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**Pragmatic Markers in English and Arabic Royal Statements - A  
Contrastive Research**

**Keywords: Pragmatic Markers, Discourse, Context**

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**Abstract**

Pragmatic Markers, hence PMs, are a well-known issue of controversy in English and Arabic studies. Those particles perform different functions when employed, by native speakers and writers, in conversations on textual and interpersonal levels. However, they vary cross-linguistically, Arabic traditional grammarians studied those particles only on the sentential level and defined them as “words which only make sense when they are joined with others” (King, 1992: 260). Also, Ryding (2005: 407) states that Arabic sentences and clauses within text can be connected and interconnected by coordinate, subordinate and otherwise link them semantically and syntactically. While available English studies show features of what can be recognised as pragmatic markers such as: phonological reduction; semantic feature of no or little propositional meaning; optional syntactic position in initial, medial and final occurrences; poly-functionality; sociolinguistic feature of informal speeches and stylistically stigmatised.

This research is an attempt to study PMs in royal statements, by Queen Elizabeth’s statements as representative of English language and Queen Rania’s statements as representative of the Arabic language, adopting pragma-discoursal analysis with emphasis on the socio-cognitive perspective. It conducts quali-quantitative analysis of PMs in both English and Arabic Royal statements.

**1. Introduction**

In recent studies, Fraser (1999 cited in Fischer, 2006:189) describes PMs as lexical expression which signal a relationship between adjacent messages, and they belong to one of five syntactic categories: coordinating conjunction,

subordinating conjunction, preposition, prepositional phrase and adverb. This study adopts few amendments which are needed to cover the analysis of range of Arabic and English PMs taking into consideration pragma-discoursal eclectic model which includes Fraser's PM's types (1999), Blakemore's DMs' context and relevance studies (1987, 1992), Chi (1992) and Vosniadou & Brewer (1987) studies of conceptual change within and across ontological categories (Alonso-tapia, 2002:2-3).

Since PMs exist mostly in spoken rather than written texts, selected Royal statements are fertile ground to perform pragma-discoursal analysis with particular emphasis on socio-cognitive perspective, this is because PMs' functions can be recognised on two levels: textual and interpersonal.

## **2. Terminological Issues**

The majority of recent studies label 'pragmatic markers' in many terms which refer to the same grammatical phenomenon like: discourse connectives (Blakemore, 1987, 1992), discourse particles (Schorup, 1985), pragmatic formatives (Fraser, 1987), pragmatic markers (Fraser, 1988, 1990; Schiffrin, 1987), pragmatic operators (Ariel, 1994) and many others. Dealing with the overlap of the expressions of the markers, Blakemore (2006:221) forwards a fact that there is no common term to label PMs, She claims that it is not always possible to say the range of alternative terms which have appeared in the literature of this area of study. She states that DM is a term adopted to mark heterogeneous class of expressions which are recognised by their function and meaning interpretation that they encode. However, Hansen (2006:25) explains that it is better to view PMs from functional pragmatic perspective rather than from the formal-syntactic one.

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### 3. PMs and DMs' Interrelation

To some extent, PMs and DMs are interrelated since most of the recent studies emphasise the same aspects which are natural language, language use in a context and language user. Malmkjar (1991:476) claims that PMs are the sinew of pragmatics such as speech acts and social maxims of relevance: sincerity, clarity and quality. However, DMs consider the same aspects which are the actual use of language “text spoken or written” and unravel its meaning reflections and unified interpretation to the interlocutors, while PMs depend on the feature of relevance which DMs indicate as text coherence.

### 4. Pragmatic Markers' Features

In early studies, PMs are well known to have no precise definition or one dominant feature. Briton (1996 cited in Anderson , 2001:21) lists a set of defining features to recognise PMs. One of those features is that PMs are multi-functional particles operate on textual and interpersonal levels. Also, he claims that they are heterogeneous forms hardly placed within traditional word class. PMs have no clear grammatical function and they are optional features which are positioned either outside or loosely attached to syntactic structure. Phonologically, they are often reduced; on the other hand, they are lexically said to conceive little or no propositional meaning. They are features of spoken or written discourse with high-frequency. Stylistically, they are said to be stigmatised and negatively evaluated.

