

**A pedagogical linguistics perspective for  
measuring Egyptian EFL learners'  
performance in using some discourse  
markers**

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**Abstract**

The present study examined how Egyptian EFL students competently use the FL discourse markers. In other words, how the Egyptian EFL learners can properly differentiate between the syntactic and textual functions of such markers. Data were collected through the instruments of pretest and posttest. As for participants, eighty Egyptian EFL students participated in the present study. They were divided into a control group and an experimental group with forty participants each. The experimental group participants were taught the syntactic and textual functions of the FL discourse markers. Data were analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively. Examples of both groups' performances in the pretest and the posttest were provided. The Paired Samples T-Test and the Independent Samples T-Test indicated statistically significant improvement of the experimental group participants' use of FL discourse markers over their control group counterparts. The present study emphasized the importance of adopting the pedagogically-oriented linguistics perspective in teaching FL discourse markers to the Egyptian EFL learners.

**Keywords:** Discourse markers, FL writing, Egyptian EFL learners, pedagogical linguistics perspective, performance improvement

### المخلص

أختبرت الدراسة الحالية كفاءة الطلاب المصريين الدارسين للغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية فى كيفية استخدام علامات الخطاب باللغة الأجنبية، و بعبارة أخرى كيف يستطيع الطلاب المصريين الدارسين للغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية أن يميزوا بدقة بين الدلالات التراكيبية و النصية لعلامات الخطاب، و تم جمع البيانات البحثية باستخدام الأختبار القبلى و البعدى حيث ضمت الدراسة 80 مشاركا مقسمين إلى المجموعة الضابطة و المجموعة التجريبية بمعدل 40 مشارك فى كل مجموعة، و قد تم تدريس الدلالات التراكيبية و النصية لعلامات الخطاب للمشاركين فى المجموعة التجريبية، و تم تحليل البيانات البحثية كيفا و كما حيث دل أختبار (ت) للعينات المقترنة و أختبار (ت) للعينات المستقلة على وجود تحسن ذا دلالة إحصائية معنوية على استخدام المشاركين بالمجموعة التجريبية لعلامات الخطاب فى اللغة الأجنبية مقارنة بنظرائهم المشاركين فى المجموعة الضابطة، و أكدت الدراسة على أهمية تبنى المنظور اللغوى ذو التوجه التربوى فى تدريس علامات خطاب اللغة الأجنبية للطلاب المصريين الدارسين للغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: علامات الخطاب، الكتابة فى اللغة الأجنبية، الطلاب المصريين الدارسين للغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية، المنظور اللغوى التربوى، تحسن الأداء

### Background of the study

Tannen, Hamilton and Schiffrin (2015) and Blanchard (2019) defined discourse markers as linguistic units that help relate different parts of discourse to each other. According to Johansson (2011) and Hasselgård (2016) discourse markers can take the form of single words (e.g. *like, so, well*) or phrases (e.g. *I mean, I know, I think, I guess*) which constitute a great portion of communicative interaction. These markers are of various functions; syntactic and textual functions. When these markers function as adverbs (e.g. he is *so* late) or connectors (he was busy *so that* I could not meet him), they serve syntactic function. That is, *so* is an adverb which qualifies the adjective ‘late’ and *so that* connects two sentences. In this case, omission of the marker changes the meaning of the sentence. However, in this example ‘*so* if they are late again, they will be fired’, the omission of *so* does not change the meaning of the utterance. Thus, *so* as a discourse marker serves a textual function to express consequence; it helps the audience understand the meanings of communicated written messages.

