Intonational Meanings of Discourse Markers in Spoken Colloquial Arabic

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ABSTRACT
Intonation is the rise and fall of the voice while speaking. It expresses the attitudes and emotions and have a grammatical, discourse, linguistic, psychological and indexical functions. It makes significant and systematic contributions to utterance interpretation. This study sought to investigate the types of meanings and pragmatic functions that the discourse markers طيب (that it), إن شاء الله (God willing), ما قُشرت &/ما قُشرت (much appreciated), يا سلام (wow), يا عيني, يا مساهل, يا ساتر (Oh My God) have when each is uttered with different intonation patterns in spoken Colloquial Arabic. Twenty student-translators received training in uttering the discourse markers with different intonations, identifying the meaning and/or purpose conveyed by each intonation, then they performed an elicitation and a judgment/interpretation task in which they were required to pronounce each discourse marker out loud with as variety of intonations and identify the meaning conveyed by each. Data analysis showed that each discourse marker has a variety of meanings and pragmatic functions when uttered with different intonations. The context makes it clear which meaning each intonation implies. Results of the interpretation of meanings that each discourse marker in the sample are reported in detail.

KEYWORDS
Discourse markers, Arabic discourse markers, intonational meaning, Arabic intonation, pragmatic function, Colloquial Arabic

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1. Introduction
Intonation is the rise and fall of the voice while speaking. This variation in the spoken pitch serves several functions: It makes a significant and systematic contribution to utterance interpretation. It expresses the attitudes and emotions of the speaker. It helps identify grammatical structures and distinguish words. It shows how clauses and sentences go together in the spoken discourse. Subordinate clauses often have a lower pitch, a narrower pitch range and a faster tempo than main clauses. This way, listeners can distinguish statements, questions, exclamatory and other sentence types. This distinction is mainly coded tonally, exploiting the up-and-down movements of pitch (grammatical and discoursal functions). Intonation also structures the information conveyed by a speaker and organizes speech into units to facilitate cognitive processing and make it easy for the listener to perceive, memorize and perform. The resultant tune gives the utterance a particular meaning that is independent of that ascribed by the text. Phrasing breaks up the flow of speech into manageable chunks that group together what semantically belongs together (linguistic function). Important information can be foregrounded by accentuation, i.e., rendering parts of the speech flow that are more prominent than others. The spoken sentence (You can have it in red, green, yellow, blue, or black) is more difficult to comprehend and remember than the same utterance when divided into intonation units, vis. (You can have it in red | green | yellow | blue | or black) (psychological function). In addition, intonation acts as a marker of personal and social identity. For example, group membership can be identified by using intonation patterns adopted specifically by that particular group, such as street vendors or preachers. A high rising intonation, where a statement ends with a high rising pitch movement is said to be typical of younger speakers of
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An important feature of intonation is that not all elements of stretch of discourse are equally significant. The pitch is associated with accented syllables and is generally more important than that associated with unstressed syllables. An intonation unit consists of a nucleus (the stressed syllable) and a tail which is any unstressed syllable or syllables that may follow the nucleus. Nuclear tones are conceived as contours which describe the speech sounds that behave as single segments but make an internal transition from one quality, place, or manner to another. The contour is a curve that tracks the perceived pitch of the sound over time. It tends to be marked by cues such as a pause and a shift upward in overall pitch level at its beginning, and a lengthening of its final syllable (Kapatsinski, Olejarczuk & Redford, 2017).

Every language has its own intonation system which means that different languages have different intonation patterns. For example, in Arabic, there are five intonation patterns: falling, rising, level, falling-rising, and falling-rising intonation and level. Falling intonation is used at the end of: (i) declarative statements محمد في الجامعة Mohammad is at the university; (ii) in commands افتح الباب open the door; and (iii) Wh-questions متى غادرت بالأمس When did you leave yesterday? Rising intonation is normally used at the end of yes-no questions هل هو في البيت الآن Is he at home now?; in utterances containing an element of surprise or protest يا عيني يا مسبلة My God; Wow!. In vocatives (أي سارة Hey Sara); in requests (أريد أن أصبح have a seat, please). In a level tone, the pitch remains at a constant level أن أخلي أن أخلي I am well. There is no pitch change that accompanies the production of utterances. Complex Tones which have a single nucleus with a bidirectional pitch movement as falling-rising which consists of two pitch movements: fall and then rise. In the rising-falling tone, a rise followed by a fall. Like the fall-rise, the whole tone movement may occur on a syllable or may spread over the syllables of that tail (Al-Jarf, 2023; Al-Azzawi & Jasim, 2010; Al-Jarf, 2003; Al-Jarf, 1994; Al-Jarf, 1990; Al-Jarf, 1995).

