Exploring the Linguistic and the Discourse-pragmatic Functions of Arabic Yaʕni in a Novel Context of Language Use

By

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ABSTRACT

Yaʕni ‘lit. he/it signifies/means/intends’ is an arising linguistic and discourse-pragmatic phenomenon in many varieties and speech situations of spoken Arabic. Yet, the few scholarly investigations yaʕni has received come from restricted and limited contexts of language use. The primary aims of this dissertation were to, first, expand and broaden research on Arabic yaʕni into novel contexts of language use and to, second, explore the linguistic and the discourse-pragmatic functions of yaʕni. Therefore, the data used for this dissertation were collected, selected, and analyzed from a sample of spoken data brought from two episodes of a Saudi sports TV show Alkurah Tatakallam ‘lit. the ball speaks.’ The analytical procedures and discussions showed that yaʕni had the following types of linguistic and discourse-pragmatic functions: as (a) a verb, (b) elaboration and turn expansion, (c) repair organization, (d) managing the turn-taking system, (e) alleviation and hedging, (f) marking concessive/contrastive relations, and (g) emphatic yaʕni. The discussions seemed to suggest the gradual solidification of three views: First, there is a suggestion that the categorical status ranging from verb yaʕni to the discourse marker yaʕni can be understood in terms of scalarity, gradience, and prototypicality. Second, there is another suggestion that gradations can also be located between the discourse-pragmatic functions of yaʕni. Third, there is a suggestion that, synchronically and diachronically, yaʕni as a form has been wildly drifting from its categorical verb status, lexical source, propositional meaning, and even its discourse-pragmatic markerhood. The analysis, discussions, and suggestions invoked the idea of bridging context(s) related to the categorical status and the discourse-pragmatic functions of yaʕni. This categorical status of yaʕni puts the binary distinction between conceptual
meaning and procedural meaning of relevance theory, and the studies of yaʕni following such a binary distinction, into question since this distinction seemed blurry. The bridging context(s) seemed to support the gradualness and the directionality of the evolution of DMs. Therefore, the categorical and discourse-pragmatic behavior of yaʕni seems to have support from the hypothesis and theories such as grammaticalization and pragmatization. It seems also that the historical development of yaʕni can be discussed in terms of the hypothesis and theories of idiomaticization and phraseology.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

All praise and thanks are due to Allah for giving me health, strength, patience, and many other blessings to reach the completion of my graduate studies and to finish my doctoral journey and my doctoral dissertation. I am also grateful for the two important people in my life, who nurtured me and pushed me significantly during good and difficult times. My parents’ words of prayers, encouragement, and the teachings to pursue knowledge are resonating in every aspect of my life.

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<td>DM</td>
<td>Discourse marker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DP</td>
<td>Discourse particle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FAT1</td>
<td>Episode 1 of <em>Fatawa</em> religious TV show</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FAT2</td>
<td>Episode 2 of <em>Fatawa</em> religious TV show</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FP</td>
<td>Final particle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIFA</td>
<td>Fédération Internationale de Football Association (the International Federation of Football)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GPSRI</td>
<td>General Presidency of Scholarly Research and Ifta</td>
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<td>KEP1</td>
<td>Episode 1 of <em>Alkurah Tatakallam</em> sports TV show</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KEP2</td>
<td>Episode 2 of <em>Alkurah Tatakallam</em> sports TV show</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lit.</td>
<td>Literally</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MP</td>
<td>Modal particle</td>
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<tr>
<td>NSM</td>
<td>Natural Semantic Metalanguage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PM</td>
<td>Pragmatic marker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAFF</td>
<td>Saudi Arabian Football Federation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TCU</td>
<td>Turn Construction Unit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TRP</td>
<td>Transition relevance place</td>
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<tr>
<td>TV</td>
<td>Television</td>
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LIST OF GRAMMATICAL GLOSSES

ACT     Active
DEM     Demonstrative
F       Feminine
FUT     Future
M       Masculine
NEG     Negative
REL     Relative
PASS    Passive
S       Singular
3       3rd person
The transliteration conventions used in this dissertation are adopted from the *Encyclopedia of Arabic Language and Linguistics* (EALL; Versteegh, 2006, p.viii) with minor modifications adapted from the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA). The following table illustrates the used transliteration conventions.

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<th>Examples</th>
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<td>ء، همزة/glottal stop</td>
<td>ء</td>
<td>ءšya ‘things’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ب</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>bukrarah ‘tomorrow’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ت</td>
<td>t</td>
<td>taššliim ‘education’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ث</td>
<td>th</td>
<td>miththal ‘example’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ج</td>
<td>j</td>
<td>jamiiil ‘beautiful’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ح</td>
<td>h</td>
<td>muḥhammi ‘lawyer’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>خ</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>xamsa ‘five’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>د</td>
<td>d</td>
<td>duktur ‘doctor’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ذ</td>
<td>ẓ</td>
<td>ṭstaad ‘mister’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ر</td>
<td>r</td>
<td>ramz ‘code’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ز</td>
<td>z</td>
<td>fuz ‘win’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>س</td>
<td>s</td>
<td>ṭsasi ‘basic’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ش</td>
<td>š</td>
<td>mašruuss ‘project’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ص</td>
<td>š</td>
<td>šut ‘vote’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ض/ط</td>
<td>ź</td>
<td>zalaam ‘dark’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ط</td>
<td>ẓ</td>
<td>źawil ‘tall; long’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ع</td>
<td>ū</td>
<td>latšib ‘player’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>غ</td>
<td>ḡ</td>
<td>ġarib ‘strange’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ف</td>
<td>f</td>
<td>fariq ‘team/club’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ق</td>
<td>q</td>
<td>qalb ‘heart’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ك</td>
<td>k</td>
<td>kurah ‘ball’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ل</td>
<td>l</td>
<td>rajul ‘man’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>م</td>
<td>m</td>
<td>najm ‘star’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ن</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>samah ‘year’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ه</td>
<td>ḥ</td>
<td>hadaf ‘goal’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>و</td>
<td>w</td>
<td>waraqa ‘paper’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ي</td>
<td>y</td>
<td>yimkin ‘probably’</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shadda</td>
<td></td>
<td>diqqah ‘accuracy’</td>
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<td>Short vowels</td>
<td>a, i, u</td>
<td>qalb ‘heart’</td>
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<td>Long vowels</td>
<td>aa, ii, uu</td>
<td>zalaam ‘dark’</td>
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TRANSCRIPTION CONVENTIONS

Transcription conventions were adapted from Jefferson (2004) with a few additions and modifications.

