Teachers' Attitudes towards the Role of Discourse Markers in Enhancing EFL Learners Listening Comprehension

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ABSTRACT

This paper aimed at investigating the role of discourse markers in enhancing EFL learners' listening comprehension in academic lectures. A case study conducted on Sudanese universities teachers. The researchers adopted the descriptive analytic method; a questionnaire has used as the main tool for data collection. The data has been analyzed by using (SPSS) program. The study sample comprises (50) teachers of English language in different Sudanese Universities. The study has arrived at a number of findings, among them; Discourse markers play an effective role in enhancing listening comprehension of academic lectures in EFL classes. Moreover, the researcher has recommended that, EFL learners have to be aware of the significant values of discourse markers as effective discourse genre in academic listening comprehension. Finally, the researcher suggested for further studies that includes; Teaching discourse markers at earlier stages to EFL learners.
Keywords: Discourse Markers, Academic Discourse, and Listening Comprehension

المستخلص

هدفت هذة الدراسة إلى التقصى فى دور إستخدام أدوات الخطابة الإيضاحية فى تعزيز إستيعاب المحاضرات لدى دارسى اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة اجنبية ؛ وهى دراسة حالة أجريت على أساتذة اللغة الإنجليزية بالجامعات السودانية. إعتمد الباحث المنهج التحليلي الوصفي لتحليل البيانات التي تم جمعها. الأدوات التي استخدمها الباحث لجمع البيانات هي الإستبيان كوسيلة اساسية لأساتذة اللغة الإنجليزية بالجامعات. وتم تحليل البيانات باستخدام برامج (الحزم الإحصائية). عينة الدراسة هي عدد (50) من اساتذة اللغة الانجليزية بالجامعات السودانية. و توصل البحث إلى النتائج الرئيسية التالية مثل: إن أدوات الخطابة الايضاحية لها دور فعال فى إستيعاب المحاضرات الاكاديميه للغة الإنجليزية كلغة اجنبية. علاوة على ذلك، أوصي الباحث ببعض التوصيات مثل: يوصى طلاب اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة اجنبية على أن يدركو قيمة علامات الخطابة الايضاحية ودورها الفاعل فى إستيعاب المحاضرات الاكاديميه. وأخيرا، اقترح الباحث بعض المواضيع لمزيد من الدراسات مثل: تدريس أدوات الخطابة لدارسى اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة اجنبية فى مراحل.
الكلمات المفتاحية: علامات الخطابة ، الخطابة الأكاديمية ، إستيعاب المحاضرات.

INTRODUCTION

Background : In the past twenty years or so, there has been an increasing interest in the theoretical studies of discourse markers, (DMs) focusing on what they are, what they mean, and what functions they manifest. Traditionally, some of the words or phrases that were considered discourse markers were treated as 'fillers', 'expletives' or 'false beginners'; words or phrases that had no function at all. Schifrin, (1987) raised the importance of discourse markers in the 80s, and offered a coherence model which includes semantic, syntactic, and discourse-organizing level to investigate how discourse markers assist oral coherence.

Lynn and Zic (2004:117), claim that discourse markers are words or phrases that are relatively syntax-independent and do not change the meaning of the sentence, and have somewhat empty meaning. Whereas, Michael Swan (2005), explains that a discourse marker is "a word or expression which shows the connection between what is being said and the wider context". For him, it is something that firstly, connects a sentence to what comes before or after and secondly, indicates a speaker's attitude to what he is saying. He gives three examples: *on the other hand; frankly; as a matter of fact.* While, Chaudron and Richards, (1986) claim that discourse markers can be categorized into two types; macro and micro. Macro markers mean higher-order markers signaling major transitions and emphasis on discourse. Where, they are used to indicate a shifting of one topic to another topic, and to organize the discourse structurally.

Accordingly, the researchers argue that, discourse markers can help learners to enhance their listening comprehension of the lecturers' speech in EFL classes. They observe that, EFL learners are not aware of the role of discourse markers in enhancing listening comprehension of the oral speech, particularly lectures.