The study of intonation has been approached from different perspectives. For example, numerous studies in the literature have described intonation in several Arabic dialects such as the intonation of statements and questions in Cairo Arabic (Norlin, 1989); variation in the intonation of formal and colloquial Egyptian Arabic (El Zarka, & Hellmuth, 2009); intonation of Lebanese and Egyptian Arabic (Chahal and Hellmuth, 2014); Lebanese Arabic intonation (Chahal, 1999); the intonation of colloquial Damascene Arabic (Kulk, Odé, & Woidich, 2003); intonational patterns of San’aani Arabic, in comparison with intonational patterns of Cairene Arabic (Hellmuth, 2014); analysis and computational modelling of Emirati Arabic intonation (Alzaidi, Xu, Xu & Szreder, 2023); intonation in Moroccan Arabic (Benkirane, 1998); intonation in English-Arabic consecutive interpreting (Al-Azzawi & Jasim, 2010) and others.

Another group of studies provided a pragmatic discourse analysis of single discourse markers in a variety of Arabic dialects. In Jordanian Arabic, several studies investigated the discourse markers عاد؟ أتى ليلة (by God), الوالا لي (enough), enough), عن خد من (really) and لا الآن (now). Harb, Jarrah and Alghazo (2022) found that the discourse marker صادد provides supplementary information that relates the speaker’s attitude (i.e., disagreement) to the proposition expressed by the host sentence. The distribution (and interpolation) of صادد can be syntactically captured. It heads the Speaker-oriented Ground Phrase, following its main function in expressing the صادد that the speaker displays towards the proposition rather than asking the addressee for a request of how to respond to the utterance.

The discourse marker الوالا (by God) serves ten functions: introducing an acceptance, an apology, a threat, and a compliment, a request softener, a marker of elaboration, a continuer, a marker of confirmation, a marker of compliance with a request, and a filler marker (Al-Khawaldeh, 2018).

The discourse marker لا (enough) has many pragmatic functions that include initiating a topic, signalling a topic change, closing a turn, ending a conversation, indicating speaker’s hesitancy, mitigating Face Threatening Acts, making a correction, attracting hearer’s attention, expressing restrictions and conditions, showing disbelief and indicating a question, providing an interpretation, showing contrast, expressing regret, showing agreement, emphasizing, and filling in gaps in an interaction (Al Rousan, Al Harahsheh & Huwari, 2020). Similarly, Ennasser and Hijazin’s (2021) identified twelve different functions of the discourse marker لا: Denying an expectation, making a repair, indicating insufficiency of information, returning to main topic, signalling a shift in topic, mitigating a face-threatening act, showing a threat, indicating a completion of cognitive process, acting as a filler marker, as a modifier as an expressive marker, and as a directive marker.

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1 Intonation
Sandżad “really” communicates sixteen functions namely anger, surprise, apologies, sympathy, commands, requests, challenges, advice, assertions, suggestions, complaints, claims, promises, oaths, threats, and offers (Altaweel & Al-Shaikhli, 2024).

The deictic temporal marker ʔiʔeʔ ‘now’ has the function of organizing the ongoing discourse. Its use as a discourse marker outnumbers its use as a deictic temporal signal. The lexical use of words is overridden by their grammaticalized and or discourse use, especially in the presence of other words that convey a similar lexical meaning (Jarrah, Al-Marayat & Salem, 2020).

In Egyptian Arabic, ʔaʃini (it means) is a marker whose main function is to signal the speaker’s cognitive efforts to get to a point, i.e., to produce the most satisfying expression of an intended message. ʔaʃini serves to state, elaborate, and stress a point. When ʔaʃini introduces new information, it serves as a foreground device through which the main argument or narrative is further developed. It also serves as a background device that shows a suspension of the current discourse purpose to provide repetitions or elaborations (Marmorstein, 2016).

When taking into consideration the topic type, syntactic position and phonological form as guidelines for interpreting the discourse marker /ja’ni/ in a corpus of 20,000 words of educated female Egyptian Arabic speech, Elshimi (1992) reported that /ja’ni/ has seven types of functions: as an extension marker, a subordination marker, a broad interpretation marker, a deictic centre marker, as an indirect intention marker and shows the degree of intensity.

