



DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.7990475>

The Impact of Discourse Markers on the Listening Comprehension of Oral Discourse to EFL Learners

Mohammed Gorashi Yassin El-Haj

Assistant Professor of Applied Linguistics

Department of English Language, College of Languages

Karary University, Sudan

mohammedgorashi34@gmail.com

Mohammed AbdAlgane

Associate Professor (Applied Linguistics)

Dept. of English & Translation, College of Science and Arts

Ar Rass, Qassim University, Saudi Arabia

mo.mohammed@qu.edu.sa

Received: MAR. 29, 2023**Accepted: MAY. 07, 2023****Published: MAY. 31, 2023**

ABSTRACT

The main objective of this study was to assist students of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) to understand spoken dialogue better by bringing their attention to different types of discourse markers. Within the scope of this investigation, researchers have adopted experimental methodology to investigate the data. In order to assemble the required data, the researchers utilized a pre-test and a post-test research instrument that has made possible the classification and investigation of this study through (T. test). Participating in the study was a total of ninety junior (third-year) students from the EFL program at College of Languages, Karary University in Sudan. As a result, one of the most important things that can be learned from this study is that EFL students who participated in the academic support program that was offered in discourse markers (DMs) had significant improvements in their capacity to interpret spoken discourse. As a result, the researchers suggested that students of FL acquire an appreciation for the value of DMs as an effective discourse category in academic listening comprehension. The findings of this study led the authors to the conclusion that including discourse markers instruction at an early stage in an EFL curriculum would assist students in better comprehending spoken interaction.

Keywords: Spoken Discourse, Discourse markers, Macro Markers, Micro Markers

Introduction

Some words and phrases that are now recognized as discourse markers were previously labeled as fillers, expletives, or incorrect beginnings. All

these expressions refer to words and phrases that do not contribute anything to the meaning of the sentence, and thus they were grouped alongside phrases that are not true sentence starters. Schiffrin (1987) brought attention to the significance of discourse markers and proposed a coherence model that examines the manner in which discourse markers contribute to oral coherence by including semantic, syntactic, and discourse-organizing levels.

According to the definition provided by Martinovic-Zic & Moder (2004), discourse markers are words or phrases that do not affect the sense of the sentence and have a meaning that is, for the most part, meaningless. According to the definition provided by Swan (2005), a discourse marker is "a term or statement that demonstrates the link between the words being spoken and the comprehensive context. According to Swan (2005), discourse markers have two purposes: first, it establishes context between two statements, and second, it reflects the speaker's emotional engagement in those claims. First, it establishes context between two statements. On the other hand, he presents three distinct categories of evidence: openly, in fact, and on the other hand. According to Chaudron and Richards (1986), discourse markers can be separated into two categories: macro and micro. However, I believe that this split is arbitrary and that there is no real distinction between the two. Higher-order indications are referred to as macro markers, because they reveal significant alterations in where the discourse is directed. Nevertheless, utilizing them demonstrates transition from one point to another and contributes to the structuring of the debate.

Therefore, it stands to reason that the researchers of the study contend that discourse markers can assist students of EFL in better comprehending what their teachers are saying in class. Why, then, hasn't there been more in-depth research done on the role that discourse markers play in improving EFL students' listening comprehension of oral communication, particularly lectures?

The ability of students learning EFL to understand the meaning of spoken discourse, such as lectures, is an essential skill in the process of language learning. This ability helps students not only acquire new material, but also promotes intellectual interaction. As a result, one of the primary goals of this research is to make EFL students more aware of discourse markers (DMs) as a means of improving their comprehension of spoken discourse through listening.

Objectives of the study

1. Giving participants the chance to learn more about the many discourse markers that have been shown to increase listeners' understanding of EFL speakers' conversations.
2. Familiarizing EFL learners with the types of effective discourse markers.

3. Determining the extent to which the academic support program has improved EFL students' listening comprehension of spoken conversation.