Listening comprehension of spoken discourse such as lectures by EFL learners is very significant skill in language learning; rather, it is learners' ability to understand the meaning of the speech that they listen to; and also in acquiring knowledge and promoting of academic exchange. Therefore, the main aim of this paper is to investigate the role of discourse markers in enhancing EFL listening comprehension of academic lectures.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

This study has been proposed due to the main reason which is; the awareness of listening comprehension in academic lectures is not developed to the extent that EFL learners can productively extract content information from academic lectures. In this respect, the researchers claim that, Sudanese EFL learners may not aware of the significant role of discourse markers that play in enhancing listening comprehension of academic lectures in EFL contexts. Therefore, the researchers tried to investigate this phenomenon by claiming that; to what extent can EFL learners enhance their listening comprehension of academic lectures if they are get aware of the effective role of spoken discourse markers?   Another claim is that, what categories of discourse markers that mostly enhance EFL learners' listening   comprehension of academic lectures? Furthermore, EFL learners sometimes fail to cope with the flow of the connected speech, this may be due to the lack of knowledge of spoken discourse markers that facilitate in understanding the content of subject. This phenomenon has affected negatively on learners' listening comprehension of the spoken discourse in EFL classes. Consequently, this has bad effects on them in terms of; EFL learners rarely take part in discussion or communicate in English effectively. And also, this

really reflects their lack of listening comprehension skills in academic lectures. Finally, due to the frequent use of discourse markers with no attention of their semantics and pragmatics values may affect negatively on their listening comprehension of any spoken discourse.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY
a. This study aims to raise EFL learners' awareness of the effective role of discourse markers in enhancing listening comprehension of lectures.
b. It aims at investigating the teachers' attitudes towards the most effective categories of discourse markers that enhance EFL learners' listening comprehension of academic lectures.

HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY
a. EFL learners can enhance their listening comprehension in academic lectures if they are made aware of the effective role of discourse markers.
b. The macro and micro discourse markers categories are the most affecting types that enhance EFL learners' listening comprehension of academic lectures.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY
The importance of this study, at firstly, is to raise EFL learners' awareness of the importance of discourse markers in listening comprehension however, in order to aid in understanding the nature of academic spoken discourse in different levels of language learning. Secondly, it tests discourse markers' model in a new perception of language learning. Thirdly, the significance findings of this study will be generalized to be practiced in other foreign contexts. Finally, the study is expected to open new horizons for more studies in discourse markers.

LIMITS OF THE STUDY
This study is restricted to investigate the effectiveness of discourse markers in enhancing listening comprehending of academic lectures in EFL classes at tertiary level. It is limited to teachers of English language at Sudanese Universities.

SCIENTIFIC TERMS
- Discourse markers: words or phrases that do not change the meaning of the sentence.
- Macro Markers: these highlighting the major, sequencing or important information.
- Micro Markers: indicate links between sentences.
- Semantics Markers: these do not affect the truth conditions of an utterance.
- Pragmatics Markers: these do not contribute to the lexical content of sentences.

THEORETICAL AND PREVIOUS STUDIES
ThEORETICAL STUDY
DISCOURSE MARKERS: According to Redeker, (1991) discourse markers traditionally, are restricted only to speech, as is illustrated in the following definitions; Goldberg, (1980) defines DMs as linguistic expressions that is used to signal the relation of an utterance to the immediate context with the primary function of bringing to listener's attention a particular kind of the upcoming utterance with the immediate discourse context. Whereas, Keller, (1979) his definition of discourse markers is marking devices which display the speaker's understanding of the

contribution's sequential relationship or relevance to the information set as established by the immediately preceding contribution. While Erman, (1986) put it like; certain set of signals in the conversationalist's speech, used to introduce level shifts within the conversation, or to prepare listeners for the next run in the logical argument expressions which help the speaker divides his message into chunks of information and hence they also help the listener in the process of decoding these information units. It is obvious that, most of the above -mentioned definitions confine DMs only to spoken language.

