

A PRAGMATIC STUDY OF YA ^hNI, AN IRAQI ARABIC DM, AND ENGLISH EQUIVALENTS

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ABSTRACT

This paper investigates the linguistic element *ya^hni* frequently found in the variety of Arabic spoken in Iraq. *ya^hni* belongs to a host of expressions known as discourse markers, pragmatic markers, discourse connectives, pragmatic particles and discourse operators. Some examples in English speech are: *so, well, you know, oh, OK, like, you see, I mean, actually and right*; examples in writing would be *because, however, to sum up, admittedly, to begin, now, then* and *on the other hand*. *ya^hni* performs numerous functions in naturally occurring conversational Iraqi Arabic in different contexts. It may serve to fill gaps, indicate agreement, soften criticism, direct statements, and to modify and clarify information and intentions. The use of these forms will be investigated using natural spoken conversation.

Keywords: Discourse markers, Pragmatics, Context, Implicature, Equivalence, Utterance.