In Spoken Iraqi Arabic, Alazzawie (2015) and Alazzawie (2014) explored the functions of the discourse markers يمعود عادي and ʔي poke. Both markers ʔi poke, which means okay, yes I hear you, no worries, how dare you, or I’ve gone through the same thing myself, has the properties that discourse markers typically have. It occurs in phrase initial or phrase-final positions. It has multiple functions such as offering support and sympathy, consolation, mitigation and encouragement, acceptance of a proposal, disapproval, reprimand and indignation, politeness and courtesy, mild criticism and sarcasm, requesting and granting permission, indifference and obliviousness, a hedging device of softening face-saving and face-saving, resignation and submission or surrender to something beyond one’s control, divergence in opinion and counter proposal, assurance and facilitation, and confirmation seeker (Alazzawie, 2015).

Similarly, yamawwad يمعود has various contextual meanings and functions. It has a general introductory function to start a conversation, as a marker of politeness and courtesy, as a pragmatically complete unit that substitutes a sentence to express more than one function. It expresses annoyance and irritation, displeasure, a request or a gentle imperative to get people to do something, and conveys furiousness and indignation (Alazzawie, 2014).

In spoken Gulf Arabic, Abdeljawad and Radwan (2016) examined the position of the marker zeen⁴ (Okay) in conversational exchanges, and its role in local and global conversational coherences. They revealed that zeen is used to help speakers and listeners locate themselves and their utterances in a conversation. zeen establishes coherence in the communication exchange and creates a framework for the information structure. ⁴ Corrected to zeen by the author

In Najdi Arabic, the discourse markers elzibda (the gist) and min jid (for real) have textual, interpersonal, and cognitive functions. elzibda was found to be more productive than min jid with almost double the number of pragmatic functions. Both share a number of textual and interpersonal functions, but elzibda exhibits a cognitive function only and shows more textual functions than min jid. By contrast min jid shows more interpersonal functions than elzibda. Syntactically, both occupy medial, final, and alone positions. min jid has the alone position as one of the landing sites while this position is quite rare for elzibda. Sociolinguistically, elzibda and min jid are highly used by Twitter student users with a BA degree (Alaswad, 2020).

In Saudi Arabic, the discourse marker maʃ nafsak has twelve pragmatic functions based on the context in which it is used. It is used to express objection or refusal, lack of interest, carelessness, indifference, annoyance, reprimanding, doubt, unwillingness, distancing oneself from others, challenge, scolding, disappointment, choice, and preserving personal privacy (Al Rousan, 2015).

To summarize, the studies reported above analysed the functions of several discourse markers used in the flow of speech in some Arabic dialects. Those studies mostly focused on a single discourse marker and the various functions it serves. Some examined the syntactic and sociolinguistic aspects of their use. However, no prior studies have investigated the effect that intonation has on the meaning of discourse markers, i.e., the changes in meaning that result from changing the intonation in which discourse markers are uttered where they have a stand-alone position or when they are used in the flow of speech (in context). Therefore, this study

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² As transcribed in the resource
³ As transcribed in the resource
⁴ Corrected to zeen by the author

aims to examine the types of meanings and pragmatic functions that the discourse markers (تَايْلِب) / Taylib/ O.K. (خَلاص )/xala:S/ (that’s it), إن شاء الله (God willing), ما قُرْرَت & /ma gaSSart/ (much appreciated), لا لا /la: la:/ (no...no), يا سَيْتِي (ماَّمَأَمٍ), يا سلام /ya sattii/ (m’a’am), يا عيني /ya šeyni/., يا مساهل /ya: msahhil/ (asking God for making things easy), and يا سَأَتِر /ya sa:ter/ (Oh My God) have when each is uttered with different intonation patterns in spoken Hijazi Arabic.

These discourse markers are very frequent and are extensively employed in spontaneous speech in Hijazi Arabic. They have not been investigated by any researcher before. The discourse markers investigated in this study have different grammatical categories (exclamatory, conditional clause, affirmative word, and negation particles + verb used as a compliment). They play a vital role in people’s daily communication. They aid communication and facilitate the cohesion and flow of a conversation. This study will capture both the cognitive processes, emotional meanings and communicative goals that are strongly present in the use of these discourse markers.

Undergraduate students majoring in translation at the College of Languages and Translation (CLT) have a variety of interpreting problems including polysemous words and the change in meaning resulting from changes in intonation (Al-Jarf, 2015). So, interpreting students and instructors will benefit from findings of this study as they will help them understand the kinds of meanings, contexts and functions carried by intonation contours. They emphasize the importance of context in interpreting discourse markers. The students will understand the functions each discourse marker serves in these contexts.