Accordingly, the researcher works on the level of spoken language. When the information convey about the subject matter to show the listener how to listen to react, and to evaluate what was spoken about the subject matter. It is usual to find sequences of two or more sentences serving discourse marker purpose, especially in introductions and conclusions to academic texts. Therefore, in this prescription discourse markers are as inclusive as involving many language forms, that is words, phrases and clauses. Lenkl and eat al, (1998) agreed that DMs bear the characteristics of being oral and multifunctional which have common characteristics such as in syntax. DMs can be placed at any position that fits into the utterance. In most cases, however, it is common to find DMs in turn-initial position to signal upcoming information.

TYPES OF DISCOURSE MARKERS

There are many discourse markers that express different relationships between ideas. The most common types of relationship between ideas, and the sentence connectors that are most often used to express these relationships, are macro and micro types of discourse.

MACRO DISCOURSE MARKERS: According to Which (1986), Macro discourse markers indicate the overall organization of lectures through highlighting major information and sequencing or importance of that information. More clarification, they are the signals or meta-statements about the major propositions. Chaudron and Richards, (1986: 123) in their study findings have reflected that, macro-markers "are more conductive to successful recall of the lecture. Chaudron and Richards' study deals with the university lecture genre as the present study does. Moreover, Decarrico and Nattinger (1988, 1997: 185) also express a similar view. They suggest that macro organizers such as topic-markers, topic-shifters, summarizers, amplifiers, relators, evaluators, qualifiers and aside markers play significant roles in lectures. Whereas, Murphy and Candlin, (1979) distinguish three types of discourse markers within macro-markers division:

a. Markers, they include signaling devices such as *well, right, now,* providing clearer discourse segmentation.
b. Starters, for example, *well, now, let's get on with,* which establish links among discourse.
c. Met-statements, used to emphasize important information in the discourse as for example *I want to mention three types of pollution.*

Murphy and Candlin, (1979) developed the following macro-marker divisions: Starter, to begin the discourse; Elicitation, which includes the words or expressions eliciting information; Accept, in order to show approval; Attitudinal, where the speaker takes positions about the discourse content; Informative, words used to emphasize important information; Comment, to express additional information;

Aside, considered as an attempt to deviate from the ongoing discourse; Meta-statement, which includes all the words and expressions used to strengthen and validate points in the discourse; and Conclusion, including final remarks. Although these two divisions of micro and macro-markers proposed above are a daring attempt to classify DMs (Murphy & Candlin 1979, Chaudron & Richards 1986), these taxonomies are mainly based on semantic categories. Quirk et al, (1972: 664) further include some other expressions into the categories of markers (see Table 1). Where, Cook, (1975) names them as "macro-markers" because they signal the macro-structure of a text.

MICRO DISCOURSE MARKERS

Chaudron and Richards, (1986) propose a distinction between micro markers (lower-order DMs) and macro-markers (higher-order DMs). Micro-markers indicate links between sentences within the lecture, or function as fillers. They fill pauses giving listeners more time to process individual segments of a piece of discourse; they hence provide more opportunities for bottom-up processing. These discourse signals help top-down processing. Under this two folded categories. Chaudron and Richards, (1986) classified micro-markers into five different categories these are; Segmentation category such as; *and, right, and alright.* Temporal category like *at the time, after this eventually.* Causal category these are words like, *so, then, because.* Contrast category such as; *both, But, Only.* Emphasis category like *Of course, You can see ,For the moment ,On the other hand, In fact.*

SEMANTIC DISCOURSE MARKERS: Moore and Carling, (1982:161) say that, there are many researchers, however take a more comprehensive view of the role of semantic instructions rather than directly representing real word concepts. Even content words such as nouns or verbs function in the first instance as processing instructions to the hearer. On this view, utterances do not convey meaning in and of themselves, but are rather one means among others that a speaker can use to "cause [the hearer] to access his own 'store' of accumulated and generalized knowledge and experience, to locate what appears to make sense of the sounds he hears".

Over almost four decades of empirical cross linguistic researches have been dedicated in discovering and testing these primes. Goddard and et al, (2006) they used to define words and concepts that are semantically more complex than they are themselves. Explications attempt to model a speaker's meaning by paraphrasing the semantic content in its entirety.

