to not get involved
 =

B: = Ah **it means, it means, it means** that the Lebanese army is capable of protecting the country from terrorism [by itself]?’

4.1.2 The pragmatics of the discourse marker *ya 'ni*

In some examples, the function of *ya 'ni* does not derive from its semantic meaning. The following examples show that *ya 'ni* could also serve other functions in speech. Example (22) shows how *ya 'ni* indicates a change of mind. Speaker B starts her answer with 'no' then she poses and uses *ya 'ni* to signals uncertainty and change the direction of her speech. In this context, *ya 'ni* acts as a repair marker, where the speaker starts speaking and then she uses *ya 'ni* to start again and change what she started saying at first. Schegloff, Jefferson, & Sacks state that one of the reasons that leads to the organization of repair is a problem in speaking (1977: 361).

(22) A:	layk-i	hal	T-shirt	maktub	'la-ya	man	
	look-you.f	this	T-shirt	written	on-it	who	
	ḥafar-a	ḥufratan	li-'aḥī-hi	waqa'-a	fī-ha.	waqa'-a	
	dug-him	a.trap	to-brother-his	fell-him	in-it.	fell-he	
	'aw	lam	ya-ka'?				
	or	did.not	he-fall?				
B:	la 'ana	ma..	ya 'ni	'eh	mbala	fī	'išya
	no I	not..	ya 'ni	yes	yes	there.are	things
	fī	'išya	mbala	wa'a'-t	ktīr	b-ḥufar.	
	there.are	things	yes	fall-I	a.lot	in-traps.	

'A: Look at this T-shirt written on it 'who ever digs his brother a trap falls into it' Did you fall or not?

B: No I did not .. **ya 'ni** yes I have fallen into a lot of traps.'

In example (23), *ya 'ni* is used for expansion of ideas (see Alkhalil, 2005). Speaker A uses *ya 'ni* after justifying how he permits attacking the Sheikh who attacked Palestine or

anyone else who does that in order to expand on the topic discussed, before speaker B interrupts him.

- (23) A: 'awwal ši man ya-muss bi-falastīn 'ana
 first thing who he-touch PREP-Palestine I
 las-tu 'u-ḥallil faqat l-mass fī-h 'u-ḥallil
 do.not-I I-authorize just the-attacking PREP-him I-authorize
 ši téni ma'-u, **ya'ni** hāḍa mawdū' =
 something else with-him, **ya'ni** this subject =

'A: First of all, I do not only authorize attacking anyone who attacks Palestine, I even authorize more than just that, **ya'ni** this is a subject ='

In example (24), *ya'ni* is used twice where it functions as a floor holder in its first usage. The speaker uses *ya'ni* (2) to continue his speech from where he held the floor and expand on his utterance. In this example, prosody helps to distinguish between the functions of *ya'ni*. The speaker elongates the last vowel of *ya'ni* after his first utterance, which shows that he is holding the floor for a longer time, then he catches up on his speech and uses *ya'ni* to expand on what he was saying.

- (24) mazēl'intā 'am t-'ūl 'inna-k duḍd
 since you PROG you-say that-you against
 tiḥyīd Lubnēn **ya'nē (1)..** **ya'ni (2)** lēkin 'int-u
 neutrality Lebanon **ya'nē ..** **ya'ni** but you-pl
 šērak-t-u bi-ḥukūmi kēn 'inwēn-a siyēsīt
 took.part-you-pl in-government was title-it policy
 l-na'i bi-l-nafis.
 the-distancing in-the-self.

functions of *'innu* include digression in speech, turn-taking, indicating a change of mind, clarifying/requesting clarification, signalling uncertainty, and searching for a word.

4.2.1 *The grammaticality of the discourse marker 'innu*

'Innu can serve as the English complementizer *'that'*. Germanos (2010) discusses the complementizer *'innu* as a free-standing category, without linking it to discourse markers. However, in the present study, *'innu* and other discourse markers that serve grammatical roles are still placed under the category of discourse markers since they serve a pragmatic function contingent upon context. Example (26) shows how *'innu* (2) is used as the complementizer *'that'*. The first use of *'innu* (1) functions as a discourse marker to request clarification.⁸

- (26) A: Sa 'id **'innu (1)** 'am ya-'mil l-klip?
 Sa 'id **'innu** PROG he-do the-music.video?
- B: 'eh 'eh.
 yes yes.
- A: huwwi sa 'id **'innu (2)** 'am ya'mil
 he.is happy **that** PROG he-do
 l-klip?
 the-music.video?

'A: Sa 'id 'innu is working on the music video?

B: Yes, yes.

A: Is he happy **that** he is working on it?'

⁸ Sa 'id is a common Arabic name, which holds the meaning 'happy' in Standard Arabic. In this example, the speaker tries to play on words.

In example (27), the use of *'innu* (*that*) serves as a device that expands on the speaker's utterance. The discourse marker *ya 'ni* carries a content meaning equivalent to '*that is*'.

(27)	'ana	badd-i	'ul	šagli	'innu	wusil	'istéz	Ĝuzēf
	I	want.I	say	something	that	arrived	Mr.	Joseph
	w	kil-lu	mai	mn-il-šiti	fa-kén	Karlus	'am	
	and	all-him	water	from-the-rain	so-was	Carlos	PROG	
	ynadḍif-lu	tyéb-u	ya 'ni	kīf	l-bay	b-yihtamm		
	clean-him	clothes-his	that.is	how	the-father	HAB-take.care		
	b- 'ibn-u							
	PREP-son-his							

'I want to say [something] **that** Mr. Joseph arrived with his clothes wet from the rain, so Carlos was cleaning his [father's] clothes - that is like the father takes care of his son.'

Similarly, in example (28), the speech of the guest consists of separate utterances similar to a narrative. In his speech, the speaker poses and uses *'innu* (*that*) to continue his utterance, where he wonders how the table is considered inferior to the chair⁹.

(28)	ma-b-a- 'rif	léh	'ind-i	héġis	šār	l-tāwli.
	not.HAB-I-know	why	have-I	obsession	has.become	the-table.
	ġarib..	'innu	l-tāwli	mahdūr	ħa' - 'a	
	strange..	that	the-table	wasted	right-it.f	
	m-lāħaz?					
	HAB-notice.you?					