2. Definition of Terms

2.1 Speech Acts

In linguistics, a speech Act⁵ is an utterance defined in terms of a speaker’s intention and the effect it has on the listener. It is the response that a speaker hopes to provoke in his/her audience. Speech acts might be greetings, requests, apologies, promises, warnings, and others. They are an important part of communication. The Speech-Act Theory is a subfield of pragmatics that is concerned with the ways in which words can be used, not only in presenting information but also to carry out actions. It is applied in psychology, legal and literary theories, philosophy, and artificial intelligence.

The Speech-Act Theory considers three levels or components of utterances: (i) locutionary acts (the making of a meaningful statement, saying something that a hearer understands); (ii) illocutionary acts (saying something with a purpose, such as informing), and (iii) perlocutionary acts, i.e., saying something that causes someone to act. Illocutionary speech acts can also be classified into different families and grouped together by their intent of usage.

2.2 Discourse Markers

Discourse markers⁶ or discourse deictic expressions are words or phrases that signal the relationship and connections between utterances and ideas in speech or writing. They come from a variety of word classes, such as adverbs (well) or prepositional phrases (in fact); particles oh, well, now, then, you know, and I mean, and the connectives so, because, and, but, and or. Their main function is at the level of discourse (sequences of utterances) rather than at the level of utterances or sentences. They are relatively syntax independent, and they do not usually change the truth conditional meaning of a sentence. They play a role in managing the flow and structure of discourse. They guide the listener or reader through the content, clarifying, connecting, and organizing the parts of the conversation or text. They make the connections between sentences and paragraphs clear, organize discourse (communication) into segments and make communication clear and coherent.

There are four types of discourse markers: (i) interpersonal discourse markers that indicate the relationship between the listener and the speaker and express perception, agreement, disagreement, and amazement (look, believe me and you know; exactly, absolutely, certainly, definitely, okay, and I see, Im not sure, mind you, I dont think so, I beg to differ, not necessarily; wow, wonderful and yay. (ii) Referential discourse markers that are usually conjunctions used to indicate sequence, causality, and coordination (now and then, because, as a result of, thanks to and due to, and, so, but). (iii) Structural discourse markers that indicate the hierarchy of the actions in a conversation at the exact time they are being performed. They express the value the speaker adds to the statements that are uttered in a conversation, highlighting the statements that are the least and the most important to them. They show organization, introduction, and summary (first of all, secondly, for a start, next and last of all, so, to begin with, to start with, for a start, to conclude, in, the end, to sum up, and in conclusion). (iv) Cognitive discourse markers that reveal the thought process of the speaker(s) during a conversation. They express processing information, realization, and rephrasing (uhh, um and erm, oh!, Really?, oh no!), I mean and in other words). In addition, discourse markers can be formal, i.e. used in academic essays, official work-related documents, formal letters, and emails

⁵ Speech Acts.pdf (khmnu.edu.uu)
(Appears in formal communication, like diplomatic or business negotiations) as in addition, furthermore, moreover, however, nevertheless, consequently, or informal used in casual conversations between friends and small talk between acquaintances as in emails and text as (what's more, on top of that, but, because).

3. Methodology

3.1 Participants

A random sample of 20 student translators at the College of Languages and Translation (CLT), Imam University, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia participated in the study. The students were in their junior/third year (sixth semester) of the translation program and were enrolled in a Pragmatics and Semantics course (3 hours). They had completed 8 hours of Arabic language courses (Syntax, Academic Writing, Stylistics Applications); 35 hours of English language courses (Listening, Speaking, Reading, Writing, Academic Writing, Vocabulary, Grammar, Syntax and Morphology); 10 hours of Introduction to Linguistics, Text Linguistics, and Use of Dictionaries in Translation courses; 4 hours of Language and Culture courses; 4 hours of Interpreting courses; and 17 hours of translation courses (Introduction to Translation, General Translation from Arabic to English, General Translation from English to Arabic, Political and Media Translation, Computer-Assisted Translation, Financial and Economic Translation, Scientific and Technical Translation). All the participants are native speakers of Arabic, with English as their foreign/second language.