### 5. Pragmatic Markers in English and Arabic

Since PMs exhibit meta-linguistic or meta-pragmatic features, English researchers expand their scope cross-linguistically to include typological interests, synchronic and diachronic perspectives with sociolinguistic emphasis. Many influential studies detected PMs' interpretation as particles that depend on language context rather than grammatical conventions. Fraser (1996 cited in Fischer, 2006:189) mentions “there is a group of lexical expressions found in

every language called ‘pragmatic markers’ which can be classified as four superordinate types (basic pragmatic markers, commentary pragmatic markers, parallel pragmatic markers and discourse markers)”. Those superordinate types are explained with their subtypes in the following examples and their hierarchy in figure (1) and some examples in table (1):

NO.	Type of marker	Example
1	Basic pragmatic markers	(please, I mean)
2	Assessment markers	(maybe, almost)
3	Manner-of-speaking-markers	(probably, oh)
4	Evidential markers	(I know, I think)
5	Hearsay markers	(seem, look)
6	Deference markers	(Sir, Dear)
7	Conversational management markers	(then, now)
8	Contrastive discourse markers	(but, still)
9	Elaborative discourse markers	(and, also)
10	Inferential discourse markers	(so, because)
11	Temporal discourse markers	(when, then)

Table (1)

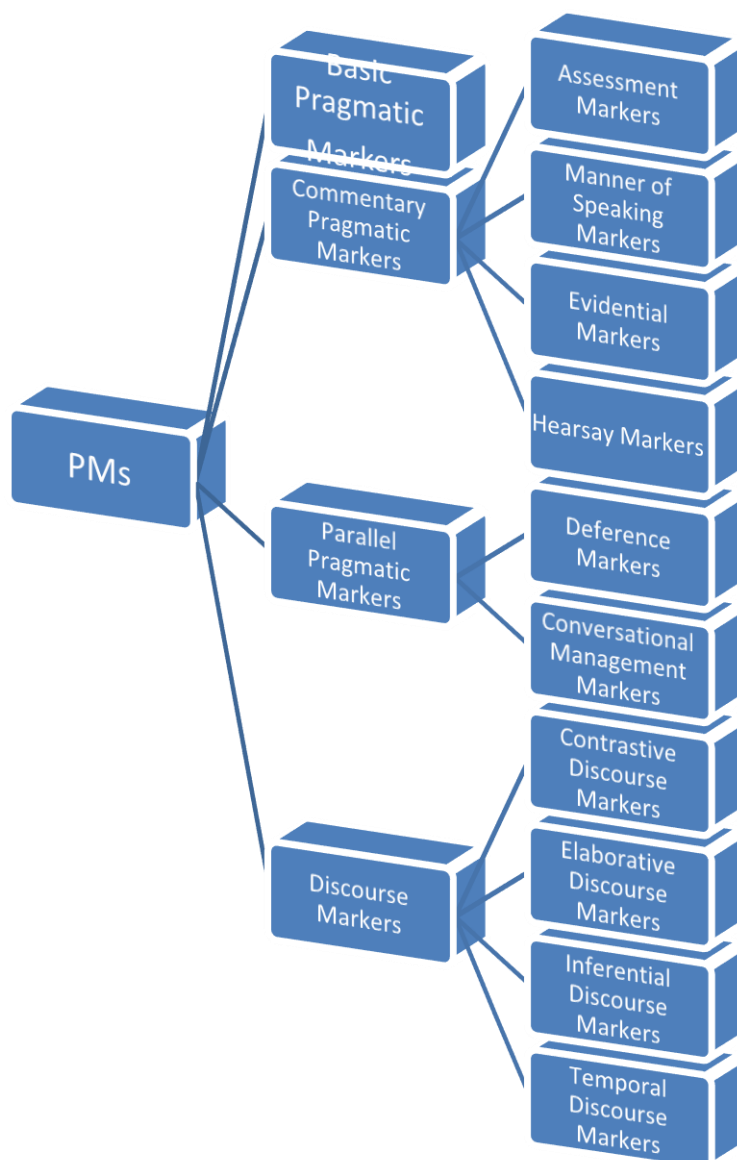


Figure (1) PMs' superordinate types and subtypes

Other studies are also pioneering in the field of determining PMs as indexical tools for social considerations such as age, sex, location...etc. On the discourse level, Ostman (1995 cited in Aijmer & Vandenberg 2011, p.225) describes PMs as class which define function of pragmatics and also as implicit anchors of deductions about speakers' attitude.

However, Arabic studies are more concerned with PMs in a marginal way; Arab linguists' perspective is maintained to show how PMs are defined, termed, approached, delimited and analysed. According to Al-Huqbani (2013:2162), Al-

Batal's (1985-1990), they view that PMs' functions have received less attention and research.; most of the attention includes only the syntactic properties such as PMs' effects on the inflections of nouns and verbs which follows due to the linguists' interests in (Al-I'rab, الأعراب). So the cohesive function of PMs is neglected and researched under independent field called rhetoric or (Albalagah, البلاغة) and termed disjunction and conjunction or (Al-Fasil wa Al-wasil, الفصل والوصل). Among Arab linguists who approached PMs from semantic and pragmatic perspectives, are Al-batal (1985, 1990, 1994), Al-Khalil (2005), Ghobrial (1994) and Hussein (2008 cited in Zmait, 2016:93).