Furthermore, Seiffedin and El-Sakka (2017) highlighted the important role of using corrective feedback, be it direct or indirect, to improve the Egyptian EFL students’ accuracy in

written discourse. In addition, Sun (2013) emphasized that language teaching should not overlook the teaching of discourse markers. On the contrary, Pourdana, Nour and Yousefi (2021) found that corrective feedback was not a statistically significant contributor to the improvement of Iranian EFL learners' accuracy in using FL discourse markers. As such, the Egyptian EFL learners should be aware of the linguistic interpretation of these markers; they should be able to differentiate between the different functions of discourse markers. The awareness of different linguistic functions of the discourse markers sustains the development of the Egyptian EFL learners' interactional competence at the level of written discourse. It also helps them produce semantically meaningful sentences. It develops their FL communicative competence through understanding the different functions of the discourse (Derigis, 2010).

The comprehension of different functions of the discourse markers by Egyptian EFL learners can be attained through using various communicative activities. At this point, pedagogy should play a role in facilitating the Egyptian EFL learners' comprehension of the various linguistic functions of discourse markers. Linguistics should be pedagogically oriented in the Egyptian EFL context. This is attributed to the fact that linguistics

is taught to non–native English speaking students even to those who are majoring in English at different Egyptian faculties and universities. In other words, there are several linguistic differences between their mother tongue (i.e. Arabic) and their target language (i.e. English) at various linguistic levels particularly syntactic and semantic levels. Furthermore, linguistics should be pedagogically oriented when it is taught to the Egyptian pre–service teachers in order to maximize the benefits of TEFL process in Egypt. Therefore, it was felt necessary to investigate the effectiveness of pedagogically training some Egyptian EFL learners to differentiate between the syntactic and textual functions of the discourse markers on their performance of using such markers properly.

### **Statement of the problem**

EFL students have difficulty using FL discourse markers. They cannot differentiate between the syntactic and textual functions of such markers. That is why the current study examined how the Egyptian EFL students competently use the FL discourse markers. In other words, how the Egyptian EFL learners can properly differentiate between the syntactic and textual functions of such markers. It also verified the statistically

significant differences that might exist between the control and experimental groups in using the FL discourse markers properly.

### **Questions**

The current study attempted to answer the following questions:

1. Why should linguistics be pedagogically oriented in the Egyptian FL context?
2. How do the control and experimental groups generally use the discourse markers in the pretest?
3. What is the difference between the control and experimental groups' performances in the posttest?
4. Is there a statistically significant difference between the performances of both groups in the posttest?

### **Aims**

Aim of the study is to investigate pedagogical linguistics perspective for measuring Egyptian EFL learners' performance in using some discourse markers. The present study aimed to:

1. Emphasize the pedagogically oriented perspective in teaching linguistics to the Egyptian EFL learners.
2. Determine the performance of the control and experimental groups in using the discourse markers in the pretest.

3. State the difference between the performance of both control and experimental groups in the posttest.
4. Verify the statistical significance of the performance of both groups in the posttest.

### **Significance of the study**

The study is significant because it highlights the intricately entwined relation between linguistics and pedagogy in the Egyptian EFL context. Linguistics and pedagogy should be parallel in designing FL curricula to the Egyptian EFL undergraduates. It is also significant because it investigates the linguistic competence of the Egyptian EFL students and their ability to differentiate between the syntactic and textual features of the FL discourse markers. The significance of the present study emanates as well from the fact that it provides TEFL implications for teaching FL writing in the Egyptian context.

### **Delimitations**

The findings of the present study are delimited to the teaching of academic writing to the Egyptian EFL third-year students at the Department of Languages and Translation, Higher Institute for Specific Studies, Haram. In addition, these findings can be fruitful to the FL writing courses being taught at other higher learning institutions in Egypt. It was conducted during the

first semester of the academic year 2018–2019.

### **Literature review**

Seiffedin and El-Sakka (2017) investigated the influential role that corrective feedback, be it direct or indirect, might have on the improvement of the Egyptian EFL learners' accuracy in FL writing. Forty–four Egyptian EFL undergraduates, enrolled at an Egyptian state–run university, participated in the study and were required to answer the pre and posttests on FL writing. Two groups were created to comprise the participants, namely control and experimental groups. Twenty–five participants took part in the control group while twenty three participants were included in the experimental group. An FL writing course was taught to both groups. However, the experimental group participants were distinguished from their counterparts at the control group. That is, the experimental group participants had received corrective direct and indirect feedback. The direct corrective feedback occurred during the lectures. However, the experimental group participants received corrective indirect feedback through the email.