Research Questions

1. What are the most effective ways to bring to the attention of EFL students to the significance of listening comprehension of the spoken discourse?
2. Which types of discourse markers are the most effective?
3. If EFL students completed a test before and after receiving the academic support classes, would the results demonstrate a significant improvement in their ability to comprehend what was being said?

Hypotheses of the Study

1. The categories of macro and micro discourse markers are mostly affecting types in promoting EFL learners' listening comprehension of the spoken discourse.
2. If the academic support program improved EFL students' listening comprehension of the spoken discourse, there would be a statistically significant difference between their pre- and post-test results.

Statement of the Problem

Students learning EFL do not have a well-developed adequate awareness of listening comprehension in spoken discourse to efficiently extract content information from academic lectures, which is the primary purpose for this study. The key reason for doing this study is to find out more about this. According to the findings of this study, students studying English as a foreign language in Sudan may not be aware of the significance that discourse markers have in improving listeners' ability to comprehend what is being said. Students who are learning EFL frequently struggle to comprehend the logic of continuous conversation. One possible explanation for this difficulty is that EFL stands for English as a foreign language. It's possible that this is due to a lack of exposure to discourse markers in spoken language, which are important for gaining a comprehension of the current issue. As a direct consequence of this problem, the students' ability to comprehend what they hear in EFL classes has worsened. The inability of students learning English as a second language (ESL) to actively participate in classroom discussions and use English is an undesirable result of this situation. When discourse markers are employed habitually without giving consideration to the semantics or pragmatics of such markers, it is probable that the listener's comprehension of any spoken discussion will be hampered. This is the case regardless of the topic being discussed.

Significance of the Study

Because it highlights the importance that discourse markers play in listening comprehension, this research is essential because it can help EFL students at different competence levels grasp the nature of academic spoken discourse. Second, it brings a novel strategy to the language acquisition process and uses that strategy with the discourse marker model. In the end, but certainly not least, it is hoped that this body of work will serve as a stepping stone for future research on various indices of spoken dialogue.

Literature Review and Previous Studies

Verbal Communication

The early steps in learning a language involved just listening to and imitating what other people said. After that, they are firmly established as a form of communication through the medium of print. On the other hand, many languages do not have a written discourse, and a large number of people do not know how to read or write. In addition, although if kids can teach themselves to read and write on their own, they still need to go to school if they want to become proficient in spoken language. Consequently, discourse analyzers investigate both oral and written forms of communication from a variety of vantage points. For instance, verbal language depends significantly on prosody (pitch, pause, tempo, voice quality, rhythm, etc.) and body language for deixis respects, inters propositional relations, and so on according to Aaron (1998). Aaron (1998) elaborates by saying that the creation of meaning in spoken language is almost always a participatory, face-to-face process in which the participants draw on prior information, make inferences based on context, or have the object of their discussion physically and visually presented to them. In other words, meaning is created in spoken language through a combination of these three factors. The presentation of spoken words is frequently disorganized and jumbled up. On the other hand, presenters are not required to adhere to a certain order when delivering their remarks; rather, they should prepare the audience for their subsequent ideas and reflect on those they have already presented.

Non-verbal clues, such as facial expressions, hand gestures, and adverbial phrases like "her," "now," and "this," according to Crystal, et al (1994) are crucial to the comprehension and presentation of verbal dialogue. The use of slang, acronyms, and contractions in everyday conversation (such as we're and you've) is another distinguishing feature of this type of discourse. In addition, there are characteristics such as rhythm, intonation, quickness of utterance, and an inability to cover up speaking faults that are present. Therefore, Kopple (1985) points out that the ability of students to understand the contents of a spoken material through the skill of DMs can be broadened gradually to help them in different contexts of language learning.