(.) Pauses

= Equal sign marks latched talk when used between two contributions of turns by two different speakers. The equal sign also marks a continuation of talk/turn by one speaker

. Final intonation

, Continuing intonation

↑ Rise in intonation

↓ Drop in intonation

? Questioning intonation

Underlining Emphasis/stress

- A hyphen indicates an abrupt interruption/abrupt in talk/speech

# Creaky voice

yaʕni Bold and italics indicate the analyzed instances of yaʕni

ya::ʕni:: Colons mark elongated speech and/or a stretched sound

[ ] Square brackets mark overlapped speech

.hh Audible inhalation

hhh laughter in speech/talk

… Three dots indicate either previous and/or following deleted talk/speech

(( )) Transcriber’s/researcher’s comment
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Well, the little words are often the most interesting. (Innes, 2010, p. 95)

Discourse markers (henceforth, DMs) are linguistic units that are ubiquitously used in almost all dimensions of either spontaneous unplanned spoken discourse or even pre-planned spoken discourse. Because of this ubiquity, DMs have raised ambiguity that is particularly noticeable on several multi-levels: starting with the grammatical, semantic, and pragmatic levels, and ending with the social, discourse, and historical levels. Different methodologies (e.g., conversation analysis and variational sociolinguistics) have been used and different approaches have been proposed (e.g., discourse coherence and relevance theory) in order to understand the linguistic status of such linguistic units/items. Therefore, it may come as no surprise that the analytical work to which sociolinguistic and discourse analytic approaches have found entrance are manifold (Aijmer & Simon-Vandenbergen, 2011; Fischer, 2006c).

DMs have been investigated cross-linguistically in typologically different languages and language varieties, however with English still sitting on the top of the languages that have been largely examined (Aijmer and Simon-Vandenbergen, 2011). This field has attracted more recent scholarly attention cross-linguistically, including Chinese (Feng, 2008; Wang, & Tsai, 2005), Catalan (Cuenca & Marin, 2009; González, 2004), Spanish (Cuenca & Marin, 2009; Koike, 1996), Dominican Spanish (Roggia, 2012), and Ojibwe (Fairbanks, 2009; 2016). With a recent slowly growing interest from Arabic (e.g., Alkholani, 2010; Marmorstein, 2016; Rieschild, 2011), the linguistic and discourse analytic views of Arabic DMs have scarcely fed the enormous available
literature on DMs. This means that a large number of what qualify as DMs remain largely un(der)explored.

In this dissertation, a linguistic and discourse-pragmatic phenomenon in spoken Arabic—this is Arabic yaʕni – is fundamentally targeted. The proliferation of yaʕni in many varieties and speech situations of spoken Arabic cannot be underestimated. This linguistic and discourse-pragmatic phenomenon cannot even go unnoticed, putting yaʕni among the most salient and most commonly used linguistic element in spoken Arabic. Interestingly enough, nowadays, the proliferation of yaʕni has surpassed the confines of spoken discourse to appear frequently used in the new forms of social written communications such as instant messaging and chatting using Short Message Service (SMS), WhatsApp, Twitter, Facebook, and the like. The linguistic and discourse-pragmatic phenomenology of this element has caused scholarly attraction within the past 20 years or so. Although the Arabic linguistic form, yaʕni, is frequently used in spoken and spontaneous Arabic talk/discourse and is observed across several varieties of Arabic and across a myriad of speech contexts and situations, our theoretical understanding and the methodological and practical/applied aspects of relevance to the linguistic and discourse-pragmatic use of this element are still in their initial stages given the very scant and sprinkled amount of empirical research and investigations that have been conducted on this linguistic and discourse-pragmatic element. Ultimately, this dissertation was initiated and progressed based on my general belief that previous research just scratched the surface of this frequent and extremely robust, yet highly elusive and multifunctional, linguistic and discourse-pragmatic element. The following sections and chapters of this
dissertation will obviously substantiate my aforementioned scholarly belief of Arabic 
yafa'ni.

In this dissertation, a synthesis of previous research on yafa'ni is offered. This
synthesis details how this linguistic and discourse-pragmatic element was approached,
including theoretical and methodological frameworks and in what kinds of speech
settings and contexts. An outcome of this synthesis was to promote and propose yafa'ni as
an arising Arabic linguistic and discourse-pragmatic phenomenon that received very little
research in very few contexts of language use compared to similar linguistic and
discourse-pragmatic phenomena cross-linguistically (e.g., like in English). Such a
synthesis of research and phenomenological promotion, I believe, are very useful and
timely. Consequently, the aim was to expand research on this Arabic linguistic and
discourse-pragmatic phenomenon into novel contexts of spoken Arabic. In addition, the
aim was to explore the linguistic and discourse-pragmatic functions of yafa'ni in these
novel contexts of language use. More specifically, in this dissertation, descriptive,
qualitative, empirical linguistic and discourse-pragmatic functional explorations are
offered on a segment of data collected from two episodes of a Saudi Arabian sports TV
show, the name of which is Alkurah Tatakallam ‘lit. the ball speaks.’

The Quest for Terminology

Before proceeding further in this dissertation, an important note regarding the
choice, the preference, and the use of terminology is in demand at this point. Numerous
terms and labels have been proposed to refer to and to classify the class of DMs. As most
recently commented on by Fedriani & Sansó (2017a), Brinton (2017), Beeching (2016),
and Degand et al. (2013b), these terms and labels reflect a complexity in this field of
linguistic and discourse-pragmatic research. Again, as observed by Fedriani & Sansó (2017b), Brinton (2017), Beeching (2016), and Degand et al. (2013b), this complexity is a result of primarily two issues that originate in the field: The first issue is the hugeness of the amount of literature that has been vastly developing in the field. The second issue concerns the numerous number of approaches, methodologies, and directions that have been used to investigate DMs.

Which term or label to select to appropriately designate the linguistic and the discourse-pragmatic behavior of the target of research in this dissertation has been a process that can be described in terms of challenge, competition, and terminological quest. The linguistic and the discourse-pragmatic behavior of the target of this dissertation could easily carry the functional itineraries known and designated for at least a number of currently competing and contested terms in the literature such as **pragmatic markers** (PMs), **discourse markers** (DMs), and **modal particles** (MPs).

With the aforementioned terms in mind, it was better to use the term **discourse marker** as a cover term specifically for the discourse-pragmatic functional aspects of *yaʕni* in contrast to the canonical and formal category of the verb *yaʕni* found in this dissertation. The choice of this terminology is similar to that of Jucker and Ziv (1998), Schourup (1999), Dér (2010), Maschler (2009; 2017), Bolly et al. (2017), and Crible (2017), to name just few earlier and most recent treatments that adopted, defended, and advocated such selection and preference of terminology by the following reasons: The term DM is the most popular and the most commonly and conveniently used one in the literature to refer to this functional class of this linguistic and discourse-pragmatic elements, of course, with no pejorative connotations associated with other terms and
labels such as *fumble* or *filler*. The choice of this term is also not associated with restricted theoretical or prescriptive orientations. To this extent, it is sufficient to introduce the selection of terminology that designate the discourse-pragmatic roles of *yaʕni*. The literature review in Chapter Two expands the discussion and justifications on the terminological issues.