Seiffedin and El-Sakka employed inferential statistics, i.e. the Paired Samples T–Test, in order to determine the existence of statistical significance between the mean scores of both groups' performance in the pretest and the posttest. Seiffedin

and El-Sakka found that direct and indirect corrective feedback was effective in improving the Egyptian EFL learners' writing accuracy. Indeed, the direct and indirect feedback helped the experimental group participants to have higher mean scores in the posttest compared to their control group participants. The improvement of the experimental participants' writing accuracy was attributed to receiving the FL instructor's direct and indirect feedback. The findings reported by Seiffedin and El-Sakka indicate that providing linguistic knowledge to the Egyptian EFL learners in the form of corrective feedback can be fruitful in improving the writing skills. This fact sustains the perspective of pedagogical linguistics in the Egyptian FL context. That is, how to pedagogically make the Egyptian EFL learners aware of the FL linguistics rules.

Chen (2018) examined the use of discourse markers by Chinese EFL teachers in FL classrooms. The examination included types of discourse markers, their functions and the frequency of using them in teaching English to the Chinese EFL learners. Data were collected through the selection of some videos of forty Chinese EFL teachers. The videos were transferred into texts to build up corpus for the purpose of data analysis. A bottom to top analysis was conducted using a mixed

quantitative and qualitative method. Chen reported that the Chinese EFL teachers frequently used discourse markers in teaching English. However, they only use a restricted numbers of discourse markers; they did not diverse their usage of FL discourse markers. The most frequently used single-word discourse markers by the Chinese EFL teachers were *okay*, *so* and *right* respectively. Their use of phrase-based discourse markers was restricted to *you know* and *all right*. That is, the Chinese EFL teachers had narrow selection of the used FL discourse markers.

The finding explained the reasons behind the use of a few or single word expressions by the Chinese EFL learners. They are influenced by the discourse markers input which lacks diversity. The Chinese EFL teachers' limitation in using diverse FL discourse markers inevitably affected the Chinese EFL learners' ability to use a wide range of FL discourse markers. Chen referred to another feature of the FL discourse markers input where the Chinese EFL teachers used several markers together in order to realize fluency of the discourse. This feature resulted from the Chinese EFL teachers' inability of oral expressions and their insufficient linguistic knowledge of the correct functions of the FL discourse markers. Indeed, Chen's

findings highlighted the importance of the pedagogical linguistics perspective. That is, the Chinese EFL teachers lacked the theoretical linguistic knowledge of appropriate usage of FL discourse markers. At the same time, they pedagogically misled their students by providing an inappropriate and narrow scale of using FL discourse markers.

Al-khazraji (2019) examined the use of discourse markers to realize cohesion and coherence in essays written by grade none students in Dubai. The participants were of different Arab nationalities including UAE students who were enrolled in a private school where English was taught as a second language. Data were collected through writing a 100-word essay on “the advantages and disadvantages of using the internet”. The students were taught how to properly use and apply discourse markers in writing. Data were analyzed qualitatively to assess the use of discourse markers according to Halliday and Hassan’s taxonomy of cohesion. Al-khazraji collected twenty-two copies of hand-written essays, but only analyzed six samples which were randomly selected to determine the accuracy of achieving cohesion and coherence in writing.

