

The Use of Interpersonal Discourse Markers by Students of English at the University of Jordan

Eman Awni Ali

University of Jordan, Amman, Jordan

Radwan Salim Mahadin

University of Jordan, Amman, Jordan

Abstract

This study adopts a functional approach to analyze the use of interpersonal discourse markers in interviews conducted with advanced EFL Jordanian learners. This group of subjects is represented by graduate students in the Department of English Language and Literature at the University of Jordan. The graduate students' data are compared to native interviews drawn from the Charlotte Narrative and Conversation Collection (CNCC). The native speakers' interviews are used as baseline data for evaluating the production of DMs by the advanced Jordanian EFL learners. Fung's (2003) taxonomy is employed for analyzing the use of interpersonal discourse markers in the native and non-native interviews. The analysis reveals that the advanced EFL Jordanian learners had a slightly higher percentage of interpersonal discourse markers than the native speakers of English. However, due to mother tongue influence, formal education and cultural preferences, the advanced EFL learners were found to employ a more restricted set of this category of DMs than their native counterparts.

Keywords: corpus linguistics, discourse markers, EFL learners, oral discourse