Discourse Markers (DMs)

Discourse markers have been utilized exclusively in verbal communication throughout the course of history Redeker (1991). Some definitions that exemplify this point are listed below: DMs are a form of language phrase that convey the relevance of a statement or query to its immediate surroundings. DMs can be used to ask questions or make statements. According to Goldberg (1980), their principal function is to shift the listener's attention to a specific type of upcoming speech that is relevant to the topic at hand. As stated by Keller (2011) characterization of discourse markers as marking tools that show the speaker's comprehension of the discourse's consecutive connection or appropriateness to the information set as formed by the discourse that comes before it. According to Erman (1986), however, it is "a specific group of indications in the speaker's oral discourse that are utilized to present level modifications within the communication process, or to make listeners ready for the following course in the reasonable argument phrases which aid the speaker split his message into pieces of information and, in turn, they also assist the listener in the process of comprehending these information elements." As would have been anticipated, the vast majority of these definitions restrict the application of DMs to spoken language alone.

As a direct consequence of this, the researchers concentrate on the degree of language that is used in discussion. When the information that is being sent about a topic is used to illustrate to the recipient the appropriate method to listen to, react to, and assess what has been stated about the issue, this is an example of teaching listening to react. The use of discourse markers, which are often made up of two or more sentences and positioned at the beginning and end of a piece of writing, is a characteristic aspect of academic writing. As a result, the discourse markers in this prescription are designed to be as all-encompassing as is practically possible by embracing different linguistic forms such as words, phrases, and clauses. Lenkl and eatal (1998) came to the conclusion that there are several qualities of DMs that are shared by the languages. Two of these traits are syntactic similarities, and the other is an oral, multipurpose nature. Whenever it seems to make the most sense to do so, direct messages can be incorporated into the speech whenever it is possible to do so. DMs, on the other hand, are almost always inserted into the turn-initial position so that they can signify subsequent data. This holds true in the overwhelming majority of circumstances.

Different Categories of Discourse Markers

There are numerous different discourse markers available, and each one can be used to express a different logical connection between two ideas. Throughout both the macro and the micro levels of discourse, concepts are

often connected to one another in some way, and sentence connectors are typically employed in order to communicate these links.

Macro Discourse Markers

Attributes of the Discourse on a Worldwide Scale According to Brock (1985), macro discourse markers are utilized to highlight either the sequentiality or the relevance of information. This is helpful in demonstrating how presentations often follow a certain format. These are the signals or meta-assertions that connect to the major claims, and they should be helpful in clarifying things to some degree. According to research conducted by Chaudron and Richards (1986), mentioned that macro-markers are more conducive to effective memory of the lecture." The format of university lectures is the focus of both this study as well as the work that Chaudron and Richards have done. This viewpoint is comparable to the ones expressed by Decarrico and Nattinger (1988, 1997: 185). The attendees of a presentation imply that macro-organizers play essential roles in the presentations they see, including roles such as topic-markers, topic-shifters, summarizers, amplifiers, relators, evaluators, qualifiers, and aside markers. Murphy and Candlin (1979) recognized three distinct categories of macro-markers, which are as follows:

1. Markers are signs that assist in more clearly dividing apart a conversation at various points. The phrases well, right, and now are all instances of instruments in this category.
2. Connective openers are those that transfer the conversation from one topic to the next. For example, "well, now, let's get on with" moves the conversation from one topic to the next.
3. In order to direct the reader's attention to the most important aspects of a piece of writing, meta-statements like "There are three forms of pollution I'd like to talk about" are utilized.

In accordance with the categorizations that Murphy and Candlin (1979) stated that macro-markers are able to be further classified into the following categories: In order to start things going, to begin the conversation; elicitation, which refers to the use of words or phrases in order to draw knowledge out of someone; Attitudinal, suggesting that the speaker is expressing personal comments on the issue at hand; Affirmation of contentment; Acceptance. Words that inform while also putting the emphasis where it should be; In order to better understand this topic, could you please comment? Aside from that, it's possible that this is an attempt to alter the subject of the conversation; a meta-statement that summarizes the points made throughout the discussion; lastly, the conclusion with final remarks. However, these two categories of micro and macro-markers are an attempt to categorize DMs (Murphy & Candlin 1979, Chaudron & Richards 1986), they are mostly using conceptual frameworks. Micro-markers are very small, while macro-markers are much larger. Keller (2011) include a

few supplementary phrases in the groupings that are considered to be markers (see Table 1). However, Cook (1975) refers to them as "macro-markers" because of the way in which they show the greater structure of the text.