3.2 Data Collection and Analysis

A sample of 10 discourse markers (ما قررتني مقررت / Tayyib / O.K., خلاص, Xala:S/ (that's it), ما مقررتني مقررت / gaSSart (M) / ma gaSSarti (F) much appreciated, / la: / (no...no...); / ya sitti / (ma'am), يأي /Ya eyni/, يأي /Ya masihil/ asking God for making things easy, and / ya sa:ter/ (Oh My God) was selected. The discourse markers belong to different grammatical categories: exclamations/interjections, conditional clause, affirmative words, and negation particles. To be included in the sample, each discourse marker had to have at least three intonational meanings.

The discourse markers were printed on paper and each student was handed a copy. The sample was given to the students as single words and phrases. Some context situations were added to some discourse markers in the sample to help the students generate intonations with multiple meanings.

Before the session, the students received some training in uttering the discourse markers with different intonations, identifying the meaning and/or purpose conveyed by each intonation. The following are examples of meanings of some discourse markers in the training material:

- Example 1: دخيل الله ما أجمل البنت (for God’s sake). It is used for admiring a person or some behavior (how beautiful, how cute); دخيل الله تساعدني آنا محتاج (for urging someone to do/give something (for God’s sake help me. I am in urgent need), دخيل الله ما أغلق دمه (for complaining and grumbling (For god’s sake. He is such a spoiled brat).

- Example 2: حاضر (Ha:Dir (o.k., of course, definitely, certainly). It shows the acceptance of a request (Can you do the dishes? > حاضر من عيوني (Can you the question? > حاضر by the eye). It expresses displeasure or annoyance and following instructions or complying with a request.

- Example 3: أكيد (Aki:d) certainly. It expresses certainty or strong affirmation as in (Are you coming to the party tomorrow? أكيد) (Of course, definitely, dear); for requesting confirmation (Are you sure?) (أكيد يأني sure? This fast); and sarcastic exaggeration or mockery (أكيد سيفوز الفريق بهذا الأداء الشعبي (Ara you sure the team will win with this poor performance).

Possible types of meanings, interpretations, and purposes of discourse markers conveyed by intonation were given to the students to choose from such as: showing agreement, acceptance, disapproval, apology, threat, a compliment, confirmation, a request softener, compliance with a request, anger, surprise, sympathy, commands, challenge, advice, assertions, suggestions, complaints, requesting and granting permission, claims, promises, oaths, regret, emphasizing, denying an expectation, offering support, consolation, mitigation, encouragement, reprimand, indignation, politeness and courtesy, criticism, sarcasm, objection, refusal, assurance, facilitation, annoyance and irritation, displeasure, indifference, doubt, unwillingness, scolding, disappointment, choice.

After the training session, the students performed an elicitation and a judgment/interpretation task in pairs. In the elicitation task, a student was required to pronounce each discourse marker out loud with as variety of intonations (at least five different intonations). The other student had to interpret each version of the discourse marker depending on its intonation. Each pair of students had to explain the meaning, purpose, attitude, force, function, and effect conveyed by each intonation of each version of each discourse marker. They could discuss the intonations and meanings conveyed together before recording their final responses. Each pair recorded their responses in the language lab. They could write their interpretations and comments on each item on paper as well. The students yielded more than 700 versions of discourse marker interpretations with different intonations.
In analyzing the intonations of each discourse marker, the stressed and unstressed syllables in each discourse marker, the nucleus or head (i.e., stressed syllable) and the contour (the curve that tracks the perceived pitch of the sound over time) were identified in order to capture the meaning conveyed by each intonation. It should be noted that the intonation units in this study are single words, 2 and 3 short word phrases. In each intonation, the pause and shift upward in the overall pitch level at the beginning of the word/phrase, and a lengthening of the final syllable were also noted.

To validate the intonational meanings of the discourse markers given by the students, the author and another colleague with a Ph.D. in linguistics listened to the recordings of each discourse markers, its various intonations and the meanings conveyed by each. Those were marked as correct or incorrect. Correct intonations that received the same meaning and purpose from 70% of the students were compiled and are reported qualitatively and described below.

Results of the analyses of the meanings and purposes conveyed by each intonation of each discourse marker are described qualitatively. It was not possible to transcribe about 60 intonation versions of the discourse markers with a speech analysis software due to the multiplicity of the voice recordings for each discourse marker. The spectrograms will be difficult for many readers to interpret. In addition, it is not possible to insert samples of students’ recordings in the body of the article.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Intonational Meanings of Discourse Markers

Results of the analysis of the responses yielded by the student informants in the current study showed numerous meanings conveyed through the rising and falling intonations of each discourse marker, depending on the context in which it is used. The intonational meanings of each discourse marker are reported and described below.