Al-khazraji found that the coordinating conjunction *but* was misused in the beginning of the sentence instead of linking two

independent clauses to indicate contrast. The conjunction *when* was also inappropriately used instead of indicating condition or time in the sentences. Other foibles of using the discourse markers include the inability to realize the semantic function of *neither* which means negation, misuse of *in the other way* to coherently connect two sentences. In addition, *and* was unnecessarily used redundantly leading to violating sentences coherence and losing the continuity of discussed ideas. There was failure to accurately use *that* in reference to previous nouns. Therefore, Al-khazraji emphasized the need for teaching discourse markers. The ESL students need to understand the different grammatical and semantic functions of discourse markers in order to improve their quality of writing in English. Al-khazraji's findings asserted the need for having a pedagogically-oriented linguistics perspective in order to develop the ESL students' understanding of English discourse markers.

Uba and Souidi (2020) examined the writing difficulties encountered Omani ESP students who studied an ESP course *English for Business*. Data were collected through an essay-writing-task and a questionnaire-based-task. The participants were asked to write a 350-word essay and were asked to pin down their expectations about the content syllabus of the ESP

course. The findings indicated that one of the main trouble spots of the Omani ESP participants was their inability to employ the FL discourse markers properly in order to realize coherence. This trouble spot was also evident in the participants' inability to organize their written essays. Other trouble spots included spelling, grammar, poor vocabulary, writing proper thesis statements. Uba and Souidi recommended that the Omani ESP participants' need for intensive contact hours of teaching essay writing; they should be taught how to generate and organize ideas. Omani ESP students should be given intensive writing tasks to develop their essay writing ability. Uba and Souidi suggested an incorporation of an essay writing course to be taught to the Omani ESP students in order to remedy the Omani ESP students' poor FL vocabulary and their ability to use cohesive and coherence devices properly. Just like the findings of Seiffedin and El-Sakka (2017), Chen (2018) and Al-khazraji (2019), those reported by Uba and Souidi encouraged the reliance on the pedagogical linguistics perspective in teaching FL discourse markers to the Omani EFL learners.

On the contrary to the previous reviewed studies, Pourdana, et al. (2021) reported opposite results. Pourdana, et al. examined the potential impact of metalinguistic corrective

feedback on the improvement of forty-two Iranian EFL learners' performance in using FL discourse markers. The participants were asked to write assignments on different topics. They received metalinguistic corrective feedback on their assignment through WhatsApp on the proper usage of the FL discourse markers. Then, the participants were asked to revise their assignments and correct their discourse markers errors. The revised assignments were analyzed to determine the types of discourse markers, namely additive, temporal, casual, and adversative. Qualitative analysis showed the additive discourse markers was the highest used discourse marker among all other types. Quantitative analysis of multivariate Chi-square test indicated no statistically significant differences in the participants' performance in the revised assignments compared to their performance in the first assignments. Therefore, Pourdana, et al. highlighted the need for further research to find out alternative strategies of corrective feedback to help EFL learners improve their performance in using FL discourse markers.

## **Method**

### **Research design**

The study adopted the mixed method of qualitative and quantitative analysis (e.g. McMillan and Schumacher, 2010;

Johnson and Christensen, 2014; and Creswell and Creswell, 2018). The quantitative analysis provides descriptive statistics of the participants' performance in the pre and posttests. It also relied on the verification of statistical significant differences between the two examined groups' performances in the pretest and posttest. For that purpose, the Paired Samples T-Test and the Independent Samples T-Test were conducted (e.g. Seiffedin and El-Sakka, 2017). Furthermore, the qualitative analysis provides examples of the participants' performance in using the FL discourse markers (e.g. Cohen, Manion, and Morrison, 2011).

### **Participants**

Eighty EFL third-year students at the Department of Languages and Translation, Higher Institute for Specific Studies, Haram participated in the present study during the first term of the academic year 2018–2019. They were divided into two groups; control group and experimental group with forty students each.