'I don't know why I started to become obsessed with the table. It is strange **that**

⁹ In this context, the chair refers to the presidency chair that several candidates are competing on.

In example (32), speaker B uses *'innu* to request clarification from speaker A. She wants a quick direct answer to her question before the interlocutor continues what she was saying.

(32) A:	Sa'īd	'am	ya-'mil	storyboard	šway =
	Sa'īd	PROG	he-do	storyboard	a.little =
B:					= Sa'īd
					= Sa'īd
	'innu	'am	ya-'mil	l-klip?	
	'innu	PROG	he-do	the-music.video?	

'A: Said is creating a storyboard a little =

B: = Said *'innu* is directing the music video?'

4.3 Halla'

Another discourse marker considered in the present study is *halla'*, *Halla'* holds the content meaning 'now'. When *halla'* (*now*) undergoes pragmaticalization, it serves a pragmatic function derived from its content meaning. Its meaning in discourse can either be literal (*now*) or figurative ('not long ago' or 'in a short time'). However, in some instances *halla'* holds a pragmatic function incidental to 'now'. These functions include holding the floor, acting as a turn-taking device, adding new information, and signaling uncertainty.

4.3.1 The semantics of the discourse marker *halla'*

As stated earlier, *halla'* can hold both the literal and the figurative meaning of 'now'. In example (33), *halla'* means 'now' literally.

(33) halla'	bad-na	hiwār	ginē'i	bēn
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4.3.2 The pragmatics of the discourse marker *halla*'

In example (36), speaker A answers speaker B's question and attempts to give as many reasons as possible to show that his party's political views are the ones that are going to lead to victory. Speaker A poses after uttering the first reason then he uses *halla*' twice afterwards as a floor holding device. Speaker A seems uncertain about what he wanted to say next. He probably uses *halla*' in order to search for other reasons or to change the topic. In this example speaker B starts his question with the discourse marker *ṭayyib* where it functions as a turn-taking device.

- (36) B: ṭayyib 'a-šū mrāhan 'alā hāḍa l-'intiṣār?
ṭayyib on-what betting on this the-victory?
- A: 'alā 'uwwit ḥulafē' -nā 'alā 'uwwit.. **halla**' (1)
on strength allies-our on strength.. **halla**'
- halla**' (2) =
halla' =
- B: = mīn ḥulafē' -kun?
= who.are allies-your?
- 'B: ṭayyib what are you betting on for this victory.
A: on the strength of our allies, on the strength of.. **halla**' **halla**' =
B: = who are
your allies?'

Halla' can also initiate an utterance and act as a turn-taking device, like its usage in example (37). Speaker B ends his utterance with the discourse marker *ya 'ni*, where it holds the meaning of 'that is'.

- (37) A: 'ah 'inta badd-ak ta'rif šū fī
 filled pause you want-you you.know what is.there
- taḥt l-tawli
 under the-table
- B: **halla'** l-wāḥad la-yifham l-mawdū' ya'ni
 halla' the-one FUT-understand the-subject that.is

'A: Ah, so you want to know what is under the table.

B: **halla'** that is that one would be able to understand what is going on.'

In example (38), *halla'* adds new information. The guest explains how some people supported politician X for certain reasons. Then the guest uses *halla'* to add the reasons that made some people abandon this leader.

- (38) fī nēs mišy-it ma'-u la'inna
 there.are people walked-they with-him because
- staḥad-it minn-u w fī nēs
 benefitted-they from-him and there.are people
- mišy-it ma'-u 'an qanē'a.. **halla'** fī
 walked-they with-him out.of principle.. **halla'** there.are
- nēs tēnyi tarakit la'inna ma-kēnit m'ēmni
 people other left because not-was believing
- w fī nēs tēnyi ḥēnit.
 and there.are people other betrayed.

'Some people supported him because they benefited from him and some people supported him because they were convinced of his views, **halla'** there are other people who abandoned him because they did not believe in his path and others betrayed him.'

4.4 Bass

Bass serves different functions where in some instances its occurrence is essential for maintaining the meaning and grammaticality of the sentence. *Bass* can have content, grammatical, and pragmatic significance. The use of *bass* can be analogous to the use of the conjunctions ‘*but*’ and ‘*when*’. *Bass* also serves several pragmatic functions, besides its grammatical significance. It is used for taking turns, shifting the topic, expanding on one’s speech, and contradicting an utterance. Moreover, the content meaning of the discourse marker *bass* in Lebanese Arabic derives from its original meaning in Persian, where it means ‘*enough/only/sufficiently*’. *Bass* undergoes pragmaticalization when its pragmatic functions derive from its grammatical and content meanings. Fraser (2009) states that the functions of *but* are universal, however this study shows that *bass* does not always function as *but* (see discussion).

4.4.1 The grammaticality of the discourse marker *bass*

In most of its occurrences, the use of *bass* is similar to the use of ‘*but*’ where it serves as a conjunction to indicate a contrast between two messages in discourse or to change the topic.

Removing *bass* in examples where it is used to indicate contrast between two messages within an utterance might alter the meaning that the speaker endeavors to convey, thus its use is essential in conveying the utterance’s pragmatic meaning. *Bass* joins two either dependent or independent clauses. For example, in (39) *bass* joins the independent clause “you gave Iyad a kiss” and “You did not give Ziad”. On the contrary, in example (40), *bass* joins two dependent clauses. Speaker A first says that he does not want to specify

the actual time that he was dependent on his parents, but then he uses *bass* to say that the time is more than thirty years. Thus, he contradicts what he said in the first part of his utterance. In example (39), the speaker also uses the discourse markers *ya'ni* and *'innu*. He uses *ya'ni* for closing his first clause and *'innu* as an opener to his second clause.

(39) 'atayt-i 'Iyad bawsi **bass** ma-'atayt-i Ziad.
gave-you.f 'Iyad kiss **but** no-gave-you.f Ziad.

'You gave 'Iyad a kiss, **but** you did not give Ziad [one].'