Micro Discourse Markers

A dissimilarity between micro markers (lower-order DMs) and macro markers was proposed by Chaudron and Richards in the foundational study that they co-authored (1986). (DMs of secondary level and higher) Micro-markers could be used to draw attention to connections between sentences in the lecture or to provide filler throughout the presentation. They serve to fill the silences, which provides the audience with additional time to concentrate on the various components of a speech and engage in bottom-up processing. These hints gleaned from the dialogue aid in the processing of information on a higher level. In the context of these two distinct groupings. In accordance with the roles that they play, Chaudron and Richards (1986) divided micro-markers into the following five categories: The phrases "and," "right," and "okay" are all examples of helpful categories that can be used to divide information. A categorization of time, such as the present moment or an unspecified point in the future. The set of causal words includes expressions such as "so" and "then." The conjunctions "both," "but," and "only," amongst others, are examples of conjunctions that contrast one another. Words and phrases such as "of course," "you can see," "for the time being," "in fact," "on the other hand," and others should be emphasized.

Discourse Markers and Listening Comprehension

Listening to a lecture in an academic setting is far more challenging than listening to a lecture in a social setting because there is less room in the former for meaning to be negotiated. When a listener engages in the practice of selective listening, this indicates that the listener might discover that discourse markers assist them in choosing the understanding of the probable pragmatic indication of the utterance that they are currently listening to that is most likely to be correct. This might be the case, for instance, when the listener is trying to determine which interpretation is the most applicable to real-world situations. To put it another way, the hierarchy of information that is preserved in one's long-term memory would be more accurate to the presentation's initial organization. Take, for Example: Many teachers are of the opinion that if they can get their pupils to comprehend the role that discourse markers play in an academic lecture, it will be much simpler for those students to remember the information that is being presented to them.

In the research that Nattinger and DeCarrico (1988) carried out, they looked at the lexical terms that were used in a wide variety of different kinds of spontaneous conversation. This encompassed a wide variety of academic fields, including but not limited to history, linguistics, biology, anthropology,

and literature. It has been hypothesized that lexical phrases perform the role of macro-organizers and stand in for the meta-level of information. Students who make use of lexical words that are collectively referred to as "macro-organizers" have a better difficulty mentally classifying what they hear. The name "macro-organizers" was coined by Nattinger and DeCarrico (1988) in order to better underline the function of these lexical expressions, which helps emphasize the relevance of students' understanding of lecture arrangement. According to the functions that they carry out within a text, Nattinger and DeCarrico (1988) classified macro-organizers into the following eight groups according to their roles: topic markers, topic shifters, summarizers, exemplifiers, relators, evaluators, qualifiers and aside markers. A discussion of how they further classify these operating groupings into local and global organizers is provided in the following points:

1. One category of organizer is known as the "global macro-organizer," whose responsibility it is to supply a comprehensive overview of the overall structure of the presentation.
2. At particular locations in the structure, the local macro-organizers should underline the significance of the information's sequence or link to the structure as a whole.

This additional categorization helps to differentiate between the fundamental ideas and the supporting details, which include things like explanations, examples, relationships, and so on.

In their investigation of second language (L2) lecture comprehension from 1995, Flowerdew and Tauroza focused on discourse markers like so, right, well, and alright. They focused their attention specifically on the difference that it made whether or not these indicators were present. According to the findings of their study, audience members had a greater capacity for comprehension of a lecture when the DMs were present as opposed to when they were not. As a consequence of this, it is crystal evident that the objective of discourse markers is to assist listeners in avoiding the confusion that would ensue from trying to piece together statements that appear to be unconnected to one another. A further function of discourse markers is to provide an indication as to the context in which an utterance will be found, which assists the listener in gaining a deeper comprehension of the information that is being communicated.