## 6. Cognitive View of PMs and the Process of Conceptual Change

For further socio-cognitive view of a particular text, it is best to distinguish between declarative and procedural knowledge. Eisenlauer (2013:67) clarifies that declarative knowledge includes elementary concepts, claims and the relationship between them with their procedural knowledge related to methods and procedures of particular task of proceeding through a text. So cognitive studies account for conceptual and procedural meaning; they distinguish the propositional content of texts and take into consideration the procedural content between language user and the text and social and cultural contexts in which it is used. As Van Dijk (2008 cited in Paltridge, 2012:2) explains, the socio-cognitive approach to discourse analysis of a text consider negotiated constructs of context: "Context cannot be accounted for objective conditions; however, they can be accounted as subjective meta-constructs continually modified through the participation interaction of the interlocutors, as such the text can be discerned as communicative units encoded in social and cultural practice using the available communicative functions of embedding in their forms depending on the interlocutors' common knowledge".

Concerning PMs, Blakemore (2002:185) mentions "not all expressions, classified as discourse connectives or markers, can be analysed in terms of

procedural encoding. There are so-called ‘discourse markers’ which encode constituents of conceptual representations”. As such, PMs may have a role in the process of conceptual change. However, through Sinatra and Dole (1998), perspective about processes of conceptual change holds that assumption of conceptual change processes are considered assimilations. Those assimilations can be described as: the addition of new information to existing knowledge structures through weak or radical conceptual mechanisms. These mechanisms are addition, deletion, discrimination and generalisation; and also commenter attempt sometimes profiling before adopting these mechanisms. In light of those mechanisms, PMs play some role in this process of conceptual change which Vosniadou & Brewer (1987) describe as a change in existing knowledge, which may involve weak or radical reinterpretation of old information or considering new ones in a spoken text (cited in Alonso-tapia, 2002:2-3).

## **7. Quali-quantitative Analysis of Royal Statements**

The present research adopts pragma-discoursal approach application to determine PMs’ types, as introduced by Fraser model (2005); Blakemore (2002) concept of context and DM’s relevance studies (1992); and Chi (1992) and Vosniadou & Brewer (1987) studies of conceptual change within and across ontological categories.