(40) 'ilo-n aktar min miš raḥ n-'ūl l-wa'it
have.been-they more than not going we-say the-time

ya'ni **bass** 'innu aktar min tletīn sini b-yihtam-mu
ya'ni **but** 'innu more than thirty year HAB-take.care-they

fi-nā.
PREP-us.

'They have been taking care of us for I'm not going to say the time, *ya'ni* **but** *'innu* for more than thirty years.'

A speaker can use *bass* as a digression device to shift the topic. In example (41), the use of *bass* is essential for maintaining the pragmatic meaning of the utterance since removing it would not alert the listener that the speaker shifted from uttering a statement to requesting information.

(41) kil ġinniyyi tuḥit min aġaniyy-i kēni-t
every song came from songs-my was-f

mašhūra **bass** 'il-ī-li 'ayya ġinniyyi masalan
famous **but** tell-f-to.me which song for.example

aktar šī =
 more thing =

‘Every song of mine was famous, **but** tell me, which song, for example, the most =’

Likewise, in example (42) *bass* (*but*) indicates a change of direction. *Bass* also acts as a floor holder in this context since the speaker pauses then continues her speech. Here, the speaker starts her speech with *halla*’, which holds the meaning of ‘now’.

(42)	halla’	bad-na	ḥiwār	ġinē’i	bēn
	now	want-we	conversation	musical	between
	l-’ab	w	l-’ibin ..	bass	badd-i
	the-father	and	the-son..	but	want-I
					’i-s’al
					I-ask
	so’āl	’abl	l-ḥiwār		l-ġinē’e.
	question	before	the- conversation		the-musical.

‘Now, we want a musical conversation between the father and the son, **but** let me ask a question before you start.’

As a turn-taking device, a speaker can use *bass* to contradict an interlocutor’s utterance, to shift the topic, introduce new information, pose a question, or aid the speaker in taking the floor. In example (43), speaker B interrupts speaker A by using *bass* in order to correct her.

(43) A:	‘am	t-sawr-i	klip	mo’ aḥaran =
	PROG	you-shoot-f	music.video	recently =

B:				= bass
				= but

'ana w ġéye 'a-l-tari şar-u tnén.
 I and coming PREP-the-road became-they two.

'A: You have been shooting a music video recently =
 B: = **but** on my way [here] they became two.'

In example (44), speaker B uses *bass* 'but' to interrupt speaker A and pose a question. This shows how *bass* is used as a device that aids speaker B in taking the floor in order to seek an explanation from speaker A. In this example, both speakers A and B use the discourse marker 'innu as the complementizer 'that'.

(44) A: fī nés ktīr rāhan-it 'ala ħeyārāt-na
 PREP people a.lot bet-they on choices-our
 l-seyesiyyi w l-strātiġiyyi bi l-manta'a 'innu
 the-political and the-strategic in the-region that
 haidi l-ħiyārat ḍu'f-it. trik-un yitsal-lu =
 this the-choices failed-they. leave-them have.fun-they =

B: = **bass**
 = **but**

l-waka' i' lam tuṭbit 'innu ħiyārāt-ak
 the-facts did.not prove.it that choices-your
 l-strātiġiyyi 'am tinhār?
 the-strategic PROG collapse?

'A: A lot of people have bet that our political and strategic choices in the region have failed. Let them have fun =
 B: = **but** haven't the facts proven that your strategic choices are breaking down?'

In example (45), speaker A uses *bass* (*but*) after she said that ‘some people say that her guest (speaker B) looks like Lady Gaga because of her glittery and metallic outfits’, before speaker B interrupts her with *bass* (*but*) to say that she is feeling pain while sitting because of her metallic dress. After speaker B takes the floor, a peripheral conversation opens with speaker C after he started laughing on speaker B’s response. Speaker A wanted to regain control of the floor in order to return to the main topic so she uses *bass* again to get back to what she was saying. In this example, *bass* (*but*) serves as an interruption device. Moreover, speaker B uses the discourse marker *halla*’ as ‘now’.

- (45) A: fī nés bišabh-ū-ki la Lady Gaga
 PREP people compare-they-you to Lady Gaga
- bi-sabab tyéb-ik l-barra’a w l-fi-ya
 for-reason clothes-your the-glittery and that-in-it
- ma’adin **bass (1)** l-ba’id =
 metals **but** the-some =
- B: = **bass (2)** waḥyét-ik ’ana w
 = **but** swear.by-you I and
- ’e’d-i halla’ mawḡo’a.
 Sitting-f now in.pain.
- A: @@@
- B: la’innu l-fostān hadīd w biwaḡḡi’ @@
 because the-dress metal and it.hurts @@
- C: lā ’anḡad? haida hadīd?
 no really? this metal?
- B: ’eh metallic.
 yes metallic.
- A: **bass (3)** l-ba’id =
but the-some =

Apart from that, code-switching with discourse markers is evident only with the use of *bass*. These examples are observed in the speech of guests in political talk shows only, where Lebanese Arabic and Standard Arabic might be used interchangeably. In examples (47) and (48), the speaker uses the discourse marker *bass* and its equivalent in Standard Arabic ‘*wa-lakin*’ (*but*) in succession. Moreover, the speaker switches to Standard Arabic after ‘*wa-lakin*’. In example (48), the discourse marker *ya ‘ni* appears as well, and in this context it starts the upcoming phrase.

(47) ‘ana ma‘ taḥyīd lubnén **bass** wa-lékin hal
 I with neutrality Lebanon **but** and-but Q
 ‘astafī‘ taḥyīd lubnén?
 capable.I neutralizing Lebanon?’

‘I am with the neutrality of Lebanon, **bass** but am I capable of making Lebanon neutral?’

(48) A: hal ‘inta ‘am t-i‘mal ‘ala ‘imkēniyyit qiyām
 Q you PROG you-work on possibility do
 l-ra‘īs lǧmayyil bi-ziyara ‘ila Dimašq
 the-president lǧmayyil PREP-visit to Damascus
 walla shū?
 or what?

B: la’ ‘abadan **bass** wa-laken ya‘ni anā duḡḡ
 no at.all **but** and-but ya‘ni I against
 seyēsit l-‘azil.
 policy the-isolation.