Previous Studies

Ameer (2008) conducted a PhD dissertation at the University of Khartoum, Sudan titled "The Enhancement of Foreign Language Listening Comprehension in Spoken Discourse Using Discourse Markers," in which he dove deep into this topic and presented his findings under the title "The Enhancement of Foreign Language Listening Comprehension in Spoken

Discourse." The primary objective of the study is to improve the English-language comprehension of non-native speakers by working with students from other countries. In addition, the research has assisted in shedding light on the fact that FLLs have a tendency to have a very limited grasp of lectures that are presented in English. The researchers decided to use a quantitative approach for this investigation by having the participants complete tests both before and after the intervention. According to the findings, including discourse markers in academic presentations leads to a significant rise in the level of comprehension achieved by the audience for the material being discussed. The findings of the study were used as a basis for the formation of a set of recommendations, one of which was that the impacts of discourse markers on understanding lecture content should be taken into consideration.

Therefore, the researchers agree with Ameer's study in terms of the overall structure of the research topic. However, the researchers disagree with Ameer in terms of the methodologies that are utilized for the collection of data as well as the dependent and independent variables that are being explored in the study.

Chaudron and Richards (1986) conducted research along the same lines, and they titled their findings "ESL students' comprehension of academic lectures." They were interested in finding out whether or not the utilization of discourse markers to indicate the overarching structure of the lecture had an effect on the students' level of comprehension. As part of the quantitative strategy for gathering data for this study, the researchers made use of a test that was administered in a total of four separate iterations, and the lecture was recorded word for word. In light of these findings, the research suggests implementing and perfecting a more systematic approach to the assignment of grammatical and discourse markers.

The purpose of this study, on the other hand, is to determine whether or not the usage of discourse markers by students has an effect on their comprehension of the material presented in lectures. There are some similarities between the two investigations; however, the methods used to acquire data and the people polled were different in each study. There are also some similarities between the two investigations.

Methodology and Population

An experimental approach was taken for the purposes of this study by the researchers. The data were collected using a design that included a pre-test and a post-test, and they were analyzed using the T test and the statistical program SPSS.

Students at College of Languages, Karary University, Sudan who were in their third year of studying English as a Foreign Language took part in the study.

The participants in this study are all in their third year of learning English as a foreign language (EFL). These students have made up their minds to attend College of Languages, Karary University in order to learn English. The pool from which the stratified random selection was created consisted of 90 junior participants. Participants were learners who were taking classes in English for speakers of other languages.

The recorded lecture that serves as the primary source material for this investigation was initially viewed by all of the participants, including those who were assigned to the control group. The researchers used a methodology that consisted of a pre-test, academic support classes, and post-test, and subsequently gathered, evaluated, and interpreted the data statistically. The researchers compared the outcomes of the experimental group's participation to the results of the control group's participation using the two measures.

Validity and Reliability

The value of the test's validity is 0.87, which indicates that the test has a high level of validity since the phases of this study are more consistent in relation to the hypothesis of the study and indicate that the test has a high level of validity. The dependability may be shown in (0.75) As a result, this reliability coefficient is strong, and this stability of the scale and the validity of the study are both shown by its presence.

$$\text{Reliability coefficient} = \frac{n}{N-1} * \frac{1 - \text{Total variations questions}}{\text{variation college grades}}$$

The analysis of the data and subsequent discussion

Data Analysis and Discussion

By using a design that included both pre and post testing, the researchers were able to collect quantitative data from the participants of both groups. The results of the tests are presented in the tables that follow. The findings of the t-test performed on the control group and the experimental group prior to the training of the experimental group are presented in Table 1. (pretest).