### **Procedure**

The participants were pretested and post-tested. They were asked to define the syntactic and textual functions of a number of markers contained in the discourse markers test. The pre and posttests spanned one and a half hours each. The

discourse markers test was piloted in prior using twenty participants. The Cronbach alpha was .91 suggesting high reliability (Johnson and Christensen, 2014). As for validity, the test was valid because it measured the participants' performance in using the syntactic and textual functions of the FL discourse markers. After the pretest, the experimental group participants were taught activities of pedagogically-oriented linguistics on the difference between syntactic and textual functions of FL discourse markers. The activities were derived from various sources as indicated in the section of electronic references. These activities included illustrative examples of the types and functions of FL discourse markers.

### **Data collection Instruments**

Data were collected through the discourse markers test (Appendix A). The text consists of twenty-five sentences which contain different functions of the discourse markers. The twenty-five sentences were adapted from different sources like (Fraser, 1999; Daif-Allah, and Albeshar, 2013; Tannen, et al., 2015, and Li, 2020). The test was marked out of fifty marks where two marks were allocated for each sentence. It was administered as a pretest and a posttest.

## Data analysis

First, the Paired Samples T-Test was conducted to determine the statistical significant differences between the control group's performances in the pretest and posttest. Second, it was conducted to determine the statistical significant differences in the performances of the experimental group in the pretest and the posttest. Third, the Independent Samples T-Test was conducted to verify the statistical significant difference between the performances of both groups.

**Tale 1: Paired-Samples T-Test Statistics**

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	Minimum
Posttest control score	40	16.3000	3.09010	.44750	10.00
Posttest experimental score	40	40.2750	6.12263	.98381	27.00
Pretest control score	40	17.6250	3.01013	.74022	9.00
Pretest experimental score	40	17.8000	3.265253	.61487	10.00

Table 2: Paired-Samples Test

Test	M	SD	N	DF	t-value	Sig.
Pretest control group score	17.6250	3.01013	40	39	1.900	.065
Posttest control group score	16.3000	3.09010	40	39		
Pretest experimental group score	17.8000	2.65253	40	39	20.854	.000
Posttest experimental group score	40.2750	6.12263	40	39		

The control group pretest score ranged between 9–25 with the mean score of 17.62 while that of the experimental group ranged between 10–25 with the mean score of 17.80. This indicates that both control and experimental groups had almost similar performance in the pretest and the participants of both groups were unable to differentiate between the syntactic and textual functions of the examined items. The standard deviation of the control group pretest score 3.01 was higher than that of the experimental group 3.26. This indicates that variance was almost the same among the participants of both groups. Table 3 illustrates some examples of the two groups' errors in the pretest and their failure to define the syntactic functions of the FL

discourse markers. Table 4 provides some examples of errors made by both groups and their inability to define the textual function of the FL discourse markers.

Table 3: Pretest error of defining the syntactic functions of discourse markers

- *Since* January, it has rained every now and then.
- You should read *while* doing that.
- Malaysia is famous of its humid weather, *unlike* England which is known for its cold weather.
- There was a terrible accident, *so* we were late.
- The lawyer will not go to the court, unless he is paid in advance.
- *Although* we left late, we arrived on time.
- The accident occurred *because of* fast driving.

Table 4: Pretest error of defining the textual functions of discourse markers

- He attended a driving class. *Obviously*, he can drive well.
- *Actually*, there are two reasons why John does not like mathematics.
- You should have gone to Australia, *you know*, it has splendid landmarks.

- We should celebrate. After all, it is her birthday.
- Where can I find the post office? Well, it is opposite the bank.
- *Anyway*, I have to walk for an interview.
- *I mean*, we should handle it seriously.
- You know, he talks about the history of England.

As for the post test, the experimental group had higher performance than that of the control group with the mean score of 40.27 compared to 16.30 for the control group. The experimental group better performance was also evident in the minimum and maximum scores (10–22 vs. 27–48) and the values of standard deviation (6.12 vs. 3.09). That is, there was more variance in the experimental group score compared to that of the control group. The control group performances in the pretest and the posttest indicate statistical insignificance as the  $p$  was  $> 0.05$ . However, the experimental group performances in the pretest and posttest were statistically significant as the  $p$  value was  $< 0.05$ . Similarly, the experimental group performance in the posttest was statistically significant compared to that of the control group as the  $p$  value was  $< 0.05$  according to the Independent Samples T-Test (Table 5).