**Objectives and Research Questions**

The best way to understand the goals of this dissertation is to view the following points and aims in a sequence and consequence fashion in which the following goals flow from the preceding ones. Therefore, this dissertation has the following aims:

- This dissertation brings together a synthesis for the existing and sparse literature on *yaʕni*;

- An outcome of the synthesis is the proposal of *yaʕni* as a linguistic and discourse-pragmatic phenomenon in spoken Arabic, which I call Arabic *yaʕni*, that needs more scholarly attention, collaboration and more research from different perspectives and data sources of language use in order to understand the reality of this linguistic and discourse-pragmatic element as well as to provide implications, reflections, and challenges of relevance for the Arabic linguistic literature related to theoretical, methodological, and practical/applied aspects;

- Another outcome of the synthesis is to point out the limited contexts and settings where Arabic *yaʕni* has been investigated, specifically data coming from interviews including, sociolinguistic and workplace interviews, and data coming from conversational settings with friends and acquaintances;
• Therefore, this dissertation expands research and exploration on Arabic yaʕni into novel speech contexts, which should enrich different aspects of our knowledge and understanding of this highly frequent, yet extremely un(der)explored, linguistic and discourse-pragmatic element in spoken Arabic discourse;

The investigation of the linguistic and the discourse-pragmatic roles of Arabic yaʕni in this dissertation flows from the following research questions:

• Linguistic category: What is the linguistic categorical status of Arabic yaʕni in the data segment selected for analysis in this dissertation?

• Functional: What kinds of functions does Arabic yaʕni fulfill in the data segment selected for analysis in this dissertation?

• Distributional: What kinds of functional distributional patterns does Arabic yaʕni exhibit in the data segment selected for analysis in this dissertation?

• Contextual: What kinds of contextual factors might have potential influence on the use and the functional distribution of Arabic yaʕni in the data segment selected for analysis in this dissertation?

Significance

A close review of linguistic research on Arabic DMs shows that research and knowledge of DMs as an essential linguistic and interactional component of oral communication and language use is still in its infancy in Arabic contexts compared to the widely acknowledged and largely established traditions of research in North America and Europe. Research on DMs coming from Arabic perspectives is still in its beginning. This beginning is an indication that Arabic investigations of DMs have not yet fed the enormous documented flow of contributions (Pons Porderia, 2006) that have turned the
study of such linguistic units into a “growth industry” (Brinton, 2017, p.1; Fraser, 1999, p.932) deserving separate entries in comprehensive treatments such as *The Handbook of Pragmatics* (Horn and Ward, 2008), *Handbook of Pragmatics* (Verschueren et al., 2000), *Discursive Pragmatics* (Zienkowski et al., 2011), and *The Handbook of Discourse Analysis* (2001; 2015), not to forget mentioning the highly comprehensive volume of *Approaches to Discourse Particles* (Fischer, 2006a), and the most recent monographs such as Fedriani & Sansó (2017b) and Degand et al. (2013b), where different approaches, methodologies, and typologically diverse range of languages have been examined, not including any single reference to Arabic or any of its language varieties. It is also important to highlight that the most comprehensive and recently published *Encyclopedia of Arabic Language and Linguistics* (Versteegh, 2006) contains no reference and/or specific entry relevant for this functional class of words, except references and entries for *connectives* (Kammensjö, 2006) and *conjunctions* (Waltisberg, 2006). Consequently, the linguistic and discourse-pragmatic behaviors of numerous Arabic DMs linguistically and frequently used in various contexts and Arabic language varieties have remained largely un(der)explored.

There are few chronologically scattered investigations of what can be seen as Arabic DMs (e.g., Alkhalil, 2005; Alkholani, 2010; Ghobrial, 1993; Marmorstein, 2016; Rieschild, 2011). Presentative particles (e.g., *yom* ‘when’) found in some research traditions informed by anthropological, ethnographic, and folkloristic research focusing primarily on the Bedouin traditional narratives or the Bedouin ‘salfah’ genre of narrative (Ingham, 1993; Sowayan, 1992, 1996) might share something in common with the scholarship on DMs in the Western literature. Yet, studies of DMs as linguistic elements
organizing and structuring discourse as well as delivering pragmatic meaning related to
delivering illocutionary force, emotive expressive load, and interlocutors interactional
movements are still virgin to scholarly investigations. Additionally, the synchronicity, the
particularity, and the specific contextuality of such research and scholarship are
significant factors motivating the current project of investigating the use of DMs in data
drawn from novel contexts of language use.

The study of linguistic items/units such as DMs is still flourishing and thriving in
Arabic as well as cross-linguistically. The current study is one attempt to provide some
cross-linguistic and substantial knowledge of significance and relevance to the linguistic
and discourse-pragmatic functions of Arabic DMs functioning in talk-in-interaction. The
current study of yaʕni in an Arabic context will provide the literature with significant
cross-linguistic views of importance for the theoretical sides and the historical aspects of
DMs. This study adds to the very sporadic and handful literature on Arabic DMs.

From a methodological side, the investigations of spoken Arabic, in general, and
specific elements of spoken language such as DMs, in particular, can be easily seen in
terms of scarcity and paucity. The lack of available and accessible Arabic corpora that
can serve linguistic inquiries about spontaneous non-preplanned spoken language might
be one possible reason for the significant dearth of investigations on DMs in Arabic
contexts. What the current study shows is that TV programs, specifically programs that
feature talk shows, can be a useful resource of spoken naturalistic data that reflect the
spoken linguistic elements and underlying spoken linguistic machinery used in everyday
interactional contexts including DMs.
Furthermore, the study of DMs gains more currency and significance when thinking about the implications and applications in which the findings can be disseminated. Besides thinking of intercultural and intracultural pragmatics, issues of pragmatics and second language learning, and issues of translating and rendering DMs across languages, the study of DMs is taking a new turning point in developing the pragmatic competence and/or the communicative competence of importance to robotic communications, i.e. robotic-robotic, human-robotic, or robotic-human communications, and the emergent technological applications such as Apple’s Siri available on Apple devices (Herring, 2016). Interestingly enough, scholars of discourse analysis and pragmatics interested in robotic and machinelike communications are not only concerned with encoding and programming standard languages in such emergent contexts; they are also advocating research that look into novel contexts of language use (Herring, 2016) through which robots and applications can use, exchange, and recognize procedural linguistic elements such as DMs in combination with prosody and multimodal patterns disseminated from linguistic and discourse analytic research. Therefore, research on DMs and delineating their discourse and pragmatic functions accompanied by contextual features are initial scholarly movements for encoding and programming such applications and robotic communications to use, exchange, and recognize the various functions of DMs.