Table 1. (pretest)

Value	No	Mean	Std. Deviation	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Scale
Experimental Group	45	54.22	10.921	1.312	44	0.19	Insignificant

Control Group	45	51.69	10.518				
---------------	----	-------	--------	--	--	--	--

Since the calculated value in table (1) of the T-test of (1.312) and a standard deviation of 0.08 indicate statistically significant variations in the sample sizes of the two groups (0.19), and since this value is greater than the level of significance value (5%), it can be concluded that there were essentially no discernible distinctions between the results of the two groups. At this point of the examination (the pretest), it is possible to observe that the scores obtained by the two groups of participants do not differ significantly from one another, as indicated by the table above. After that, the results of these groups were interpreted as follows: (The experimental group had a mean of 54.22 and a standard deviation of 10.921, whereas the control group had a mean of 51.69 and a standard deviation of 10.518) It would indicate that both groups were present for the lecture as well as the exam before they were made cognizant of the crucial function that discourse markers play in the lectures. As a result, the first hypothesis can be accepted.

Table (2) T-test results for the gaps-filling portion between the control and experimental groups, taken before the intervention of the academic support program in the latter.

Value	Mean	Std. Deviation	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Scale
Experimental Pre-filling the gaps	25.93	9.776	0.210	44	0.83	Insignificant
Control Pre-filling the gaps	26.33	7.416				

The calculated value in table (2) of the T-test has denoted the differences between the scores that the participants received on the first hypothesis, the pre-test (part one) significance threshold was 0.210, and the indicated value was 0.83, hence the hypothesis was not rejected. In such case, the experiment had a mean of 9.776 and a standard deviation of 10.921. whereas the control had a mean of 26.33 and a standard deviation of 7.416. However, this indicates that there are not any differences that are significantly different between the two sets of results. There is no question that it is reasonable to believe that neither of the two groups of participants was recognizing the importance of the functions that discourse markers play in improving one's ability to understand what is being heard. What can be seen here is that EFL students are not acquainted with the crucial responses to the gap filling part, and this may be remedied by taking

discourse markers into consideration. As a result, this finding provides evidence in favor of the study's first hypothesis.

Table (3) T-test results for the multiple-choice section between the control and experimental groups, taken before the academic support program for the experimental group was implemented.

Value	Mean	Std. Deviation	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Scale
Experimental pre- multiple choice	23.82	6.191	-1.889	44	0.00	significant
Control pre-multiple choice	26.22	7.242				

For the post-test (part two of the first hypothesis), the t-test value of (-1.889) indicated statistically significant differences between the two groups (0.000). This value is lower than the level of significant value (5%), which indicates that the first hypothesis is false. These are references to the fact that there is a marginal statistical difference between the test group and the control group in the section before the multiple-choice test. On the other hand, this distinction is not being taken into account anymore, unless this group (the control) is going to be tested once more in the post-test after the academic support program has been carried out for the experimental group. As a result, the first hypothesis must be correct.

As a result of this inquiry, the answer that can be arrived at to the first question that was stated is that an enhanced awareness of discourse markers among EFL students leads to an improvement in their listening comprehension of academic lectures. As a consequence of this finding, outcome of the hypothesis' approval or disapproval is based on the level of knowledge that EFL students possess about the role that discourse markers play in enhancing listening comprehension. This hypothesis was put to the test by first giving the participants a practice test that consisted of twenty questions, each of which was worth two points if it was answered properly. The purpose of this exercise was to determine whether or not the hypothesis was true. After that, the results of the responders' grades on the test were computed, and after comparing the means of the experimental group with those of the control group, it was discovered that the scores of both groups in the pre-test were not significantly different, as demonstrated in table. This conclusion was reached after comparing the means of the experimental group with those of the control group (1). As a result of this, it is easy to jump to the conclusion that both groups have the same level of background knowledge of discourse markers when it comes to improving EFL listening comprehension. This is because increasing genre requires more prior knowledge of discourse markers.

The Initially Suggested Hypothesis Was Correct: This Is Confirmed

The first hypothesis was validated by the researchers by having them mark the two exams that were taken by EFL students from two different groups (the control group and the experimental group) to determine how well they adhered to their awareness of discourse markers in listening comprehension of spoken discourse. This was done in order to validate the first hypothesis. As a consequence of this, the findings of the statistical analysis, which are presented at the very top of table (3), have shown an insignificant value of (0.000), which indicates that EFL learners' awareness of listening comprehension in spoken discourse is not developed to the point where they can extract content information through the DMs. As a direct consequence of this, this idea has been rigorously examined, and the results have shown that it is accurate.