1. Tayyib/ O.K.

The adjective Tayyib/ طيب is a polysemous word that has many denotative meanings in Colloquial Arabic as “delicious, alive, a nice person, I am fine, a good-hearted and a naive person”. These meanings are not attributed to differences in intonation. However, as a discourse marker, it is used in response to questions, requests, fillers, a continuation marker. It may render the following meanings when uttered with a falling intonation: when someone gives instructions, when you comply with instructions or requests; when you understand what someone is saying; when you give informal consent; when someone asks for permission you can respond with Tayyib/ طيب also means O.K. that’s perfect; (O.K. don’t worry about it); ماشي ولا يهمك (O.K. don’t worry about it); طيب أمري لله (that’s fine, there is nothing I could do about it) يسلموا (Thanks! Really grateful); يسلموا (Thanks! Really grateful); عده أعتامام (O.K. don’t worry about it); طيب (that’s fine, there is nothing I could do about it); طيب امري لله (O.K. don’t worry about it); طيب امري لله (God Willing). This is O.K. when you’re doing it; طيب امري لله (God Willing). This is O.K. when you’re doing it.

2. xala:S/ (That’s It)

The Arabic expression xala:S/ خلاص that’s it has various meanings depending on the context in which it is used. It is uttered with a falling intonation when it expresses completion. When someone says xala:S/ خلاص it means (that’s it! It’s done or It’s over); خلاص لا تزعم that’s it. It is o.k. don’t worry I will go with you; or in compliance with an offer or suggestion (as you wish). On the contrary, it is pronounced with a rising intonation if someone is bothering you or if you want to end an argument or quarrel. Here is means أوقف الجدل خلاص أنتهى الموضوع, أوقف الجدل. Enough, stop it or cut it out, change to topic; in drawing attention to something wrong or asking someone to control his/her behaviour; or reaching the limit.

3. InshaAllah7 (God Willing)

InshaAllah (God willing) is a discourse marker that is very common in daily speech. It is used in many contexts and has many meanings. It is used for future plans, such as a meeting, a journey, or any other event as InshaAllah (I’ll see you.

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7 Inshallah Meaning, Its Benefits and Usage: 7 Times When You Should Say Inshallah - AlQuranClasses
tomorrow, inshallah). Culturally, Arab people use it in polite refusal, i.e., as a nice way of saying "No". For example, when someone invites you, but you don’t want to go, or if a child is asking for an ice cream, or when a shop keeper invites you into his/her shop, you can say: مَا قَصَرْتُ (Ma gaSSart) or /ma gaSSarti (Much Appreciated) the Arabic expression /ma gasart (M) ma gasarti (F)/ (literally you have not come short, meaning you have done everything that you are asked to do; you have done your duty without any shortcomings, or you have not let us down; or you have met our expectations). It is used to thank someone; acknowledge someone’s efforts, kindness, or assistance; It conveys gratitude and appreciation; recognizing someone’s hard work or dedication; valuing the help or support received; acknowledging someone’s efforts; showing respect for someone’s contributions; affirming good deeds and so on. It also has negative connotations such as expressing disappointment when something is below expectations. مَا قَصَرْتُ / ما قَصَرْتُ (I did not say that/I did not go; I did not see her). It is used sarcastically or humorously, to approach a woman in a high social class as in the case of princesses and queens. But it is uttered with a rising intonation when it is used to show respect to a close female friend as in بِنَاسِكِ (Benasik). The expression /Benasik/ is informal and friendly which means (Miss or lady). It is used to refer to an adult woman in general, not necessarily a young woman. It is also a way to refer to a lady or woman. Here, ست Mỹ /ya sitti/ (Ma’am, lady, grandma). The discourse marker يا ستي is commonly used in Arabic and has different meanings. It is uttered with with a falling intonation when someone talks to a close female friend as in شوفي يا ستي (listen dear), i.e. يا ستي /ya sitti/ (Oh my lady). It is with elderly ladies; it is used to refer to women of high social class as in the case of princesses and queens. But it is uttered with a rising intonation when it is used for getting someone’s attention politely and favourably because you are going to explain something important; It is also a way to refer to a lady or woman. Here, يا ستي يا ستي /ya sitti/ (Wow) the expression /ya salam/ has various meanings depending on the context. It is used for complimenting someone's appearance يا سلام /ya salaam/ has various meanings depending on the context. It is used for complimenting someone’s appearance (You look fantastic); astonishment or excitement (Wow, look at that view!); appreciating beauty (this sunset is stunning) with a rising intonation on the final syllable of /salaam/; appreciating a well-prepared meal يا سلام /ya salaam/ (Good for you) is uttered with a level tone; in response to stupid or ignorant actions يا سلام خرابها بهذة /ya salaam khareba behda/ (this food is very delicious); showing admiration يا سلام يا سلام /ya salaam ya salaam/ (Wow! Long time no see! We have finally met); scepticism or doubt as if someone makes a bold claim, you can respond by saying يا سلام (Really?) with a rising intonation; frustration or disappointment when faced with a challenging situation; to express criticism and sarcasm in response to stupid or ignorant actions يا سلام يا سلام /ya salaam ya salaam/ (Good for you. acting smart, Smart brain); objecting to an action يا سلام يا سلام /ya salaam ya salaam/ (what’s this? I never did that); to show disbelief or astonishment in response to an action; taking the speaker lightly, showing disbelief of what is being said; للاستنكار والاستغراب for denunciation and astonishment in response to a situation such as when a child scribbles on the wall, dirty’s himself; or fails the test. In most of these
contexts, the highest pitch is on final syllable of salam, hence it is pronounced with a rising intonation on the final syllable of /salam/.