Semantically, most of the uses of discourse markers seem not to affect the truth conditions of an utterance. It is apparent that this is not the case with all markers and all their uses.

PRAGMATIC DISCOURSE MARKERS: González, (2005) explains the different nature of discourse markers by distinguishing these DMs as logico-semantic argumentative relations of (cause, result, reason, concession, contrast, time…etc.) from pragmatic markers. She states that, these DMs have "descriptive or lexical meaning and have been traditionally called in the literature 'argumentative connectors". DMs that are included in this category are; *for instance, therefore in contrast, on the other hand, nevertheless, and because. Additionally*, González (2005: 54) explains the functions of discourse markers as:

[...] whose main functions are rhetorical signal the speaker's intentions and goals and basically help convey the illocutionary force of the story. Markers found in the sequential structure delimit segments boundaries and sustain the discourse network; they highly facilitate the in-and-out shift of the narrative segments. In the case of markers that have a dominant inferential role, the link that is set up between the cognitive domain of the speaker and hearer is fundamental to understand and grasp the point of the story.

In the above quotation this category of discourse marker as a pragmatic one, which is explained by González into three structures: rhetorical, sequential and inferential. González, (2004) disregards semantic markers for her study paying attention only to the so called pragmatic markers, in particular she takes for her study markers such as *well, so, then, I mean, you know and anyway*. The same as the researcher of this study who focuses on the macro markers such as *I mean anyhow* ….etc. pragmatically in facilitating the comprehension of the lecturers'' speech in EFL classroom. Therefore, this study and the study of González display a discourse coherence model based upon Schiffrin (1987) and Redeker's (1990) discourse coherence which is on the semantic versus pragmatic source of coherence.

In sum, it is agreeable that pragmatic discourse markers illustrate the meaning of utterances and play an important role in improving communicative competence of the speaker. Thus, it enhances EFL learners' understanding of the lectures in EFL contexts.

DISCOURSE MARKERS AND LISTENING COMPREHENSION

Listening comprehension of the academic lecture is much more complex than listening comprehension in a social context, since there is a little room for negotiation of meaning. Therefore, in the process of selectively listening to utterances, discourse markers may be able to assist the listener in selecting the most probable interpretation of the possible pragmatic meaning of the utterance. In other words, the hierarchical representation that is stored in the long-term memory would be more directly in line with the original structure of the lecture text. It is believed among many researchers that, students will be able to recall more exactly what the lecturer conveys should they be conversant with the roles that discourse markers play in the spoken academic lecture.

In Nattinger and DeCarricos study, (1988) they investigated lexical phrases occurring in a variety of natural academic lectures including history, linguistics, biology, anthropology and literature among others. They defined lexical phrases as representative of a higher level of information and describe them as macro-organizers. Nattinger and DeCarrico (1988) use the term macro-organizers to better illustrate the function of lexical phrases that help students mentally organize information as they listen and helps stress the importance of students' awareness of lecture organization. Nattinger and DeCarrico (1988) divided the macro-organizers into eight categories on the basis of their function: topic markers, topic shifters, summarizers, exemplifiers, relators, evaluators, qualifiers and aside markers. They further divide these functional categories into local and global organizers as follows;

  a. Global Macro-organizers: indicate the overall organization of the lecture.
  b. Local Macro-organizers: highlight the sequencing or importance of information within the framework at specific points set by the global organizers.

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ISSN (text): 1858-7224

This further classification helps in distinguishing main topics from the explanations, examples, relations etc., which in turn serves as development and support for the topics.

Flowerdew and Tauroza's study (1995) has investigated the impact of the presence and absence of discourse markers such as, 'so', 'right ', 'well' and 'ok ', on L2 lecture comprehension. Their results indicate that a spoken lecture with DMs present is comprehended better by listeners than the same lecture with the DMs edited out. This means that the discourse markers function to help listeners avoid the confusion that would arise if they tried to connect two disjointed utterances and provides cues on how to anticipate and process the relationship of utterances to a discourse marker.