Table (4) Results from a t-test comparing the experimental and control groups before and after the experimental group received tutoring (post-test).

Value	No	Mean	Std. Deviation	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Scale
Experimental	45	69.80	10.541	8.796	44	0.00	significant
Control	45	51.89	11.692				

The significance of the differences between the study's participants on the posttest can be deduced from the value of the t-test that is displayed in the table that is located above. Despite this, the value of the test was 8.796, and it had a significant value of 0.00, which is significantly less than the threshold of significance value that was set at 5%. This makes reference to the fact that there are statistical differences for the group that was experimented on. At this point, it is important to point out that the post-test results of the experimental group showed a considerable improvement as a direct result of the academic support program.

Table (5) Gaps-filled T-test results for the control and experiment groups following the academic support program for the experimental group. (Post-test)

Value	Mean	Std. Deviation	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Scale
Experimental post-filling the gaps	34.89	5.982	6.564	44	0.00	significant
Control post-filling the gaps	25.78	7.534				

A value of (6.564) with a significant value of (0.000) has been shown by the calculation of the t-test in the table (5) that is shown above. This value is lower than the level of significant value (5%), which indicates that the differences in the participants' scores on the first section of the test are not significant. In spite of this, the findings of this experiment revealed the presence of a statistically significant difference between the control group and the experimental group. As a consequence of this, what is observed in this kind of test is that the experimental group has a higher rate of a mean (34.89), compared to the control group's mean value of (25.78). It is abundantly obvious that the academic support program had made it possible for the experimental group to respond to this question by providing them with a comprehension of the macro-DMs categories.

Table (6) Comparison of trained experimental subjects with untrained control groups on a multiple-choice test using a T-test.

Value	Mean	Std. Deviation	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Scale
Experimental post- multiple choice	34.76	7.100	6.503	44	0.00	significant
Control post- multiple choice	26.22	7.242				

The value of the t-test in table (6) has been calculated to symbolize the differences between the numbers of participants in the second portion of the posttest, which was (6.503), with a signify value of (0.000), which is lower than the threshold of significant value (5%). These statements pertain to the fact that there is a statistically significant difference between the control group and the experimental group in regard to the post-multiple-choice question. As a consequence of this, this study has demonstrated that the training Program on the discourse markers led to an improvement in the scores that learners obtained on this issue. As a result, the response to the second question that was given is correct.

Providing Evidence for the Correctness of the Second Hypothesis

In order to verify this hypothesis, the researchers have scored the two parts of the posttest that were administered to the experimental group for adherence to significant statistical differences that existed between the pre-test scores and the post-test scores that were obtained by the group that had been subjected to the academic support program. The group's pre-test scores and post-test scores have been analyzed in order to search for these statistically significant differences. The outcomes of the statistical analysis,

which are provided in table (4), have as a consequence of this indicated a significant value of (0.000), which is considerably less than the level of significance that was established at (5%). It is possible to draw the conclusion, given these findings, that there were differences in the manner in which the experimental group performed on the post-test. These differences were statistically significant. As a consequence of this, the second hypothesis of this inquiry has been successfully tested, and the findings of those tests have demonstrated that the hypothesis is correct.

Results

Inferences such as the ones listed below are able to be drawn on the basis of the results that were obtained. Students who are able to recognize macro and micro language indicators have an easier time processing the information that is provided in spoken conversation. According to the findings of a recent research project, including the instruction of discourse markers as part of an academic support program can successfully improve students' listening comprehension of spoken discourse in EFL classrooms.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study is to investigate whether or not students of English as a Foreign Language are aware of the role that discourse markers play in improving their comprehension of spoken language. The author of the study hypothesized that the primary cause of EFL students' incapacity to comprehend lectures is their lack of awareness regarding the critical function that DMs play in the process of extracting significant takeaways from linguistic input. Therefore, the purpose of this research is to determine whether or whether an increased grasp of discourse indicators by EFL students corresponds with an improved ability to comprehend what is being heard.