8. /ya ʕayni/ (Wow!)
The discourse marker /ya ʕayni/ has different meanings depending on the context. It is used for praise and encouragement in response to someone who did something well by saying /ya ʕayni عليك (Good job!) or Bravo! (How beautiful). It is sarcastically used in response to someone complaining about something so trivial and you decided to make fun of his unjustified complaining by saying /ya ʕayni عليك in response to (I had to wake up early for school). (the poor thing). It can be used to convey sadness or concern along with a few other body parts like /ya ʕayni عليك (I am sorry/sad for you); or when someone is sympathetic /ya ʕayni عليك يا صاحبي, مشكلتك معهد (I am so sorry pal). It is used to mock someone /ya ʕayni عليك شو فهيم or /ya ʕayni عليك و علي ذاكلاك (Wow! how smart you are); when you are impressed by what someone has done and you like it very much /ya ʕayni عليك (Good job, Bravo); when some understands exactly what you mean (You got me. That’s exactly what I mean). It can also convey awareness of someone’s tricks. In all of these contexts /ya ʕayni is pronounced with a rising intonation in which the intonation contour is on the first syllable of /ya/ and the particle /ya/ is unstressed.

9. /ya: msahlil/ (Asking God for Making Things Easy)
The expression /ya: msahlil/ is commonly used in Arabic, especially in difficult times or when facing challenges. The speaker uses it in seeking ease when embarking on a difficult task as /ya: msahlil سأبدأ العمل على هذا المشروع (Oh God, make this project/work/job easy for me); if you are struggling with something /ya: msahlil ساعدني في حل هذه المشكلة (Oh God, help me solve this problem); in supplications to Allah to make things easy. For example, if you are sitting and you want to get up; or if you are embarking on a journey /ya: msahlil (Ya: msahhil) /ya: msahlil/ when faced with a challenge /ya: msahlil, أعطني القوة للتغلب على هذا الصعب (Oh God, make things easy and give me strength to overcome this difficulty). In these examples, /ya:/ is uttered with the highest pitch and thus contains the intonation contour. But when /ya: msahlil/ is used in a gentle, euphemistic enquiry about where a person is going: للمصلحة (Where are you heading/travelling/go); in showing disapproval, objection or surprise when a person is leaving without permission /ya: msahlil/ the initial syllable in /msahlil/ is uttered with a rising pitch and hence it contains the intonation contour.

10. /ya satir/ (Oh My God)
The expression /ya satir/ (Oh my God) is commonly used in Colloquial Arabic for seeking divine protection (Oh my Lord, keep us safe during this journey) or as in the case of turbulence driving in heavy rain can be dangerous. It is also shows a person’s reaction to unexpected events /ya satir كاذت السيارة أن تخبطني/ (The car almost hit me). /ya satir كاذت السيارة أن تخبطني (I narrowly missed the train). On the contrary, it is used in grumbling about a person such as saying /ya satir ما أزلف دم (Oh my God. He is such a nuisance) and in showing relief as /ya satir أخيرا غادر (Gosh, I am glad he left). In all of these contexts, /ya satir is pronounced with a rising intonation.

5. Discussion
The discourse markers /ya ʕayni/ and /ya satir/ (Oh my God) are interpersonal discourse markers that indicate the relationship between the listener and the speaker and express perception, agreement, disagreement, and amazement and son on.