**Table 5: Independent Samples T-Test**

	N	M Gain score	SD	DF	t-value	Sig.
Control	40	1.32	0.78	39	18.95	0.000
Experimental	40	23.47	3.57	39		

The experimental group participants became more aware of the difference between the syntactic and textual function of the examined discourse markers. They were able to define the syntactic functions of markers like *since*, *unless*, *although*, *so*, *unlike*, and *because of*. They realized that these discourse markers function as conjunction and their omission changes the meanings of the examined sentences. In addition, the experimental group participants managed to define the textual functions of the examined discourse markers such as *I mean*, *actually*, *anyway*, *well*, *you know*, *after all*, and *obviously*. They realized that the omission of these discourse markers does not change the meaning of the examined sentences. Although the performance of the control group participants slightly improved in the posttest compared to the pretest, they largely lagged behind their experimental group counterparts.

## **Discussion, TEFL implications and conclusion**

### **1. Why should linguistics be pedagogically oriented in the Egyptian FL context?**

The process of teaching English in Egypt should be entwined to pedagogy at different educational stages and all fields of specialization. This emanates from the fact that English in Egypt is taught to non-native speakers of English even to those who are majoring in English. The teaching of pedagogically oriented linguistics to the Egyptian EFL learners will help eliminate and improve the interlanguage output of those learners be it syntactic, phonetic, phonological or semantic. The pedagogically oriented linguistics will make Egyptian EFL learners aware of the linguistic differences between their mother tongue and target language. Such awareness ensures the improvement of their linguistic output. This is evident from the improvement of the proper usage of discourse markers based on the ability to differentiate between the syntactic and textual functions of such markers. In addition, the process of teaching English in Egypt differs from those in countries like Malaysia and Singapore where the researcher had been for more than a decade. On the contrary to Malaysia and Singapore, English is used in Egypt as a medium of communication on narrow scales. Meanwhile, in these countries

English is used for communicative interaction on wide scales; everywhere people can communicate in English.

For the purpose of teaching FL discourse markers, Egyptian EFL instructors should make their students aware of the different discourse markers. This end can be attained through reading and conversation activities. In this case, students could be asked to define/determine the occurrence of these discourse markers in reading passages or in conversation. Following this activity, the EFL instructors can discuss with their students the effectiveness of using those discourse markers in the formal written text and informal spoken conversation. In another activity, student could be trained to match discourse markers with their meanings. The EFL instructors can use the discrete-point exercises like fill-in-the-spaces using appropriate discourse markers to train their students on the proper usage of such markers. The EFL instructors can also provide their students with a list of discourse markers and ask them to use such markers in writing a few sentences. Then, students can exchange their written sentences with their peers in order to discuss their written output. The EFL instructors can ask their students to write paragraphs on certain topics using at least three discourse markers in each paragraph.

**2. How do the control and experimental groups generally use the discourse markers in the pretest?**

The performance of both groups in the pretest was commonly marked with errors in defining and explaining the syntactic and textual functions of the examined discourse markers. The participants of both groups failed to differentiate between these two functions of the discourse markers. They could not realize that conjunctions have syntactic functions as discourse markers and their omission fully changes the meanings of such sentences. Likewise, they were unable to determine the textual functions of discourse markers like *I mean, actually, anyway, well, you know, after all, and obviously*. They were not aware that the omission of such markers would not affect the meanings of the examined sentences. The poor performance of both groups in the pretest highlights the need for making the Egyptian EFL learners aware of the theoretical linguistic rule. Thus, it is the role of FL instructors to select, devise and implement communicative activities that sustains the Egyptian EFL learners' awareness and comprehension of such rules.