Expanding and exploring DMs in new arenas of language use have been generally and highly encouraged in the most recent literature (Aijmer, 2002; 2013; Aijmer and Simon-Vandenbergen, 2011; Fedriani & Sansó, 2017b; Fox Tree, 2010; Fuller, 2003; Innes, 2010; Schiffrin and Maschler, 2015). The extensive scholarly interest in
researching and investigating DMs has advanced the scholarship on these linguistic and discourse-pragmatic elements into novel contexts, situations, registers, and settings of language use. The outcomes of such research and scholarship have significantly enriched the theoretical background and the methodological aspects of relevance to DMs, reaching to the applied and practical implications. Of considerable importance is that the pursuit of investigating DMs in novel contexts of language use has brought new theoretical questions and methodological issues into the foreground. To put it more precisely, the advantages of expanding research and scholarship especially on DMs and the move of this dissertation to share such views related to the examination of Arabic ʔaʔni add to the significance of the current dissertation. As noted in a number of scholarly work (Aijmer, 2002; 2013; Aijmer and Simon-Vandenbergen, 2011; Fedriani & Sansó, 2017b; Fox Tree, 2010; Fuller, 2003; Innes, 2010; Schiffrin and Maschler, 2015), such advantages might include:

- To broaden our knowledge and understanding of these linguistic and discourse-pragmatic elements;

- To motivate methodological issues, challenges, questions, and conundrums that need navigation, (e.g., annotating DMs in corpora; annotating discourse-pragmatic functions; including/excluding contextual factors influencing the behavior of DMs).

- To discover new and unconsidered linguistic and discourse-pragmatic functions that can be added and documented in dictionary entries. Such added dictionary entries can enrich the ongoing lexicographical efforts that benefit future inquiries and scholarship related to DMs;
• To provide and develop the theoretical aspects related to research on DMs, (e.g., definitions and defining characteristics of DMs and the historical developments of DMs).

• To motivate and provide practical/applied implications/outcomes or issues, challenges, questions, and conundrums of relevance to research on DMs, (e.g., teaching and learning (pedagogical); interpretation and translation of DMs in highly sensitive speech situations such as court (Innes, 2010).

**Overview of the Dissertation Chapters**

This dissertation has the following structure: Chapter Two presents a general literature review of DMs. The review includes an overview of the research field of DMs and introduces and discusses the widely acknowledged defining features of DMs reported in the literature. The review, then, sheds light on traditional issues related to the research field of DMs. The review proceeds to show research on DMs in Arabic contexts with a special focus on the available literature on yaʕni. Chapter Three presents the data collected, selected, and analyzed for the study of yaʕni in this dissertation. Chapter Three also provides details about the heuristics, the methods, and the analytical procedures used to investigate the linguistic and the discourse-pragmatic functions of yaʕni. Chapter Four offers a qualitative and functional analysis, findings, and discussions related to the linguistic and the discourse-pragmatic functions of yaʕni. Chapter Five is a conclusion with a summary of the analysis, the findings, and the discussions that accumulated in this dissertation. As a final step in this dissertation, Chapter Five offers suggestions and directions for further research related to Arabic DMs as well as Arabic yaʕni.
There are two main goals in this chapter. First, the chapter presents a general literature review about DMs with discussions related to both the most traditional and up-to-date aspects in research and scholarship on these linguistic elements. Second, the chapter offers a review for the Arabic research and scholarship on elements equivalent to DMs with narrowing down the review to highlight the discourse-pragmatic phenomenology of Arabic ِyaʕni and to remark the dearth of available scholarly research on this linguistic and discourse-pragmatic element.

DMs in the Literature

A Bird’s-Eye View of the Literature on DMs

Research on DMs has tremendously expanded in the last four decades (Aijmer, 2002; Aijmer and Simon-Vandenbergen, 2011; Brinton, 2017; Fedriani & Sansó, 2017a; Fischer, 2006c; Schiffrin and Maschler, 2015; Schourup, 1999). This bulk of research produced a wide number of heterogeneous (Fischer, 2006a, c; Jucker and Ziv, 1998; Schourup, 1999), sometimes combined into complementary (González, 2004), theoretical frameworks, approaches, and methodologies that complicated the task of grouping and bringing them under one overview article or even one scholarly monograph (Aijmer and Simon-Vandenbergen, 2011; Fedriani & Sansó, 2017b; Fischer, 2006c). It also seems that the recent competing efforts and developing definitions, understandings, and conceptualizations of DMs and MPs (Degand et al., 2013a), DMs and final particles (FPs; Hancil et al., 2015), and PMs, DMs, and MPs (Fedriani & Sansó, 2017b) have complicated the task of defining, describing, and categorizing DMs and the task of unifying this field of research as a whole.
In the introduction of one of the most influential edited monographs on DMs, Fischer (2006c, p.1) described the study of DMs, DPs in her terminology, as follows:

There are very many studies of discourse particles on the market, and by now it is almost impossible to find one’s way through the jungle of publications. For a newcomer to the field, it is furthermore often difficult to find the bits and pieces that constitute an original model of meanings and functions of discourse particles. Moreover, the studies available so far are hardly comparable: the approaches vary with respect to very many different aspects: the language(s) under consideration, the items taken into account, the terminology used, the functions considered, the problems focused on, and the methodologies employed. (emphasis is mine)

The approaches ranged from “synchronic and diachronic, formal and informal” to “approaches building on text-linguistic models; models of general cognitive processing or interactively relevant domains of discourse; as well as approaches concentrating on syntactic, semantic, pragmatic, or prosodic aspects” (Fischer, 2006c, p.1).