‘A: Are you working on a possible visit of president Gemayel to Damascus or what?’

B: Not at all, **but** I am against the isolation policy.’

Bass is also used as the conjunction ‘*when*’. In this case, the use of *bass* is essential for maintaining the grammaticality of the utterance.

(49) **bass** ‘il-ti sa’l lēh tṭalla‘-ti b-Michēl?
when said-you.f rude why looked-you.f at-Michēl?

‘Why did you look at Michel **when** you said rude?’

4.4.2 *The semantics of the discourse marker bass*

Bass occurs twice in example (50). It functions as the conjunction ‘*but*’ in its first use and as the adverb ‘*only*’ in its second use. Since *bass* (2) acts as an adverb in this context, its use is not essential for maintaining the sentence grammatically, yet it adds content meaning to the sentence.

(50) ‘āl kwayyis nuṭwī hal ṣafḥa **bass** (1) l-ḡeš
great ok we.turn this page **but** the-army

ma-badd-u **bass** (2) du‘a’ l-ḡeš badd-u
not-want-it **only** prayer the-army wants.it

slēḥ.
weapon.

‘Great, ok it is great to turn this page **but** the army does not need **only** prayers, the army needs weapons.’

4.4.3 *The pragmatics of the discourse marker bass*

Bass has a pragmatic significance in example (51). Speaker A asks speaker B a question, but speaker A does not answer directly. Instead, she starts her answer with a filled

pause ‘hmm’ then she uses *bass* in the middle of her utterance as a ‘self-initiated self-repair’ to start again. Schegloff, Jefferson, & Sacks state that “it is a notable fact that the occurrence or distribution of repair/correction is not well-ordered by reference to the occurrence of ‘error’. Repair/correction is sometimes found where there is no hearable error, mistake, or fault” (1977: 363), which occurs in this example where *bass* expands on the speaker’s utterance and reassures her point instead of correcting her speech.

- (51) A: mīn ’awwal ḥada da’ ayt-ī-lu w
 who first person called-you.f-him and
 ’il-tī-lu ‘an naḡeḥ-ik?
 told-you.f-him about success-your?
- B: hmm ma-ḥada.. ‘adatan ‘anḡad **bass** ’ana
 filled pause no-one.. usually really **bass** I
 ‘anḡad ma-bdi’’ la-ḥabbir ḥada ‘ann-i.
 really not-I.call to-tell anyone about-myself.

‘A: Who was the first person you called to tell about your success?’

B: Hmm, no one, usually I really **bass** I really do not call to tell anyone about myself.’

4.5 Hēk

Hēk is a discourse marker that serves several pragmatic functions, some of which derive from its content meaning. *Hēk* undergoes pragmaticalization when its pragmatic function derives from the pronoun ‘*this*’ or the adverb ‘*thus*’ (see discussion). Apart from that, *hēk* can be used to search for a word, avoid listing other reasons that support the speaker’s view, explain a message, monitor speech, and take the floor.

4.5.1 The semantics of the discourse marker *hēk*

Hēk might carry the meaning of the pronoun ‘*this*’ in English. The use of *hēk* is thus essential for maintaining the meaning of an utterance and its grammaticality. Example (52) displays the usage of *hēk* as ‘*this*’. Moreover, in this example, the speaker uses the discourse marker *ya ‘ni* that acts as a floor holder to introduce the next phrase.

(52)	l-nawēdi the-clubs	l-ġam ‘iyyēt the-associations	l-mu ‘assasēt the-institutions	killun all.of.them	
	karram-ū-ni honored-pl-me	ya ‘ni ya ‘ni	kattir increase	ḥayr-un good-their	shu what
	bi ‘dir ‘ul can.I say	ġēr other.than	hēk. this.		

‘A lot of clubs, associations, and institutions have honored me *ya ‘ni* I am deeply thankful, what can I say more than **this.**’

4.5.2 The pragmatics of the discourse marker *hēk*

In example (53), the speaker uses *hēk* as a floor holder while searching for a word. She also uses *bass* where it holds the content meaning ‘*only*’, and *ya ‘ni* to add information.

(53)	miš not	bass only	‘istēz Mr.	rūmiu Romeo	ya ‘ni ya ‘ni	Sitt honorific.title.f	
	‘Um-Kulṭūm Umm Kulthum	wa ‘t-ā time-its	lta ‘i-t met-f	fī-k-i with-you-f	w and		
	‘atit gave	ra ‘y-a opinion-f	fī-k-i with-you-f	w and	‘atit-ik gave-you.f	hēk hēk	mitil like
	šhēde. tribute.						

‘Not only Mr. Romeo ya‘ni The Lady Umm Kulthum met you back then, gave her opinion, and gave you **hēk** like a tribute.

Hēk can also come following *wa* (*and*). In example (54), when the speaker uses ‘*w hēk*’, she indicates other reasons that support her view on the topic. The speaker uses *halla*’ as an equivalent to ‘*now*’ in the beginning, then she uses *w hēk* to signal that there are other reasons than the one stated that she gives immediately (using *ya‘ni*) to signal the addition of new information. The speaker also uses the discourse marker ‘*innu*’ as the complementizer ‘*that*’.

(54) ‘anā halla’ firhān-i b-wlēd-i **w** **hēk** ya‘ni
 I now happy-f with-children-my **and** **hēk** ya‘ni

w b-šūf l-nēs ’innu ba‘da b-iṭhib-ni.
 and HAB-see the-people that they.still HAB-love-me.

‘At this time, I am happy with my children **and hēk** ya‘ni and I see how the people around me love me.’

Moreover, in example (55), speaker B uses the discourse marker *hēk* as a turn-taking device for reformulating a question. She uses *ya‘ni* afterwards as ‘*that is*’. The rising intonation (↗) shows that the host’s utterance is interrogative.

(55) A: b-ti-‘tibr-i sinit 2011 kēn-it sint-i-k
 HAB-you-consider-f year 2011 was-f year-f-your

b-’imtiyēz?
 with-distinction?

B: hmm.. ma-ba‘rif ma-b-a-‘rif.
 hesitation-marker not-HAB-I-know not-HAB-I-know.