### **7.1 Queen Elizabeth’s Statements’ Quali-quantitative Analysis**

The contextual frame of Queen Elizabeth II’s statement is a TV interview of the Queen addressing people of Britain concerning the challenges of British people during COVID-19 pandemic. In the first statement, the queen adopts several markers to communicate the intended meaning clearly. The pragmatic functional mapping shows that the queen adopts evidential marker (I know), manner-of-speaking marker (I’m sure), basic pragmatic marker (I want to thank everyone) and (I also want to thank those of you), inferential discourse marker (thereby), and several elaborative discourse marker including (and, as well as).

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The statement's relevant interpretation unveils an identity of her Excellency the queen addressing her people at difficult times and encourages them to keep up the good work at their work-posts and this brings them together to overcome their losses whether financial or actual people lives. The statement adopts generalisation mechanisms i.e. (I'm speaking to you, our country, I want to thank everyone); as such, it is a radical conceptual change. The propositional content and its context of the statement confirm the aforementioned types of the adopted PMs.

Moreover, the second statement's pragmatic functional mapping adopts inferential discourse marker (if), temporal discourse marker (then, I hope in the years to come), and several elaborative discourse markers (and). This statement is a confirmation to the encouragements of the previous one, it characterises the implicit request to keep British people's noble attributes such as self-discipline, maintaining harmony of life quality and good-humoured resolve. The adopted conceptual mechanism is an addition and shows a weak conceptual change of the previous message. The propositional context and its context affirm that type of adopted PMs in the second statement.

Interestingly, the third statement contains several PMs: temporal discourse marker (the moments when) and elaborative discourse markers including (or, and). The adopted conceptual mechanisms are generalisation and addition and attempt profiling i.e. (across the Commonwealth and around the world, we have seen heartwarming stories of people coming together to help others), so it seems a radical conceptual change process. The statement propositional content and its context assert the types of the aforementioned PMs in this statement. However, the fourth statement the queen adopt is a weak conceptual change to her previous statements and the propositional context and its context confirm several types of PMs including: inferential discourse marker like (here, this time), temporal discourse markers such as (today, once again, but now as then, before, but for now), evidential marker i.e. (we know), basic pragmatic marker (I send



my thanks) and several elaborative discourse markers (and). This statement may seem an implicit request to British people to maintain their faith and trust to continue endeavours to overcome the pandemic of COVID-19. The following table (2) includes the statistics of the statistical analysis carried out:

BMs	CMs				Par.Ms		DMs			
	Asses.M s	MOSM s	EvidM s	HM s	Def.M s	CMM s	CDM s	EDMs	IDMs	TDMs
I want to thank everyone			I know			Then	But for now	And/15	Thereby	After
I also want to thank those of you			I am sure					As well as	If	Today
			I want to assure you					Or	Here	The moments when
			We know					Once again		But now as then before
										This time
										I hop in the years to come

Table (2)

## 7.2 Queen Rania's Statements' Quali-quantitative Analysis

The context of this statement frame is Queen Rania of Jordan addressing her people through a TV program called (kalam nawa'em, كلام نواعم). Queen Rania's statement consists of five statements as an answer to the TV host questions. The first statement opens with an evidential marker (al-hakekah, الحقيقة), the statement pragmatic functional mapping also includes several markers: manner-of-speaking marker (fa min al dharori jeddan, فمن الضروري جداً, min al mohim jeddan, من المهم جداً), inferential discourse markers (le'annah, لأنه-fa bil nesba lehatha al mawdoa', فبالنسبة لهذا الموضوع), temporal discourse marker (min ba'ad