As a result of the heterogeneity and the complexities associated with this field of research, it is not unusual in the literature of DMs to find descriptions such as “fuzzy concept” (Jucker and Ziv, 1998, p.2; also see Cuenca, 2013; Degand et al., 2013b), “unclear term” (Aijmer and Simon-Vandenbergen, 2011, p.224), “complex” (Fedriani & Sansó, 2017a, p.5), “tricky” (Aijmer and Simon-Vandenbergen, 2011, p.226), “anomalous” (Cuenca, 2013, p.212), “notoriously difficult to describe” (Fischer, 2006b, p.247), and “elusive” (Brinton, 2017, p.2; Blakemore, 2008, p.225; Fedriani & Sansó, 2017a, p.1), to name but a few. Nevertheless, DMs are widely acknowledged as “precious cues” (Bazzanella, 2006, p.494), “a fundamental part of oral fluency” (Beeching, p.4), “pragmatically essential” (Brinton, 2017, p.6), and “highly important items” (Lenk, 1998, p.203) that play sophisticated functional roles on multifaceted levels of discourse (Schiffrin and Maschler, 2015).
Much of the work and knowledge base that have richly accumulated over the last 30 years or so in the field of PMs/DMs is undergoing substantial and critical scholarly rethinking, revisions, reflections, and reassessments leading into updates and (updated) mappings on several levels related to research and examination of PMs/DMs (e.g., Brinton, 2017; Degand et al., 2013a; Fedriani & Sansó, 2017a). Despite the extensive body of literature and research on DMs and the ongoing scholarly efforts of rethinking, revisions, reflections, and reassessments, Diewald (2013, p. 22) commented that the “situation [of researching, defining, describing, and categorizing DMs] has not changed since then.” Notwithstanding the spectrum of approaches, the richness of research, and the variability of theoretical frameworks and methodologies, several areas remain dilemmatic including, according to Fedriani & Sansó, (2017a), Brinton (2017), Degand et al. (2013a), Dé r (2010), Fischer (2006c), Jucker and Ziv (1998), and Schourup (1999):

- Defining DMs and describing their definitional characteristics;
- The categorization of DMs under one lexical, functional, or grammatical class;
- The terminology used to refer to the class of DMs;
- The differentiation between DMs and other resembling functional word classes;
- Functions, number of functions, and the functional realms of DMs;
- The sociolinguistic aspects that might impact the use of DMs;
- The pathways or lines of historical developments and the processes of language change that might account for the evolution and the development of DMs.
Quiet recently, Fedriani & Sansó (2017a) postulated the following, eventually hedged and conditioned, conceptualizations of the functional class of PMs, DMs, and MPs:

We intend PMs as markers of functions belonging to the domains of social and interpersonal cohesion (the hearer-speaker relationship, the social identity of H and S, the type of social act performed; e.g. *please, danke, if I may interrupt*, etc.) and DMs as strategies ensuring textual cohesion (discourse planning, discourse managing; e.g. utterance initial usages of *but, anyway, still*, etc.). The term MP, on the other hand, has a longer and better-established tradition, indicating a closed class of items that participate in a paradigm as signals of the speaker’s evaluation of the information status of his/her utterance (e.g. German *ja, eben, doch*, etc.).

Reading and digesting the above conceptualizations of PMs, DMs, and MPs\(^1\) red-flags specific challenges related to the categorical status and the functional spectrum of the target of this dissertation, Arabic *yaʕni*. Accordingly, the task of building a review of the literature, a theoretical framework, or a methodology becomes more dilemmaic when considering the linguistic and the discourse-pragmatic functions and the behavior of an element, like Arabic *yaʕni*. Apparently, Arabic *yaʕni* could crisscross the above intended, yet operational and conditioned (Fedriani & Sansó, 2017a), terminological choices and conventions, categorical boundaries and distinctions, and defining characteristics and conceptualizations between PMs, DMs, MPs, and FPs (Degand et al., 2013a; Fedriani & Sansó, 2017a; Hancil et al., 2015; see also *inter alia* Aijmer, 2002; 2013; Brinton, 1996; 2008; 2010; 2017; Fraser, 1988; 1990; 1996; 1999; 2006; 2009; Schiffrin, 1987; 2006).

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\(^1\) Again, PMs refers to *pragmatic markers*, DMs refers to *discourse markers*, MPs refers to *modal particles*, and FPs refers to *final particles*. 

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The current investigation of *yaʕni* in this dissertation, and accordingly the literature review, is better to be aligned with the literature on PMs/DMs. I abandon any discussions and review related to the class of MPs or FPs for four reasons:

1) Specifically, MPs as a kind of a functional class and as a kind of a formal category has never been introduced into the Arabic scholarly linguistic and discourse-pragmatic literature. Therefore, the status, the relevance, and the existence of MPs is still unknown in Arabic;

2) MPs and FPs share many commonalities and affinities with PMs/DMs (Fedriani & Sansó, 2017a; Hancil et al., 2015). These classes are sometimes even subsumed under the more general classes of PMs/DMs;

3) The linguistic and the discourse-pragmatic behavior of *yaʕni* is better to be viewed in the light of PMs and DMs;

4) The current dissertation departed from the idea that "an inclusive approach to these items is to be preferred to an exclusive one" (Fedriani & Sanso, 2017a, p.2).

The purpose of the following review of literature is by no means to offer a comprehensive theoretical or methodological framework and/or to offer solutions for and engage with “lengthy [and unhelpful] discussions of traditional issues concerning PMs, DMs and MPs” (Fedriani & Sansó, 2017a, p.2), and FPs. Rather, the aim is to, first, produce a flavor that could reflect some reality of the field with the intention to keep readers on track as much as possible and to, second, build a review of literature that should end up with what I would characterize as helpful theoretical and methodological views and formal and functional characteristics that can be integrated for the study of Arabic *yaʕni* in the data collected, selected, and analyzed for this dissertation. Taken into
consideration is the goal of building a review of literature that keeps redundancy into a minimum, of course, considering the huge literature available in the field of research on DMs and other affiliated functional class of linguistic elements. The following starts with introducing and discussing terminologies used to refer to the class of DMs in the literature.

**Terminology**

Linguistic elements known as DMs, e.g. *well, I mean, and you know*, have been called by numerous terminologies. Brinton (1996, p.29; see also Beeching, 2016) compiled and listed a number of terms used to refer to the so-called DMs including:

- comment clause, connective, continuer, discourse connective, discourse-deictic item, discourse operator, discourse particle, discourse-shift marker, discourse word, filler, fumble, gambit, hedge, initiator, interjection marker, marker of pragmatic structure, parenthetic phrase, (void) pragmatic connective, pragmatic expression, pragmatic particle, and reaction signal.

On this plethora of terms (Brinton, 1996), Aijmer (2002, p.2) commented that it seemed that there is “no shortage of candidates” used to refer to this class of linguistic elements. Dér (2010, p.24), who identified forty-two different terms in English alone, added that situations of “terminological chaos” and “terminological maze” are typically encountered in the literature related to such linguistic elements.

Sometimes, one scholar might use different terms to refer to the same investigated discourse-pragmatic phenomenon. Aijmer is one example and Schourup is another. For example, Aijmer (2002) used the term *discourse particle* while she used *pragmatic marker* in her (2006) and (2013) publications. Schourup (1985) used the term *discourse particles* while he used the term *discourse markers* in his (1999) and (2011) scholarly work. Bazanella (1990) used the term *connective* while she used the term *discourse
marker in her (2006) publication. The term discourse marker, however, is still the most commonly used term in the literature to refer to the categorical status and the functional aspects of linguistic items such as you know, I mean, and actually (Brinton, 1996; Dér, 2010; Fischer, 2006b; Jucker and Ziv, 1998; Schourup, 1999).