A: **hēk** ya^ʿni inti ʿam ti-talla^ʿ-i ʿal 2011
hēk that.is you.f PROG you-look-f PREP 2011

b-it^ʿil-ī-la (↗) =
HAB-tell-f-it (↗) =

‘A: Do you consider 2011 a great year for you?
B: ‘Hmm, I don’t know, I don’t know.
A: **Hēk** that is when you look at 2011, you say to it?’

4.6 Ṭab/ Ṭayyib

Ṭayyib and *ṭab* are two discourse markers in Lebanese spoken Arabic where at some instances they can be used interchangeably, whereas in other instances they cannot. Palva (1967: 8) indicates that *ṭab* is the reduced form of *ṭayyib*, however the present study shows how *ṭab* does not always serve as an alternative to *ṭayyib*. *Ṭayyib* and *ṭab* both hold a pragmatic meaning, yet in some instances the discourse marker *ṭayyib* can hold a semantic meaning analogous to ‘*ok/very good*’ as well.

In most of their occurrences *ṭab* and *ṭayyib* function as turn-taking devices that initiate utterances. However, these are also used for other functions like expanding on the speaker’s utterance, digressing in speech, requesting clarification, holding the floor. *Ṭayyib* and *ṭab* can also function as hesitation devices. In the following examples, I note the instances where *ṭab* can serve as a substitute to *ṭayyib* and vice versa in order to show that these two are not always interchangeable. This demonstrates how *ṭab* undergoes semantic bleaching and phonological reduction where it loses its content meaning, in contrast to *ṭayyib*.

4.6.1 The semantics of the discourse marker *ṭayyib*

Ṭab cannot hold a semantic meaning, in contrast to *ṭayyib*. In example (56), the use of *ṭayyib* is akin to the use of ‘ok’. Speaker A interrupts speaker B by using *ṭayyib* (*ok*) to signal acquiescence to his speech and add information. In this example, *ṭab* cannot hold the same function in the place of *ṭayyib* since it has undergone semantic bleaching, hence cannot suggest the meaning of ‘ok’. Speaker B uses the discourse marker *ya’ni* as a floor holder to introduce the next phrase, and *hēk* as the pronoun ‘this’ and speaker A uses *’innu* as the complementizer ‘that’.

(56) B:	= l-nawēdi = the-clubs	l-ḡam ‘iyyēt the-associations	l-mu’ assasēt the-institutions	killun all.of.them			
	karram-ū-ni honored-pl-me	ya’ni ya’ni	kattir increase	ḡayr-un good-their	shu what		
	bi’ dir can.I	’ūl say	ḡēr other.than	hēk this	’ana me	ba’ dēn also	’ana I
	hal this`	tekrīm honoring	’am PROG	yiḡi coming	min from	l-nēs the-people	
	l-taybīn = the-good =						
A:	= ṭayyib.. = ok..	miš not	’inta you	lēzim have.to	t’ūl say	niḡna we	
	lēzim have.to	n-’ūl we-say	’innu that	ḡuzēf Joseph	’azar Azar	byistēhil deserves	’aktar more
	w and	’aktar. more.					

‘B: A lot of clubs, associations, and institutions have honored me *ya’ni* I am

deeply thankful, what can I say more than this. Also, this honor is coming from the good people [as well] =
 A: = **Ok** we have to say that, not you, that Joseph Azar deserves much more.'

4.6.2 The pragmatics of the discourse markers *ṭab* and *ṭayyib*

The following example presents *ṭab* as a turn-taking device. In example (57), speaker B takes the floor from speaker A by posing a question starting with *ṭab*. *Ṭab* is also used to request speaker A to provide more information. In this example, *ṭayyib* can substitute *ṭab* and the utterance would still retain its meaning.

(57) B: **ṭab** b-tifham-ī-h lyūm?
 ṭab HAB-understand-you-him today?

‘B: **ṭab** do you understand him today?’

Likewise, example (58) presents the use of *ṭayyib* as a turn-taking device, where speaker A uses *ṭayyib* to tell speaker B that it is time to turn away from their discussion to view a recorded report. The speakers were discussing the matters of the region before speaker A uses *ṭayyib* to shift the topic (See Ghobrial, 1993). *Ṭab* and *ṭayyib* are interchangeable in this example.

(58) A: **ṭayyib** ḥallī-na n-shūf l-ductūr Fāris S'ed
 ṭayyib let-us we-see the-doctor Fāris S'ed
 ḍumun rupurtāğ.
 in recorded.report.

‘**ṭayyib** let us see doctor Fares Said in a recorded report.’

In the following example, *ṭab* is used four times. In the first two consecutive instances the guest uses *ṭab* as a hesitation device; *ṭab* (3) marks boundaries in discourse, where the guest uses *ṭab* before trying to pose a question that he eventually fails at.; *ṭab* (4) is used as a floor holder that serves digression in speech as well. This utterance would still maintain its grammaticality and meaning if *ṭab* is substituted by *ṭayyib*; however, the speaker uses *ṭab* for the ease of articulation. In this example the discourse marker *'innu* is equivalent to the complementizer *'that'*.

(61) fī	qirā'a	siyēsiyyi	bya'mil-a	l-wāḥad.		
there.is	reading	political	make.he-it	the-someone.		
ṣār	fī	qirā'a	ḥāṭ'a	min.qibal	l-ba'd	
happened	there	reading	mistaken	by	the-some	
bi-'innu	yalaṭīf	George	Bush	shū	badd-u	
PREP-that	Oh.God	George	Bush	what	want-m	
ya'mil	fī-na	w	yfawwit-na	'a	l-ḥabs	qabl
does	PREP-us	and	get.he-us	into	the-jail	before
l-maḥkami		l-dawliyyi	bifatra	yawmita		
the-court.of.justice		the-international	a.while	that.day		
ṣār	fī	qirā'a	ḥāṭ'a	ṭab (1)	ṭab (2)	ḥalaṣ ḥuṣīt
happened	there	reading	even	ṭab	ṭab	done ended
l-marḥali	ṭab (3)	shū ..	ṭab (4)	hay	l-nēs	lli 'am
the-stage	ṭab	what..	ṭab	these	the-people	who are
teḥki	hā	l-bi'il-lak	baddi	'iš ...		
talking	this	that-tells-you	I.want	live...		