PREVIOUS STUDIES

Ameer, (2008) investigated in his PhD thesis titled: The Enhancement of Foreign Language Listening Comprehension in Academic Lectures Using Discourse Markers at University of Khartoum. The study actually aims at enhancing lectures comprehension delivered in English as a foreign language (FL) context. Moreover, the study has shed lights to the problems that foreign language learners' (FLL) level of lecture comprehension in English medium is relatively low. In which, the study adopted the quantitative method in terms of pre/posttest. The study has come out with the results that, discourse markers significantly enhance learners' comprehension in academic lectures. Based on these results the study made some recommendations that, discourse markers' effects on lecture comprehension should be given attention.

Accordingly, the researchers agree with the study of Ameer, in the general framework of the research problem but disagrees with him in the dependent and independent variables of the study.

A similar study was carried out by Chaudron and Richards, (1986) in their study, titled; ESL Students' Comprehension of Academic Lectures. They aimed to establish the use of discourse markers which indicated the overall organization of the lecture, had effect on students' listening comprehension. The study adopted the quantitative method for data collection in which they used a test in four different versions of the lecture was audio-recorded. Based on these results, the study made some recommendations for more systematic assignments on grammar and on the use of discourse markers should be applied and practiced.

Whereas, the present study tries to investigate that, do discourse markers have effect on students' listening comprehension of the lecture? Despite the similarities of the two studies, but they are different in the methods that are used for collecting the data and also, the population of the study.

METHODOLOGY

This study has adopted the descriptive methodology for data collection.

STUDY POPULATION: The population of the study is a group of English teachers at Sudanese Universities.

STUDY SAMPLE: The sample of this study is Sudanese teachers of English from various universities who responded to the questionnaire. The study sample comprises of (50) teachers was randomly selected to respond to the questionnaire.

DATA COLLECTION: The researchers collected the primary data of this study through a questionnaire for universities English teachers.

VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY:
The value of the questionnaire validity is (0.88) which means that the phases in this study are more consistency relating to the hypothesis of the study indicating that a questionnaire is characterized by high validity to a achieve the purpose of the study and to make the statistical analysis fit and acceptable.

Reliability is the consistency of a measuring instrument, when administered more than once, under the same conditions, it gives comparable results. Reliability is (0.77) Therefore, the reliability coefficient is high and it indicates the stability of the scale and the validity of the study.

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

PROCEDURE: The questionnaire was examined the respondents' judgments on (15) statements and five optioned scale then the results were statistically computed in terms of frequencies and percentages.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
STUDY HYOTHESES
1. EFL learners can enhance their listening comprehension of spoken discourse if they are made aware of the effective role of discourse markers.
2. The categories of macro and micro discourse markers have mostly effect on EFL learners' listening comprehension of academic lectures.

To test the hypotheses, the researcher used chi-square test for showing the differences between the means of the sample at (0.05) level of significance.

DATAT ANALYSIS
ANALYSIS OF THE QUSTIONAIRE
In order to reach the objectives of this study the researchers have gathered a quantitative data by means of a questionnaire from respondents who are university teachers. This questionnaire reflects the attitudes of the participants about the role of discourse markers in enhancing listing comprehension of academic lectures. For more details, the tables below show the results and address the questionnaire's statements for answering the study questions.

Table (1): EFL learners should be aware of discourse markers values to enhance their listening comprehension of the lectures.

Value	Frequencies	Percentage %
Strongly agree	27	60.0%
Agree	17	37.8%
Neutral	1	2.2%
Disagree	0	0.0%
Strongly disagree	0	0.0%
Total	45	100.0%

The results of the table (1) indicate that, the respondents who were; strongly agreed (60.0%) and (37.8%) agreed, whereas, only (2.2%), neutral and (0.0%), were disagreed and strongly disagreed. In general, besides the assumption of the researcher, those EFL learners should be aware of DMs in listening comprehension of the lecture, it was found that, over (90%) of the respondents have positive attitudes towards the above statement.