The literature also showed that some scholars presented a preference and some objections for the use of a term over another (Aijmer, 2002; Beeching, 2016; Fedriani & Sansó, 2017a; Fischer, 2006c; Schourup, 1999). Due to their domination and frequency in the literature, the discussion mostly centered around four labels: discourse marker(s), discourse particle(s), pragmatic marker(s), and pragmatic particle(s) (Brinton, 2017; Dér, 2010; Fedriani & Sansó, 2017a; Fischer, 2006c; Schourup, 1999). The selection of a term over another seems to be influenced by formal, functional, and conceptual and theoretical grounds as well as the heterogeneity either of the source items of DMs or the functions and the functional ranges of DMs (Brinton, 2017; Dér, 2010; Fedriani & Sansó, 2017a; Fischer, 2006c; Schourup, 1999). For instance, although using the term discourse particle in an earlier treatment (Schourup, 1985), Schourup (1999, p.229; also Dér, 2010) preferred the term discourse marker for the following reasons:

1) The term “‘particle’ has traditionally been a syntactic term” that cannot cover the diversity of syntactic classes commonly regarded as DMs;

2) The term particle is usually used to refer to invariable, non-inflecting, monosyllabic, small words like conjunctions and prepositions. Such terminology might risk excluding linguistic elements such as you know and I mean; and

3) Using the term ‘particle’ to refer to elements functioning as ‘discourse markers’ might generate some confusion with a distinct functional and grammatical class of
words found in languages such as German, Dutch, Norwegian, and Chinese because such a term is reserved for a distinct functional and grammatical class of words found in those languages (see Brinton, 1998; Dér, 2010; Fischer, 2006c; Jucker and Ziv, 1998; Degand et al., 2013a).

Brinton (1996; 2017) proposed the term *pragmatic marker* and preferred this term to the other terms she listed. Brinton wrote (1996, p.29-30; 2017):

the term *marker* is preferable to either *word* or *particle* since it can encompass single-word items such as *so* as well as phrases such as *you see*; furthermore *particle* is sometimes reserved for the so-called “modal particles” of German and other languages which may represent a distinct syntactic class. (emphasis in the original).

However, Brinton used the terms *comment clause* (2008) and *discourse marker* (2010) in later publications on the same discourse-pragmatic elements such as *I mean* and *you know*.

Brinton (1996), Fischer (2006b), and Dér (2010) discouraged the use of some terms such as *connective, filler, fumble, or gambit*. The term *connective* was discouraged because it “would associate the whole class with a particular function [connectivity], which would not do justice to the broad range of functions DMs are held to fulfill” (Fischer, 2006b, p.431). *Filler* was discouraged because it indicates a lack of function related to these linguistic items, which are acknowledgely multifunctional. Both *fumble* and *gambit* were discouraged because both terms denote, and therefore are associated with “pejorative connotation” (Brinton, 1996, p.30).

On the other hand, some other scholars such as Jucker and Ziv (1998) selected the term *discourse marker* for its popularity and for purposes of convenience. Jucker and Ziv (1998, p.2) stated that:
We have chosen “discourse marker” as a convenient cover term because it seems to be the one with the widest currency and with the least restricted range of application; one that enables us to include a broad variety of elements under a single conceptual umbrella. There is no prescriptive intention in this terminological choice.

To summarize, numerous labels and terms have been proposed to call the class of DMs. However, the literature shows that there are preferences and inclinations towards some labels and terms over others. Such preferences and inclinations are motivated by several factors including as mentioned earlier: formal, functional, conceptual and theoretical factors. Deciding on one label or a term over another is also influenced by matters related to the categorical source of linguistic items included within the class of DMs and the types of functions or the functional ranges proposed for such linguistic items. The following section will review the characteristic features of DMs starting with discussions related to the difficulty of finding a consensual definition of the class of DMs.

**Characterizing and Delimiting DMs**

To define and characterize DMs is to aim “at the impossible” (Fischer, 2006c, p.1). As alluded to earlier, there is a huge variability in the definitions in terms of DMs. There is also no consensus on the characteristics and/or the number of characteristics that could be used to delimit this functional class. Although the literature shows that these linguistic items challenge any attempt to accurately define them, to group them under one lexical or grammatical category, or to appropriately delineate their discourse-pragmatic functions, some scholars suggest that there are several diagnostic, including formal, functional, and descriptive features that distinguish a DM from the other canonical grammatical and lexical classes such as verbs or adjectives. The literature on DMs has as
many proposals as compared to the variable approaches, definitions, and characterizations. The following reviews some of the suggested characteristics of DMs found in the literature, specifically in Schiffrin (1987), Sankoff et al. (1997), Brinton (1996; 2008; 2010; 2017), and Schourup (1999). Fedriani & Sansó (2017a), Heine (2013), and Dér (2010) advocated similar characteristic features of DMs. The resonance of these proposals in the literature of DMs and their relevance for the analysis of the item under investigation in this dissertation were important factors for selecting and reviewing the properties of DMs proposed by these scholars. The features are usually accompanied with appropriate hedges and tentative suggestions (Jucker and Ziv, 1998). Not surprisingly, such characteristics are far from reaching consensus, and each proposal has received specific kinds of criticism.

Schiffrin’s (1987) approach and treatment of DMs is still one of the most influential (Aijmer and Simon-Vandenbergen, 2011) and sometimes described as the most comprehensive treatment of DMs (Fairbanks, 2016) in the field to date. The influence of Schiffrin’s pioneering work, according to Aijmer and Simon-Vandenbergen (2011, p.224), “can probably not be exaggerated.” Schiffrin (1987) analyzed the following linguistic elements as DMs:

Table 1

*English DMs (Schiffrin, 1987, p.327)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(a) oh, well</th>
<th>(b) and, but, or, so, because</th>
<th>(c) now, then</th>
<th>(d) y’know, I mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(particles)</td>
<td>(conjunctions)</td>
<td>(time deictics)</td>
<td>(lexicalized clauses)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In her initial work, Schiffrin defined DMs as “sequentially dependent elements which bracket units of talk” (1987, p.31), “i.e. nonobligatory utterance initial items that function in relation to ongoing talk and text” (Schiffrin, 2001, p.57; Schiffrin and Maschler, 2015, p.191). By “sequentially dependent elements,” she implied that the linguistic elements she analyzed as DMs are better to be located, analyzed, and discussed on the discourse level rather than sentential (or clausal) level. By “brackets,” she implied that those linguistic elements function to signal the structure of discourse and mark the boundaries of discourse, or what she postulated as “units of talk.” The conception of “units of talk” was intentionally left vague in Schiffrin’s definition. This was justified by the multifunctional behavior of DMs of marking relations on multi-level units of discourse such as speech acts or propositions.