ma yakoon, (وبالتالي, من بعد ما يكون-wa bil tali), another inferential marker ( wa ili netaj, (واللي نتج عنه, ana) and temporal discourse marker (haleyyan, حالياً), hearsay marker (methil, مثل), conversational management marker (alhamdullellah, الحمد لله-wa inn sha' Allah, (و ان شاء الله), and several elaborative discourse markers (wa, و). The statement seems an implicit call to shed light on domestic violence not only in Jordan but also in the Arab world. The queen highlights the other institutes affiliated to the government endeavours, and encourages further efforts to raise healthy societal awareness and protect Jordanian families from domestic violence. The queen adopts several conceptual mechanisms including: generalisation and addition, it is a rapid conceptual change attempt causing reinterpretation of the old information about Jordanian or Arab families as free of domestic violence. The statement propositional content and context confirm the aforementioned PMs' types.

The second statement adopts basic pragmatic marker (ya'ni, يعني), temporal discourse marker (fa hatta, فحتى), inferential discourse marker (le'annah, لأنه—meshan, مشان - wa hatha mohim jeddan, (وهذا مهم جداً), contrastive discourse marker (aw, او), an evidential marker (bahis, بحس, taba'an, طبعاً), contrastive discourse marker (lakin, لكن), and also elaborative discourse marker, (wa, و – wa mathalan, ومثالاً). Following the preceding statement, there is a radical conceptual change using generalisation and addition mechanisms. The statement's propositional content and its context assert the types of the aforementioned PMs.

Furthermore, several PMs are adopted in the third statement which includes: basic pragmatic marker (ya'ni, يعني), an evidential marker (al-hakika, الحقيقة), conversational management marker (wa fi nafs al waqit, وفي نفس الوقت), hearsay marker (mithil, مثل - fi methil hatha al mawadi', (في مثل هذه المواضيع), inferential discourse marker (le'anah, لأنه), contrastive discourse marker (aw, او) and elaborative discourse marker (wa ili, (واللي - wa, و - ايضاً, aidan, و). Those PMs' types are confirmed by the propositional content and its context, also attempt

radical conceptual change using generalisation mechanism i.e. (ويكون في اعتراف )  
(انه هذه الظاهرة موجودة سواء داخل الوطن العربي او من العالم)

Accordingly, the fourth statement attempts also radical conceptual change using mechanisms of generalisation, addition and also profiling i.e. (لأنه كمان نابع ) (من ثوابتنا ثوابت الدين الاسلامي الحنيف و من اهم القيم عي التواصل والتراحم بين جميع افراد المجتمع). However, the included PMs are: a temporal discourse marker (fi al-bedaya, في البداية), an evidential marker (fi'lan, فعلاً), an inferential discourse marker (le'annah, لأنه), a contrastive discourse marker (aw, او), conversational management marker (fa en sha'a Allah, فأن شاء الله), and an elaborative discourse marker (wa, و). The propositional content and its context confirm the aforementioned PMs' types in this statement. Table (3) below covers the adopted PMs' types.

BMs	CMs				Par.Ms		DMs			
	Asses.Ms	MOSMs	EvidMs	HMs	Def.Ms	CMMs	CDMs	EDMs	IDMs	TDMs
يعني ٧/	بصراحة	الاخذ بعين الاعتبار	الحقيقة/٢	مثل/٣		لانه فقط	لكن ايضاً	و/٤٩	اذا	منذ
	لكن ربما	بس	فعلاً			حفظها الله	او/٣	وايضاً/٣	لأنه/٦	اليوم
	من الضروري جداً		بالتالي			فالحمد لله	لكن	ومثلاً	من خلال	ومن بعد ميكون
	من المهم جداً		بحس			الحمد لله		مثلاً	فبالنسبه لهذا الموضوع	حالياً
	وهذا مهم جد		طبعاً			وان شاء الله		فلما	واللي نتج عنه	فحتى
						اهلا وسهلاً فيكم			مشان	حتى/٢
						وفي نفس الوقت			أ	
						فأن شاء الله				

Table (3)