Table (2): EFL learners are not aware of the effectiveness of discourse markers in enhancing listening comprehension of the lecture.

Value	Frequencies	Percentage %
Strongly agree	13	28.9%
Agree	29	64.4%
Neutral	2	4.4%
Disagree	1	2.2%
Strongly disagree	0	0.0%
Total	45	100.0%

The results in the above table (2) illustrates that the respondents' views of the above statement were (28.9%) strongly agreed, (64.4%) agreed, and neutral (4.4%).Whereas, (2.2%) disagreed, and (0.0%) were strongly disagreed. In fact, this result indicates that (92%) of the respondents have agreed on the fact the EFL learners are not aware of the effective role of discourse markers in enhancing their listening comprehension of the lectures. Therefore, this result has a significant value in the scale agree.

Table (3): EFL learners have a limited knowledge of discourse markers in enhancing listening comprehension of the lectures.

Value	Frequencies	Percentage %
Strongly agree	20	44.4%
Agree	19	42.2%
Neutral	5	11.1%
Disagree	1	2.2%
Strongly disagree	0	0.0%
Total	45	100.0%

The information which was derived from the above table (3) has shown that, (86.6%) of respondents agreed on the fact that EFL learners lack the qualities of discourse markers which enhance EFL listening comprehension. Whereas, only (13.4%) were responded as; neutral (11.1%) and disagree (2.2%). This result has appeared that EFL learners as indicated above their listening comprehension was limited or even low and have had poor understanding of the lectures. So, this result has significant value to the first question.

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ISSN (text): 1858-7224

Table (4) EFL learners' awareness of discourse markers makes effective interactional features though it enhances their listening comprehension of the lectures

Value	Frequencies	Percentage %
Strongly agree	13	28.9%
Agree	27	60.0%
Neutral	4	8.9%
Disagree	1	2.2%
Strongly disagree	0	0.0%
Total	45	100.0%

Table (4) illustrates the views of the respondents of those who responded by strongly agree (28.9%), agree by (60.0%), neutral by (8.9%), disagree by (2.2%), and strongly disagree by (%0.0).When this data was analyzed and considered, it reflected that (88.9%), of the respondents agreed with the raised statement. Although, there were other skills that raised the interaction of the lectures, but they are not regarded as adequate styles for tertiary studies at universities. Therefore, this statement is valid.

Table (5): Discourse markers are important clues in directing EFL learners' attention in the lectures

Value	Frequencies	Percentage %
Strongly agree	20	44.4%
Agree	19	42.2%
Neutral	6	13.3%
Disagree	0	0.0%
Strongly disagree	0	0.0%
Total	45	100.0%

As shown in table (5) which illustrates the views of the respondents who responded by strongly agree (44.4%) and agree by (42.2%) and neutral by (13.3%) and disagree by (0.0%) and strongly disagree by (0.0%).These results reflect that there are many important expressions of discourse markers such as; (*please listen to this ... look at this point……. and you know it is …… are you following me)* can be used by lecturers to direct learners' listening attention to the topic of the lecture in order not to interrupt the flow of the lecturer's speech. Nonetheless, these words or expressions required skills from learners to catch up the lecture's contents whenever these directors of discourse markers are used by the teachers. Therefore, the result which is derived from the respondent's views has agreed value.

DISCUSSION OF THE FIRST HYPOTHESIS
According to the discussed-data of tables (1, 2, 3, 4, 5) which indicated that, the participants have agreed on that, EFL learners should be aware of discourse markers values because those learners have a limited knowledge of the role of discourse markers in listening comprehension. Furthermore, the participants have agreed on that, EFL learners' awareness of discourse markers makes effective interactional features and important clues in enhancing listening comprehension of lectures. Accordingly, all the results have answered question one with a statistical significant value.

VERIFICATION OF THE FIRST HYPOTHESIS
To verify this hypothesis, the questionnaire's answers are statistically analyzed and discussed for adherence to the significant statistical differences among the

respondents' views. Accordingly, the results of the statistical analysis, as depicted in the previous tables have signified value of (0.000) which is lower than level (0.5) it means this hypothesis is valid to question one. However, this indicates that teachers' response revealed statistical differences. Therefore, the first hypothesis is successfully tested and verified true.