After the initial treatment of DMs in her study, Schiffrin (1987) refined her “operational” definition and ended up with a set of theoretical conditions that would allow a linguistic item to be used as a DM. Schiffrin (1987, p.328) posited a number of “tentative suggestions” for a linguistic element to be considered as a DM:

a. “it has to be syntactically detachable from a sentence
b. it has to be commonly used in initial position of an utterance
c. it has to have a range of prosodic countours (e.g. tonic stress and followed by a pause, phonological reduction)
d. it has to be able to operate at both the local and global levels of discourse, and on different planes of discourse this means that it either has to have no meaning, a vague meaning or to be reflexive (of the language, of the speaker).”
In addition to the characterizations provided by Schiffrin (1987), Sankoff et al. (1997, p.195-197), also summarized in Degand (2013a, p.5-6), presented the following properties for the identification of DMs in their study:

1. “They do not enter the construction syntactically with other elements of the sentence. This property excludes sentence adverbs and conjunctions used with their original semantics.

2. The propositional meaning of the sentence does not depend on their presence.

3. They are subject to semantic bleaching as compared with their source forms.

4. They undergo greater phonological reduction than their source forms.

5. They are articulated as part of smoothly following speech production. This property excludes hesitation markers.”

Brinton (1996, p.32-35) presented a comprehensive list of features for what qualifies a linguistic item to be treated as a DM. The list was abbreviated and reordered in Jucker and Ziv (1998, p.3) and reiterated and widely quoted in the literature such as in Brinton (2008; 2010, p.285-286), González (2004, p.43-44), Aijmer and Simon-Vandenbergen (2011, p.226), and Beeching (2016; p.5-6). The list is presented in table 2.
Table 2

List of Basic Features of Discourse Markers (Brinton, 1996, p.32-35)

- Phonological and lexical features:
  a) They are short and phonologically reduced.
  b) They form a separate tone group.
  c) They are marginal forms and hence difficult to place within a traditional word class.

- Syntactic features:
  d) They are restricted to sentence-initial position.
  e) They occur outside the syntactic structure or they are only loosely attached to it.
  f) They are optional.

- Semantic feature:
  g) They have little or no propositional meaning.

- Functional feature:
  h) They are multifunctional, operating on several linguistic levels simultaneously.

- Sociolinguistic and stylistic features:
  i) They are a feature of oral rather than written discourse and are associated with informality.
  j) They appear with high frequency.
  k) They are stylistically stigmatized.
  l) They are gender specific and more typical of women’s speech.

Schourup (1999, p.230-234), in a detailed overview, outlined a number of characteristics “most commonly attributed to DMs.” These characteristics are presented in the following:

- Connectivity: DMs connect adjacent utterances, ideas, and/or propositions creating discourse-pragmatic relations on a local level. DMs can also function on a global discourse level serving to organize higher units of talk. The feature of connectivity can be related to the classic conceptions of DMs found in coherence-based accounts such as Schiffrin (1987; 2006), Redeker (1990; 2006), and Lenk (1998). The feature of connectivity is also the hallmark of Fraser’s consecutive,

- Optionality: DMs can be seen as optional and moveable on a discourse level; and that the existence or removal of a DM does not affect the truth condition or the (un)grammaticality of the proposition in the sentential level;

- Non-truth-conditionality: DMs are void of lexical meaning and semantics and, therefore, do not add any semantic meaning to the utterance. In relevance-theoretic terms, DMs feature procedural meaning that is instructive for interpreting and comprehending the semantic and pragmatic message and the force of an utterance. The view of DMs from a relevance-theoretic perspective seems worth-pursuing here. Relevance theory (Sperber and Wilson, 1986; 1995) has provided a framework for the analysis and descriptions of DMs. Relevance theory is more cognitively and more semantically oriented towards the process of communication and the interpretation of utterances. That is, the focus is heavily on the meaning and the cognitive and semantic aspects of linguistic units rather than functional aspects. In this framework, utterances are seen to contain two types of linguistic meaning, conceptual meaning and procedural meaning. For example, produced utterances are seen to contain linguistic units that carry conceptual content (e.g. bird) and linguistic units that carry no more than procedural meanings (e.g. but). Informed by assumptions and principles of relevance theory, Blakemore (1987; 2002) has described and discussed a number of linguistic expressions, what she called discourse connectives including: but, nevertheless, however, and well. Within a relevance theoretic approach, DMs are
commonly viewed as linguistic expressions with two features: 1) DMs do not contribute to the truth conditions of an utterance; and 2) DMs encode procedural rather than conceptual meaning. Utterances produced in a context may have several interpretations accessible to the hearer. It is by virtue of this procedural meaning that speakers use DMs to encode procedural constraints that facilitate the hearer’s cognitive processing and reach with minimal cognitive inferential effects to the interpretation of an utterance relevant to the context.

- **Weak clause association:** In sentential levels, DMs are seen as detachable linguistic units that are not fused and fixed in the syntax of a sentence;

- **Initiality:** DMs mostly occur in turn or utterance-initial position; yet, some DMs can occur in utterance-medial position or utterance-final position to signal some specific discourse-pragmatic functions (e.g. *you know*);

- **Orality:** Although found in written forms of discourse, the literature mostly associates DMs with speech data. According to Schourup (1999, p.234), “[c]laims that DMs are allied to speech may only reflect the fact that early work on DMs focused predominantly on conversational items like *well* and *oh.*”

- **Multi-categoriality:** DMs are drawn from different lexical and grammatical categories including conjunctions (e.g. *and, but, or, because*), adverbs (e.g. *now, then*), minor clauses (e.g. *I mean, you know*), interjections (e.g. *oh, gosh*), and verbs (e.g. *look, say, see*).

While Schourup (1999) considered connectivity, optionality, and non-truth-conditionality as critical features of DMs, he regarded the other features, including weak
clause association, initiality, orality, and multi-categoriality, as less critical for the status of DMs.

It is now important to note that there are some agreements as well as some considerable variation between the above sample of proposals in terms of establishing a set of criteria that can be used to distinguish DMs from other grammatical and functional linguistic items. For example, it seems noticeable that there are agreements on characteristics such as:

- Phonologically, DMs tend to be short, reduced, and invariable linguistic units. They are sensitive to aspects of prosody;
- Syntactically, DMs tend to be detachable from the syntactic structure of the utterance. They tend to be optional and moveable in the utterance and in the discourse;
- Semantically, DMs lack semantic and lexical content because of semantic bleaching and gain more of procedural meaning.