'There is a political reading to be done. There was a misreading that happened by some people who thought that George Bush is going to imprison us a while before the international court of justice, back then there was a misinterpretation **ṭab ṭab** now this stage has ended **ṭab** what .. **ṭab** those people who are speaking, they are saying that they want to live...'

Chapter 5

DISCUSSION

The data collected from Lebanese discourse yielded occurrences of the discourse markers *ya 'ni*, *'innu*, *halla'*, *bass*, *hēk*, and *ṭayyib/ṭab* that hold pragmatic functions and can have semantic and/or grammatical roles as well depending on contextual factors. *Ya 'ni*, *'innu*, *halla'*, *bass*, *hēk*, *ṭayyib*, and *ṭab* have undergone pragmaticalization since they have gained pragmatic functions derived from their content and grammatical meanings. Moreover, besides its pragmaticalization, *ṭab* has also been subject to phonological reduction and semantic bleaching where it lost the content meaning of *ṭayyib*, so *ṭab* and *ṭayyib* cannot be used interchangeably in all instances.

The data for the present study covers a large range of the functions of discourse markers; however, I include a few more examples from daily conversational Lebanese Arabic that gives a more comprehensive view of these functions.

Ya 'ni is the most frequently occurring Lebanese discourse marker. The occurrences of *ya 'ni* in Lebanese media reflect its use in everyday speech. As a discourse marker, *ya 'ni* can hold a meaning equivalent to 'it means'/'that is'. In this case, *ya 'ni* regulates speech, signals acquiescence, and clarifies/requests clarification. Moreover, other functions of *ya 'ni* include digression in speech, indicating a change of mind, turn-taking, floor holding, interruption, expanding on one's ideas, and signaling uncertainty.

'Innu the second mostly used discourse marker has several pragmatic functions as a complementizer (*that*), where it can expand on the speaker's utterance, solicit an answer, or hold the floor. Apart from its use as a complementizer, *'innu* indicates digressing in speech,

turn-taking, clarifying/requesting clarification, signaling uncertainty, and searching for a word.

Example (62) is an example from daily Lebanese speech that illustrates *'innu*'s function in speech digression. In this example, *'innu* is used as a repair marker. The speaker reiterates what she was saying but in another way. The speaker starts her speech by saying 'that kid is very impudent' (*maġlū*'), then she uses the discourse marker *'innu* to regulate her speech and say, 'the kid does not listen'. *'Innu* also expands on the speaker's utterance in this context.

(62)	hal	walad	ktīr	maġlū'	' innu	ma-b-yi-sma'	l-kilmi
	this	kid	very	impudent	' innu	not-HAB-he-listen	the-word
		'abadan					
		at.all					

'This kid is very impudent **'innu** he does not listen at all.'

Halla' is a discourse marker that holds the semantic meaning 'now', which could be either literal or figurative. When used figuratively, *halla*' could be equivalent to either 'not long ago' or 'in a short time'. Other pragmatic functions of the discourse marker *halla*' include acting as a floor-holder and as a turn-taking device. *Halla*' can also be used to signal uncertainty and expand on one's utterance.

Some functions of *halla*' were not present in the Lebanese media discourse data, yet these can occur in Lebanese conversational Arabic. Thus, *halla*' can be used to indicate a change of mind, clarify and illustrate a statement and/or request clarification, and for digression in speech.

country still keeping-it like.this schools open.

‘A: Do you believe that when I went [to school] to teach, the students gave me a ruler to hit whoever talks in class.

B: What! Really?!

A: Yes, as if they are living horror.

B: **halla**’ I cannot understand how this government is keeping schools like this open.’

Moreover, in example (65), speaker A uses *halla*’ for requesting clarification about a peripheral topic.

(65) A: šifit Layla mēšy-i hiyyi w Sa‘īd
I.saw Layla walking-she her and Saeed

‘ayyat-ti-la bass ma-sim‘it-ni.
call-I-her but not-hear.f-me.

B: **halla**’ Layla w Sa‘īd ba‘d-un sawa lēh?
halla’ Layla and Saeed still-they together why?

‘A: I saw Layla walking with Saeed; I called her but she did not hear me.

B: **halla**’ Saeed and Layla are still together [dating]?’

Another discourse marker, *bass*, can act as the conjunctions ‘*but*’ and ‘*when*’. In the case of ‘*but*’, the speaker can code-switch the Lebanese and the Standard Arabic equivalent of *bass* ‘*lākin*’ in succession. *Bass* can also hold a semantic meaning equivalent to ‘*only*’ in several occurrences. *Bass* also serves as a turn-taking and a floor holding device. It can indicate a change of mind, clarify and illustrate a statement and/or request clarification, and show digression in speech.

In reference to Fraser (2009) who claims the universality of *but*, the following example from Lebanese Arabic refutes his claim by showing that *bass* cannot be used as its English equivalent *but* in all cases. Thus, the data collected from Lebanese spoken Arabic do not always conform to Fraser’s claim of the universality of primary discourse markers like *but* (equivalent to *bass* in Arabic) Example (66) is extracted from Fraser’s study to show how *but* is used for correcting information, while example (67) is taken from Lebanese conversational Arabic to demonstrate that the use of *bass* cannot always be equivalent to *but*.

(66) She’s not my sister **but** my mother. (Fraser 2009: 318)

(67)	hiyyi	miš	’iḥti	bass	’imme*
	she	not	my.sister	but	my.mother

Example (67) is ungrammatical in Lebanese spoken Arabic, where *bass* cannot be used as *but* for correcting information in this context, hence Fraser’s claim of the universality of primary discourse markers like *but* does not apply on *bass*, the analogous discourse marker to *but* in Lebanese Arabic.

The findings of the present study show that the other discourse marker *hēk* can hold the semantic meaning of the pronoun ‘*this/that*’ in English. Moreover, observations from the use of *hēk* in Lebanese spoken Arabic show that *hēk* can also hold the content meaning of ‘*thus/like this*’, as the following example shows.