For the purpose of conducting research for this project, the questions that were posed have been recast as speculative claims. To begin, instructing students of English as a Second Language (ESL) about macro and micro discourse markers helps boost those students' ability to understand spoken English. This hypothesis was put to the test by those whose first language is not English. As a direct consequence of this, there has been a discernible shift in the kinds of responses that are permitted on the examination.

Second, participation in the academic support program will result in a statistically significant improvement in the EFL students' listening comprehension of spoken language, as measured by the difference in test scores obtained before and after the program.

In conclusion, the findings of this experiment offer support for the hypothesis that the proposed academic support program improved the experimental group's post-test scores in listening comprehension of the

spoken discourse. This conclusion is supported by the evidence offered by the results of the experiment.

Recommendations

1. EFL Students should be aware of the significance of discourse markers as a form of discourse that contributes to a better comprehension of conversational speech.
2. It is important that professors in higher education are made aware of the impact they could have on their students by reducing the complexity of their lectures through the application of discourse markers.

References

- Aaron. V. (1998) Three Models of Discourse Analysis: The role of social structure. University of California. San Diego.
- Ameer, Y, H. (2008). The Enhancement of Foreign Language Listening Comprehension in Academic Lectures Using Discourse Markers, University of Khartoum, Sudan.
- Brock, C. A. (1985). The effects of referential questions on ESL classroom discourse. *TESOL quarterly*, 20(1), 47-59.
- Chaudron, C. & Richards, J.C (1986). The Effect of Discourse Markers on the comprehension of Lectures. In *Applied Linguistics*. Vol. 7,2;113-127
- Cook, J. R. S. (1975). A communicative approach to the analysis of extended monologue discourse and its relevance to the development of teaching.
- Crystal, D. S., Chen, C., Fuligni, A. J., Stevenson, H. W., Hsu, C. C., Ko, H. J., & Kimura, S. (1994). Psychological maladjustment and academic achievement: A cross-cultural study of Japanese, Chinese, and American high school students. *Child development*, 65(3), 738-753.
- Decarrico and Nattinger. (1997) *Lexical Cohesion and Corpus Linguistics*. Benjamins Publishing Company.
- Erman, Britt. (1987). *Pragmatic expression in English: A study of you know, I see in face-to-face conversation*. Stockholm: Almqvist and Wiksell.
- Flowerdew, J and Tauroza, S. (1995) The Effect of Discourse Markers on Second Language Lecture Comprehension, In *studies in second language acquisitions*.
- Goldberg, J. A. (1980). *Discourse Particles: An Analysis of the Role of "Know," "I Mean," Well*.
- Keller, E. (2011). *Gambits: Conversational Strategy Signals*. In Volume 2 *Conversational Routine*. De Gruyter Mouton.
- Kopple, W. J. V. (1985). Some Exploratory Discourse on Metadiscourse. *College composition and communication*, 36(1).
- Lenkl, Gisle, and Thorstien. (1998). *Pragmatic Markers and Prepositional attitude*. John Benjamins Publishing Company.
- Martinovic-Zic, A., & Moder, C. L. (2004). *Discourse across languages and cultures*. *Discourse Across Languages and Cultures*. John Benjamins Publishing Company.
- Murphy, D. F., & Candlin, C. N. (1979). *Engineering Lecture Discourse and Listening Comprehension*. *Practical Papers in English Language Education*, Vol. 2.
- Quirk, R. (1960). Towards a description of English usage. *Transactions of the philological society*, 59(1).
- Redeker, G. (1991). Linguistic markers of discourse structure. *Linguistics* 29(6).
- Schiffrin, D. (1987). *Discourse markers* (No. 5). Cambridge University Press.
- Swan, M. (2005). *Practical English Usage* (Vol. 688). Oxford: Oxford university press.