### 7.3 Discussion of Contrastive Statistical Analysis

According to tables (2, 3), the total percentage of the PMs adopted by Queen Rania of Jordan is (10.5%), this is a higher percentage than the one adopted by Queen Elizabeth of Britain which is (6.5%). Furthermore, English BMs percentage scored (0.3%) less than the Arabic one; however, Arabic percentage is (0.7%) while English CMs scored (0.7%); it is less than Arabic percentage which is (1.6%). Also, Arabic Par.Ms' percentage score is (0.8%) and this is higher than the English one which is (0.1%). Finally, Arabic DMs score, which is (7.4%), is also higher than the English one that scored (5.3%). The figures below i.e. (٢, ٣) may explain the contrasting percentages of PMs' adopted by the Queen of Jordan as representative of Arabic language and Queen of Britain as representative of the English language.

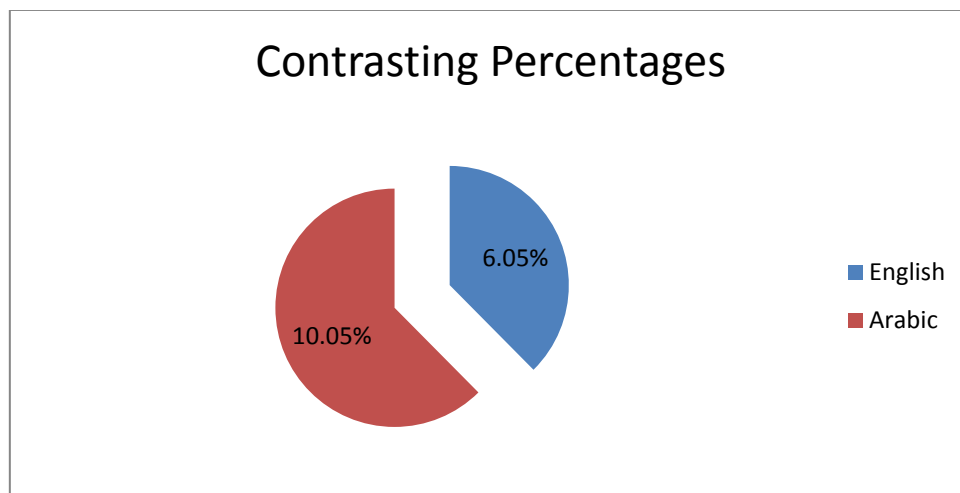


Figure (٢)

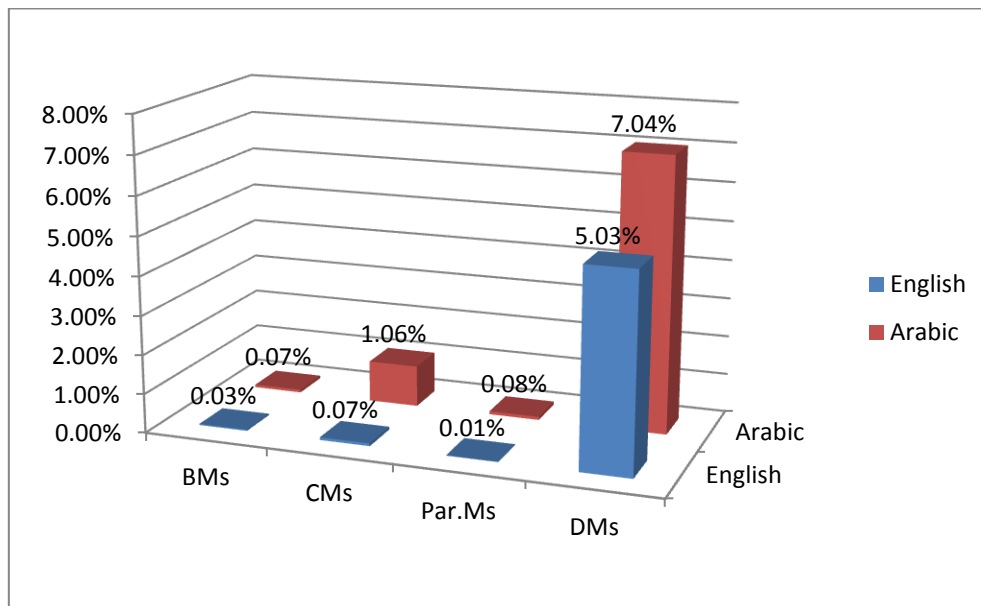


Figure (٣)