The following tables show the analysis and discussions of the second question of the study which explained in terms of five statements.

Table (6): EFL learners can comprehend lectures when micro discourse markers such as; *so, and, because…etc.* are used.

Value	Frequencies	Percentage %
Strongly agree	16	35.6%
Agree	23	51.1%
Neutral	5	11.1%
Disagree	1	2.2%
Strongly disagree	0	0.0%
Total	45	100.0%

The table (6) illustrates the percentage of the teachers' attitudes towards the above statement; Yet, it has displayed that, (35.6%) of the respondents have strongly agreed with the sample and (51.1%) of the respondents have agreed. Whereas, (11.1%) were neutral plus (2.2%) were disagreed and (0.0%) strongly disagreed. The researcher considered that, micro discourse markers are the adhesive markers of the discourse in a way that help top-down processing of listening. So these categories of markers enhance EFL learners listening comprehension of the lectures. Thus, when the data were resulting from teachers' opinions it has revealed a significant value to question two.

Table (7): EFL learners can comprehend the lectures when the macro discourse markers (okay*, you know, I mean* ... etc.) are used.

Value	Frequencies	Percentage %
Strongly agree	18	40.0%
Agree	17	37.8%
Neutral	8	17.8%
Disagree	1	2.2%
Strongly disagree	1	2.2%
Total	45	100.0%

The data in Table (7) illustrates that EFL learners can comprehend the lectures when the macro discourse markers are used. Yet, the views of the respondents of this sample are as follows; (40.0%) of the respondents have strongly agreed and (37.8%) have agreed. Whereas, (18.8%) were neutral and (%2.2) disagreed and strongly disagreed by (2.2%). Subsequently, this result has a significant value to the second question of this study where it also meets the researcher's assumption to this question. Therefore, this statement has a significant value to the second question of this study.

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Table (8): Pragmatic discourse markers enhance EFL learners' listening comprehension of the lecture.

Value	Frequencies	Percentage %
Strongly agree	11	24.4%
Agree	26	57.8%
Neutral	5	11.1%
Disagree	3	6.7%
Strongly disagree	0	0.0%
Total	45	100.0%

The results in the above table (8) illustrates the respondents' views of the statement ;(Pragmatic discourse markers enhance EFL learners' listening comprehension of the lecture) are (24.4%) strongly agreed, (57.8%) agreed, neutral by (11.1%), (6.7%) disagreed, and (0.0%) are strongly disagreed. Generally, this result indicates that, the respondents have agreed positively on the above statement. Therefore, this has revealed that the pragmatic use of DMs help learners in understanding spoken text in different situations.

Table (9): Semantic discourse markers have little effect in enhancing EFL learners' listening comprehension of the lectures.

Value	Frequencies	Percentage %
Strongly agree	4	8.9%
Agree	26	57.8%
Neutral	5	11.1%
Disagree	8	17.8%
Strongly disagree	2	4.4%
Total	45	100.0%

The table (9) shows teachers' views on above statement, that semantic discourse markers has little effect on EFL learners' enhancement of listening comprehension. By strongly agree (8.9%) and agree by (57.8%) and neutral by (11.1%) and disagree by (17.8%) and strongly disagree by (4.4%). It's noted that, the highest percentage is supported the above statement. Meanwhile, the researcher claimed that, the macro and micro discourse affect the enhancement of EFL learners' listening comprehension of the lectures. Therefore, this statement is accepted to support the specified hypothesis.