(68)	hék	minganni.
	like.this	we.sing.

‘We sing **like this.**’

The pragmatic functions of *hēk* include acting as a device for taking the floor, clarifying and illustrating a statement and/or requesting clarification, signaling uncertainty, monitoring and reformulating speech. *Hēk* can also be used at the end of an utterance preceded by ‘*and*’ (*wa*) to avoid listing other reasons that support the speaker’s view.

Furthermore, in most of their occurrences, *tab* and *ṭayyib* function as turn-taking devices and floor holders. They can also be used to expand on the speaker’s utterance, clarify and illustrate a statement and/or request clarification, and for digression in speech. *Ṭab* always holds a pragmatic function and cannot hold a semantic meaning, unlike *ṭayyib* that can hold a meaning analogous to ‘*ok*’, besides its pragmatic function. *Ṭab* and *ṭayyib* can be used interchangeably in some instances, whereas in other instances they cannot.

The data presented in this study shows that *ṭayyib*, which sometimes holds the content meaning ‘*ok/very good*’, is a good representation of pragmaticalization, which results in reducing its content meaning and increasing its functional meaning; this is evident in most of the examples of *ṭayyib* as a discourse marker. Likewise, Palva (1967) shows that *tab* is the reduced form of *ṭayyib* (*good*), however since *tab* has been reduced phonologically and semantically bleached, it can no longer be used where *ṭayyib* expresses the meaning of ‘*good*’.

The following examples show how *ṭayyib* and *tab* can be used interchangeably. In examples (69) and (70), *ṭayyib* and *tab* initiate a question in order to request an alternative answer than the one provided. These two discourse markers are interchangeable in this context since they both hold the same pragmatic meaning. However, *tab* cannot substitute

ṭayyib in examples where the meaning of *ṭayyib* is analogous to ‘ok’ since *ṭab* has undergone semantic bleaching, so it only acts as a pragmatic marker.

- (69) A: bšūf-ak lyūm?
see-you today?
B: lā' lyūm mašgūl
no today busy
A: **ṭayyib** bukra?
ṭayyib tomorrow?

‘A: Will I see you today?
B: No, today I am busy.
A: **ṭayyib**, tomorrow?’

- (70) A: bšūf-ak lyūm?
see-you today?
B: lā' lyūm mašgūl
no today busy
A: **ṭab** bukra?
ṭab tomorrow?

‘A: Will I see you today?
B: No, today I am busy.
A: **ṭab**, tomorrow?’

Some researchers are uncertain about the phenomenon of pragmaticalization and believe that the development of discourse markers is a result of grammaticalization instead (see Degand & Evers-Vermeul 2015), but *ṭab* serves no content or grammatical function, so it has not been grammaticalized. *Ṭab* has become a pure discourse marker, hence it is a result of pragmaticalization.

Chapter 6

CONCLUSION

This chapter sums up the findings of the functions of discourse markers in Lebanese conversational Arabic. It discusses the limitations of the present study, and suggests future research.

6.1 Findings

The data of this study consists of two hours of recorded speech extracted from Lebanese media talk shows. Some extra examples from daily Lebanese spoken Arabic are also included in the discussion in order to expand upon the functions of the Lebanese discourse markers. The assumption in the present study is that the use of discourse markers in Lebanese media resembles its use in Lebanese Spoken Arabic in daily life.

According to Schiffrin (1982), discourse markers primarily relate two consecutive utterances pragmatically. Schiffrin points out that the use discourse markers could be based on their sentential semantics and/or their grammatical status (1982: 239). In view of that, the two main arguments that form the groundwork of the present study are the following:

- 1- Discourse markers are words that hold a pragmatic function contingent upon context. They can hold a semantic meaning and/or a grammatical role as well, and thus operate on the semantic and the syntactic level of utterances.

- 2- Pragmatic functions of discourse markers can emerge as a result of pragmaticalization, where content words increase their pragmatic/functional meaning (Diewald 2011).

In this study I have attempted to analyze pervasive discourse markers in Lebanese conversational Arabic through observing Lebanese media discourse. The studied discourse markers are *ya 'ni*, *'innu*, *halla* , *bass*, *hēk* and *ṭab/ṭayyib*. These discourse markers were analyzed based on their pragmatic, semantic, and grammatical roles, taking into consideration the process of pragmaticalization and how discourse markers that hold content or grammatical meaning develop a more functional role in speech. Very few, if any, studies have made such a distinction between the functions of discourse markers in Arabic and other languages. Accordingly, I hope that this study can serve as an initiative for further studies in this domain.

The findings of this study show that all of the considered discourse markers excluding *ṭab* serve pragmatic functions that derive from their grammatical or content meanings. *Ya 'ni* serves pragmatic functions that derive from its content meaning '*it means*'; *'innu* serves pragmatic functions that derive from its grammatical role as the complementizer '*that*'; *halla* ' serves pragmatic functions that derive from its content meaning '*now*'; *bass* serves pragmatic functions that derive from its grammatical role as the conjunctions '*but*' and '*when*' and its content meaning '*only*'; *hēk* serves pragmatic functions that derive from its content meanings '*this*' and '*thus/like this*'; *ṭayyib* serves pragmatic functions that derive from its content meaning '*ok*'.

On the other hand, although *ṭab* is a derivative of *ṭayyib* as Palva (1967: 8) suggests, these two are not always interchangeable since *ṭab* has undergone phonological reduction and semantic bleaching so it lost its content meaning, unlike *ṭayyib*. According to Stenström (2006), phonological reduction and semantic bleaching are signs of grammaticalization. However, *ṭab* does not function as a grammatical operator; it only holds a pragmatic function, thus it is a result of pragmaticalization instead.