## 8. Concluding Remarks

On the basis of the aforementioned analysed royal statements, qualitative and quantitative results are visible. So similarities and dissimilarities are observed and the following conclusions are reached:

- 1- The contrastive Percentage of PMs shows that the Arabic statements adopt PMs more than English royal statements to communicate contextually-dependent intended meaning interpretation.
- 2- Arabic royal statements exhibit higher BMs percentage due to the linguistic phenomenon that Arabs are committed to overcome social distancing more than English royal statements which are committed to present reality and facts with attention to maintain social distancing.
- 3- Parallel markers are heavily adopted by Arabic royal statements, and this is an indication that Arabic royal statements tend to maintain the dialogue stream from any turn interruption; while the English ones are less attentive to maintain the dialogue turns.
- 4- The extensive use of DMs by Arabic royal statement is one of many indications that Arabic tends to be more elaborative than English.

- 5- On the basis of the potentiality that PMs may present more than procedural knowledge, the Parallel markers adopted in the Arabic language i.e. (الحمد لله، ان شاء الله) imply that (everything is ok), and this is seemingly more than procedural knowledge which may hold constraints on the implicature presented by the propositions. So this is an indication that Arabic PMs may contribute to the process of conceptual change more than English counterparts.
- 6- Taking in consideration the previous qualitative analysis, the conclusion of weak and radical conceptual change contrast exhibit no overall differences since both languages adopt conceptual change mechanisms like (generalisation, profiling) to perform a radical conceptual change process which is less dependent on (addition, deletion and discrimination).

بحث تماثلي لأدوات الربط التداولية في التصريحات الملكية الانكليزية والعربية  
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 جامعة بغداد – ابن رشد

### الملخص

تعتبر ادوات الربط التداولية قضية جدلية في الدراسات اللغوية العربية والانكليزية حيث تؤدي هذه الادوات مختلف الوظائف عند استخدامها من قبل متحدثي اللغة والكتاب الاصلاء في محادثاتهم في الجمل على المستوى النصي والشخصي. لكنها قد تبدوا ادوات ربط غير متماثلة بين اللغات المختلفة، حيث عرفت في دراسات النحويين العرب والتي شملت فقط مستوى الجملة بـ"الكلمات التي تعطي معنى منطقي عند ربطها سوية". وتشير اللغوية (كارين رايدينك) ان العبارات والجمل العربية يمكن ربطها نحويًا ومعنويًا داخل النص بواسطة ادوات وصل، في حين تشير الدراسات الانكليزية لخصائص ادوات الربط التداولية مثل: التقليل الصوتي، امتلاكها للقليل او عدم امتلاكها للمعنى الافتراضي، خاصية الموقع النحوي الغير لازم في بداية او وسط او نهاية الجملة، تعددية الوظائف وكونها خاصة تميز المحادثات الغير رسمية من منظور مجال دراسة اللغة الاجتماعي وغير محبذ استخدامها من منظور مجال دراسة اللغة الاسلوبي.

هذه الدراسة هي محاولة بحثية عن أدوات الربط التداولية في التصريحات الملكية في اللغة الانكليزية لملكة بريطانيا (اليزابيث) واللغة العربية في تصريحات لملكة الاردن (رانية)؛ تتبنى هذه الدراسة تحليل تداولي خطابي لأدوات الربط التداولية مع التركيز عليها من منظور ادراكي-اجتماعي، وهو بالمجمل تحليل نوعي وكمي.

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