Table (10): EFL learners can enhance their listening comprehension of the lecture if they are exposed to different functions of discourse markers

Value	Frequencies	Percentage %
Strongly agree	20	44.4%
Agree	21	46.7%
Neutral	3	6.7%
Disagree	1	2.2%
Strongly disagree	0	0.0%
Total	45	100.0%

Table (10) illustrates the views of the respondents of the statement; (EFL learners can enhance their listening comprehension of the lecture if they are exposed to different functions of discourse markers) by the strongly agree (44.4%) and agree by (46.7%) and neutral by (6.7%) and disagree by (2.2%) and strongly disagree by (0.0%). However, the researcher claims that, the textual function is an enabling function and essential for cohesive texts and effectively conveying ideational and interpersonal

meanings of the listener. Therefore, when EFL learners expose to different functions of DMs it enhances their listening comprehension. Moreover, this claim is supported by the concept of Halliday and Hasan's Approach of cohesive devices. Furthermore, the majority of respondents to this statement sample agreed on the assumption that EFL learners enhance their listening comprehension when they get exposed to different functions of DMs.

DISCUSSION OF THE SECOND HYPOTHESIS
According to the discussed-data of table (6) which indicated that (85.7%) of the participants agree that, EFL learners can comprehend lectures better through the use of micro discourse markers. And also, the data of table (7), indicated that (77.8%) of the respondents strongly agree that, EFL learners can comprehend lectures better through the use of macro discourse markers. Where in table (8) which reflected that (82.2%) of the respondents agree on that Pragmatic discourse markers enhance EFL learners' listening comprehension of the lecture. And in table (9) which indicated that (66.7%) of the participants agree that, semantic discourse markers do not to affect the truth conditions of an utterance therefore, they do not enhance EFL learners' listening comprehension. in addition to table (10) that reflected that (91.1%) of the participants agree on that, EFL learners can enhance their listening comprehension of the lecture if they are exposed to different categories of discourse markers. Accordingly, the answer of question two has a statistical significant value.

VERIFICATION OF THE SECOND HYPOTHESIS
To verify this hypothesis, the questionnaire's responses are statistically analyzed and discussed for adherence to significant statistical differences among the respondents' views. Accordingly, the results of the statistical analysis, as depicted above in figure (6, 7, 8, 9, and 10) signify value of (0.000) however; this indicates that teachers' response has revealed statistical differences which they served positively on verifying the second hypothesis. Therefore, the hypothesis that stated as; the macro and micro discourse markers categories are the most affecting types that enhance EFL learners' listening comprehension, in the treatment programme is confirmed to be true.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS
CONCLUSION
This study is set out to investigate the effectiveness of discourse markers in enhancing learners' listening comprehension in EFL classes. Concerning learners' difficulties in understanding lectures, the researcher argued that, the main problem lies within the ignorance of EFL learners to the effective role of DMs in extracting meaningful information from linguistics input. Therefore, this study attempts to find out whether there is a statistical difference between EFL learners' awareness of discourse markers and enhancing listening comprehension.
For the purposes of investigating this study, the above questions have been formulated into hypothetical statements;
Firstly, EFL learners can enhance their listening comprehension in academic lectures if they are made aware of the effective role of discourse markers. This hypothesis was tested by EFL teachers. Consequently, it has reflected a significant difference in terms of answering the questionnaires' statement.
Secondly, the macro and micro discourse markers categories are the most affecting types that enhance EFL learners' listening comprehension of academic lectures. in the

treatment Programme. The necessity of exposing DMs to EFL learners is validated by teachers' views to this hypothesis. Moreover, this hypothesis's results correspond with those of Chaudron and Richards, (1986) who found a consistent result across the groups listening to the lectures that macro-markers, which are the "higher order markers signaling major transitions and emphasis in the lectures" were more helpful to recall than micro-markers. Where the researcher has justified that, micro discourse markers are the soul of discourse text, without them the discourse is incoherent. In the light of the results obtained, this study reached at the following findings; Discourse markers play an effective role in enhancing listening comprehension of academic lectures in EFL classes. And also, exposing different categories of discourse markers such as macro and micro types, impose learners' ability to cope with content information of the lectures.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. EFL learners should be aware of the significant values of discourse markers as effective discourse genre in academic lecture comprehension.
2. Lecturers should furthermore be made aware of the contribution they could make by simplifying their academic lectures through the use of discourse markers.

SUGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDIES

1. Learners' poor performances in tests and examinations related to the contents information conveyed by the teacher.

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