The following conclusions regarding the functions of discourse markers in Lebanese spoken Arabic are drawn:

- 1- The primary role of the discourse markers *ya 'ni*, *'innu*, *bass*, *halla*, *ṭayyib/ṭab*, and *hēk* is to serve a pragmatic function in discourse.
- 2- The discourse marker *bass* is the only discourse marker that can serve a pragmatic, semantic, and grammatical role; the discourse markers *ya 'ni*, *halla*, *ṭayyib* and *hēk* have both a pragmatic and a semantic meaning; *'innu* has a pragmatic and a grammatical role; *ṭab* is the only discourse marker that only serves a pragmatic function, since it has undergone pragmaticalization. An indication of this is that it is not fully interchangeable with its parent form *ṭayyib* 'good'.
- 3- The functions of *ya 'ni* 'it means' include: indicating digression in speech, indicating a change of mind, turn-taking, floor holding, expanding on one's ideas, and signaling uncertainty. The pragmatic functions of *ya 'ni* that derive from its semantic meaning 'it means'/'that is' include clarifying and illustrating a statement, requesting clarification, and regulating the conversation.
- 4- The functions of *innu* 'that' include: indicating a change of mind, clarifying and illustrating a statement/ requesting clarification, signaling uncertainty, acting as a

repair marker, acting as a turn-taking device, acting as a floor holder, and serving as a tool for digression in speech. The pragmatic functions of *'innu* that derive from its grammatical use as a complementizer include expanding on the speaker's utterance and soliciting an answer.

- 5- The functions of *halla* 'now' include: acting as a floor-holder, acting as a turn-taking device, signaling uncertainty, serving as a repair marker and reformulating one's speech, expanding on one's utterance, indicating a change of mind, clarifying and illustrating a statement and/or requesting clarification, and serving as a tool for digression in speech. The pragmatic functions of *halla* ' that derive from its semantic meaning of 'now' include catching attention, holding a temporal function, and holding a figurative meaning equivalent to 'not long ago' or 'in a short time'.
- 6- The discourse marker *bass* can serve as a repair marker for reformulating one's speech and as a floor holder. The pragmatic functions of *bass* 'but' that derive from its grammatical use as a conjunction include: indicating contrast, digression in speech, turn-taking, introducing new information, and clarifying / requesting clarification. Fraser (2009) claims the universality of the functions of the discourse marker 'but' (analogous to *bass*), but our findings show that Fraser's claim is invalid since it does not apply on Arabic in all of the examples. Besides, other functions of *bass* derive from its content meaning 'only', where it is used for emphasis.
- 7- The functions of *hēk* include: acting as a turn-taking device, signaling uncertainty, regulating one's speech, and acting as a floor holder. *Hēk* can also be used at the end of an utterance preceded by 'and' (*wa*) to avoid listing other reasons that

support the speaker's view. Other pragmatic functions of *hēk* derive from its semantic meaning as the adverb 'thus/ like this' and the pronoun 'this' in English.

- 8- The functions of *ṭab* and *ṭayyib* include: acting as turn-taking devices, acting as floor holders, expanding on one's utterance, signaling uncertainty, clarifying and illustrating a statement and/or requesting clarification, and serving as a tool for speech digression. In some instances, the use of the discourse marker *ṭayyib* derives from its content meaning 'ok' so its use signals acquiescence, unlike *ṭab* that has undergone semantic bleaching and has lost its content meaning.

To sum up, all the functions discourse markers examined in the present study include serving as a turn-taking device, acting as a floor holder, and signaling uncertainty. Each of the discourse markers studied also has its own particular pragmatic functions that distinguish it from other discourse markers (see Appendix 3). Some of these pragmatic functions derive from the discourse marker's content and/or grammatical meaning (see Appendix 4).

6.2 Limitations and Future Research

This study concerns prevalent discourse markers in Lebanese conversational Arabic; there is a number of other discourse markers in Lebanese Arabic like *walla*, *lakan*, etc. that have not been discussed in this study. These discourse markers necessitate more time and much more data to be analyzed.

To my knowledge, no study that targets different Lebanese conversational discourse markers has been done so far. The only study done on Lebanese discourse markers was

done by Germanos (2010) and it was limited to studying the functions of the discourse marker *'innu*. Thus, the present study aims to expand our understanding of Lebanese discourse markers by elucidating the functions of several of them, and noting how these discourse markers hold some universal functions like turn-taking, floor-holding, and signaling uncertainty, whereas particular discourse markers have unique functions as a result of pragmaticalization.

Prior studies (see Ghobrial 1993, Albatal 1994, & Alkhalil 2005) investigated roles of discourse markers in various Arabic dialects, yet future research can shed light on the discourse markers discussed in the present study in other Arabic dialects, making a similar distinction between them. Moreover, a more comprehensive research must be done on discourse markers in Lebanese conversational Arabic encompassing all of the possibilities of discourse markers.

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Appendix 1

LIST OF THE USE OF STANDARD ABBREVIATIONS

f feminine
FUT future tense
HAB habitual aspect
Pl plural
PRES present
PROG progressive
PST past
RES resultative
Q question marker

Appendix 2

TRANSCRIPTION CONVENTIONS

- = When there is no interval between adjacent utterances, the second being latched immediately to the first (without overlapping it).
- @ laugh
- .. hold/micropause
- ↗ rising intonation
- [] overlapping utterances

Appendix 3

PRAGMATIC FUNCTIONS OF DISCOURSE MARKERS IN LEBANESE CONVERSATIONAL ARABIC

Function	ya'ni	'innu	Bass	halla'	ṭayyib	ṭab	hēk
Turn-taking device/ interruption	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Expand on one's utterance	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Indicate a change of mind	X	X	X	X			
Digression in speech	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Avoid listing other reasons that support the speaker's view			X				X
Reformulating one's speech	X	X	X	X			X
Clarifying	X	X	X	X			
requesting clarification	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Floor holder	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Signal uncertainty	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

Appendix 4

SEMANTIC AND GRAMMATICAL FUNCTIONS OF DISCOURSE MARKERS IN LEBANESE CONVERSATIONAL ARABIC

		ya'ni	'innu	Bass	halla'	ṭayyib	ṭab	hēk
Grammatical Role	Complementizer 'that'		X					
	Conjunction 'but'			X				
	Conjunction 'when'			X				
Semantic Meaning	it means/ that is	X						
	Only			X				
	Now				X			
	Ok					X		
	Thus'/ Like this							X
	Pronoun 'this'							X