The pragmatic functions, attitudes and emotions conveyed by the intonational meanings of the discourse markers examined in the current study are partially similar to the kinds of functions that the discourse markers investigated by prior studies such as عاد Iaad (Harb, Jarrah, & Alghazo, 2022), والله Allah (Al-Khawaldeh, 2018), bas (enough) (Al Rousan, Al Harashsheh & Huwari, 2020; Ennasser & Hijazin, 2021), ya:msahlil/ asking God for making things easy, and /ya satir/ (Oh My God) are interpersonal discourse markers that indicate the relationship between the listener and the speaker and express perception, agreement, disagreement, and amazement and son on.

Moreover, findings of a study by Armstrong and Prieto (2015) provide evidence for the dynamic relationship between intonation contours and specific context types that differ in the amount and type of meaning they convey.

Regarding the factors that affect the intonational meanings of discourse markers, data analysis has shown the following: (i) Attitude and whether each utterance is affirmative, neutral, polite, humorous, sarcastic, resentful, cooperative and so on; (ii) the context/situation which is reflected in the shared knowledge between the speaker and the listener (favorable or unfavorable actions); the speaker’s background knowledge about the listener and whether (he/she did not do a particular action), (passed an
exam and so on); availability of the objects or things they are talking about; the linguistic context, i.e., the words and sentences that precede the discourse marker which help determine its meaning; the social context, i.e., any aspects of an occasion in which a speech-act takes place, including the immediate physical and social setting in which people live or in which something happens and develops. The social context also includes the culture in which the speaker and/or hearer was educated or lives, and the people and institutions with whom they interact. The relationship between the speaker and the receiver and whether it is friendly, aggressive.

6. Recommendations
Data analysis of each discourse marker in the present can be uttered with different intonation, yielding different meanings. This linguistic phenomenon in CA is problematic for students learning AFL/ASL and for student-interpreters. Therefore, intonational meaning of discourse markers should be part of the Semantics and Pragmatics, and Interpreting courses that translations students at CLT take. A variety of online tasks that require the students to listen to and/or produce discourse markers using a variety of intonations in Arabic and English can be provided for comprehension, interpretation and mastery.

Since many textbooks and classroom instruction for teaching Arabic as a Foreign Language (AFL) to non-native speaking students focus on reading, writing, grammar, and translation (Al-Jarf & Mingazova, 2020), the students should practice listening to and producing Arabic oral discourse with discourse markers with a variety of intonations. Teachers of AFL should make sure students taking AFL/ASL courses can utter discourse markers with different rising and falling intonations to convey different purposes, intentions, meanings, and effects. Textbooks for teaching AFL should also contain listening and speaking practice that focuss on intonational meanings of discourse markers in Arabic.

In addition, students learning AFL may use a variety of technologies for practicing the pronunciation of discourse markers in Arabic with a variety of intonations and gain pronunciation accuracy by using text-to-speech software (Al-Jarf, 2022b; Al-Jarf, 2022c), and YouTube videos on their own or under the instructor’s supervision (Al-Jarf, 2022d). Similarly, undergraduate interpreting students may listen to TED Talks on YouTube or in a digital multimedia language lab for practicing interpreting texts and dialogs with discourse markers with a variety of rising intonations (Al-Jarf, 2021). They can meet online with their instructor via a video-conferencing platform such as Elluminate, Zoom, Microsoft Teams, WebEx and others to engage in listening and speaking activities that focus on discourse markers in Arabic (Al-Jarf, 2013). The students may create their own podcasts in which they create dialogues and conversations with discourse markers, engage in debates and give oral presentations in which they use discourse markers in English and Arabic (Al-Jarf, 2022a).

Since the intonational meanings of discourse markers are under-researched in the Arabic language literature, more research studies that investigate the intonational meanings of further discourse markers as (come on); صح النوم (have you woken up, it is too late); علي أنا؟ (are you trying to fool me); كيف ينبغي (how); ما شاء الله (o.K.); علي ذاتي (at your disposal); آمن (perfect); (very enlightening); شكراً (thank you); مبارك (congratulations); بالسلامة (have a safe trip); (thanks, may God bless you); ممتاز (excellent); رائع (wonderful); عظيم (great) are still needed whether in Standard Arabic or specific Arabic dialects. Studies that explore how student-interpreters interpret discourse markers with a variety of intonations and meanings during an oral interpreting task, in addition to the ability to understand a variety of intonational meanings of Arabic discourse markers by students learning AFL are still open for further investigation in the future.

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