### 3. What is the difference between the control and experimental groups in the posttest?

On the contrary to the pretest, the experimental group participants had better performance compared to the control group participants. This is attributed to their awareness of the theoretical linguistic rules concerning the classification of different function types of the discourse markers. Their awareness was largely sustained due to the pedagogically-oriented linguistics perspective through which they were taught the distinction between the syntactical and textual functions of the FL discourse markers. The different activities of pedagogically-oriented linguistics had helped them achieve higher scores in the discourse markers test compared to their control group counterparts. For example, they were able to define the textual functions of *I mean, actually, anyway, well, you know, after all, and obviously*. They also managed to define and explain the syntactic functions of *since, while, unlike, so, unless, although and because of*. Meanwhile, the control group's performance in the posttest did not improve from that in the pretest. This is attributed to the fact that they did not have the same theoretical linguistic knowledge which was provided to their experimental group counterparts. Findings of the present study conforms those reported by

(Seiffedin and El-Sakka, 2017, Chen, 2018, Al-khazraji, 2019, and Uba and Souidi, 2020). However, they contradict those reported by (Pourdana, et al. (2021).

**4. Is there a statistically significant difference between the performances of both groups in the posttest?**

The experimental group's performance was verified as statistically significant compared to that of their control group counterparts. This statistical significance highlights the importance of the implemented pedagogical linguistics perspective in teaching FL linguistic rules to the Egyptian EFL learners. It helped the experimental group participants improve their performance in using the FL discourse markers.

**Recommendations for further research**

The current study provides the following recommendations for further research:

1. The present study is replicable using other linguistic components such as the Egyptian EFL learners' phonological and grammatical skills.
2. A replicable study can be carried out to investigate the pedagogically-oriented linguistic performance of Egyptian EFL learners according to their social variables such as gender and socio-economic status.

3. The pedagogically-oriented linguistic performance of Egyptian EFL undergraduates can also be examined in terms of the theory of acculturation.
4. The present study is also replicable in terms of examining the impact of various learning styles adopted by Egyptian EFL learners on their pedagogically-oriented performance.
5. The design of FL curricula to the Egyptian EFL undergraduates can be investigated based on the perspective of pedagogical linguistics.
6. The Egyptian EFL undergraduates' pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic competence can also be investigated according to the perspective of pedagogical linguistics.

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## **Appendix A**

### **The Discourse Markers Test**

**In the sentences below, define the syntactic and textual functions of the discourse markers typed in italic and account for your answer. The total mark is 50 with two marks per each sentence:**

**1 *Since* January, it has rained every now and then.**

1. We should celebrate. *After all*, it is her birthday.

2. She looks *similar* to my sister.

3. I believe in fairness. *Equally*, I believe in practicality.

4. *You know*, he talks about the history of England.

5. You should read *while* doing that.

6. Jack does not want to go. *On the other hand*, he does not want to stay.

7. Malaysia is famous of its humid weather, *unlike* England which is known for its cold weather.

8. Nancy won't eat. *Consequently*, she will lose weight.
9. *I mean*, we should handle it seriously.
10. The lawyer will not go to the court, *unless* he is paid in advance.
11. There was a terrible accident, *so* we were late.
12. She did not go *after all*.
13. The article was *so* good *that* Sam read it a second time.
14. John closed his eyes. *So*, he missed the bird.
15. *Although* we left late, we arrived on time.
16. *Anyway*, I have to walk for an interview.
17. Jack likes to walk. *Conversely*, John likes to ride.
18. You should have gone to Australia, *you know*, it has splendid landmarks.
19. Where can I find the post office? *Well*, it is opposite the bank.
20. It sounds *like* a good idea.
21. *Actually*, there are two reasons why John does not like mathematics.
22. The accident occurred *because of* fast driving.
23. He attended a driving class. *Obviously*, he can drive well.
24. The shops have been closed all day. *Thus*, we could not go shopping.