Controversies, however, have revolved around the proposed sociolinguistic and stylistic features. For example, Brinton (1996; 2008; 2010) included some sociolinguistic and stylistic features in her list while Schiffrin (1987), Schourup (1999) and Sankoff et al. (1997) did not include such features such as gender-specificity. Subsequent research on DMs has problematized a number of the set of criteria for identifying DMs (Beeching, 2016; Brinton, 2017). Jucker and Ziv (1998) is a case in point. Commenting on the features proposed in the literature, in general, and on Brinton’s (1996) list, in particular, Jucker and Ziv (1998, p.4) stated that these features are “not equally diagnostic” for the class of linguistic items analyzed as DMs. The authors added that only the first three
levels of features in Brinton’s (1996) list provide “the crucial tests.” According to Jucker and Ziv (1998), features on the functional, sociolinguistic, and stylistic levels are mainly descriptive and, subsequently, not principal for identifying a linguistic item as a DM.

Therefore, according to Brinton (2017; also see Fedriani & Sansó, 2017a), subsequent research has made it imperative to revisit and revise most of the above characteristics and proposals. In a most recent publication, Brinton (2017, p.9) provided an updated and revised version of her list with the use of appropriate hedging and qualifications. Table 3 presents Brinton’s (2017, p.9) most recent and updated characteristics.
Table 3

Characteristics of DMs Adapted from Brinton (2017, p.9)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Phonological and lexical characteristics</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(a) DMs are often “small” items, although they may also be phrasal or clausal; they are sometimes phonologically reduced.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) DMs may form a separate tone group, but they may also form a prosodic unit with preceding or following materials.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c) DMs do not constitute a traditional word class, but are most closely aligned to adverbs, conjunctions, or interjections.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Syntactic characteristics</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(d) DMs occur either outside the syntactic structure or loosely attached to it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(e) DMs occur preferentially at clause boundaries (initial/final) but are generally movable and may occur in sentence-medial position as well.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(f) DMs are grammatically optional but at the same time serve important pragmatic functions (and are, in a sense, pragmatically non-optional).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Semantic characteristics</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(g) DMs have little or no propositional/conceptual meaning, but are procedural and non-compositional.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Functional characteristics</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(h) DMs are often multifunctional, having a range of pragmatic functions.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Sociolinguistic and stylistic characteristics</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(i) DMs are predominantly a feature of oral rather than written discourse; spoken and written DMs may differ in form and function.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(j) DMs are frequent and salient in oral discourse.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(k) DMs are stylistically stigmatized and negatively evaluated, especially in written or formal discourse.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(l) DMs may be used in different ways and in different frequencies by men and women.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Classification and Word Class Membership**

It is now commonly viewed that DMs constitute a functional rather than a formal class of words (Aijmer and Simon-Vandenbergen, 2011; Fraser, 2009; Schourup, 1999). It is also important to know, as remarked by Fedriani and Sansó (2017a, p.2), and observed in Jucker and Ziv (1998), Hansen (1998), Maschler (2009), Brinton (2017), and
Aijmer and Simon-Vandenbergen (2011), that membership in this functional class of words is better to be understood in terms of scalarity, prototypicality, degree, and gradience, and that “is generally a matter of degree rather than a yes-or-no question.” Jucker and Ziv (1998), also Hansen (1998), Aijmer and Simon-Vandenbergen (2011), and Fedriani and Sansó (2017a), suggested embracing a prototype approach where membership in the class of DMs is better be conceived in terms of categorical and discourse-pragmatic scalarity. In other words, “elements demonstrating more of the critical features may be taken to be more prototypical members of the class of discourse markers and those showing fewer characteristic properties may be considered more peripheral” (Jucker and Ziv, 1998, p.2-3).

There is little agreement on the forms and number of forms to be considered and classified as DMs (Brinton, 1996; Fedriani & Sansó, 2017a; Fischer, 2006c; Jucker & Ziv, 1998; Schourup, 1999). For example, Schiffrin (1987) included and, or, but, so, now, then, oh, because, well, I mean and you know as DMs in her treatment. However, Fraser (1990; 1996; 1999; 2009) either excluded some prototypical DMs altogether such as well, I mean, and because or provided alternative classifications for linguistic items such as oh and you know. While Schourup (1985) included interjections aha and hey, neither Schiffrin (1987) nor Fraser (1990; 1996; 1999; 2009) included the later mentioned items in their characterizations of DMs.

Although there have been disagreements and objections among scholars, as mentioned earlier, for the linguistic items and the number to be classified as DMs, Brinton (1998, p.32) provided a compilation of exemplary DMs which “have received
detailed scholarly attention […] in Modern English” (see Aijmer, 2002, p.2 for a similar list).

Table 4

Inventory of Discourse Markers in Modern English

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ah</th>
<th>if</th>
<th>right/ all right/ that’s right</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>actually</td>
<td>I mean/ think</td>
<td>so</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>after all</td>
<td>just</td>
<td>say</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>almost</td>
<td>like</td>
<td>sort of/ kind of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and</td>
<td>mind you</td>
<td>then</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and {stuff, things} like that</td>
<td>moreover</td>
<td>therefore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>anyway</td>
<td>now</td>
<td>uh huh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>basically</td>
<td>o.k.</td>
<td>yes/ no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>because</td>
<td>or</td>
<td>you know (y’know)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>but</td>
<td>or</td>
<td>you see</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>go ‘say’</td>
<td>really</td>
<td>you see</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As a matter of fact, most of the items listed above are still scholarly intriguing and attracting more attention from a variety of linguistic and discourse-pragmatic perspectives. English *like* (e.g. D’Arcy, 2017) is a case in point.

**Functions, Number of Functions, and Functional Realms of DMs:**

On one hand, most researchers (Aijmer, 2002; Aijmer & Simon-Vandenbergen, 2011; Brinton, 1996; 2010; Fediani & Sansò, 2017a; Fischer, 2006c; Jucker & Ziv, 1998; Müller, 2005; Schiffrin, 1987; 2001; Schiffrin & Maschler, 2015; Schourup, 1999)
agree that DMs are polyfunctional linguistic elements “that function in cognitive, expressive, social, and textual domains” (Schiffrin, 2001, p.54; Schiffrin & Maschler, 2015, p.189).

On the other hand, these scholars emphasized the fact that there is no agreed upon number of functions a DM can fulfill. In fact, Aijmer and Simon-Vandenbergen, (2011, p.228) stated that “[discourse] markers have a number of different functions depending on the context.” The same authors added more emphasis reiterating a similar statement that “[discourse] markers can have an almost infinite number of functions depending on the context.” (p.229, emphasis is mine).

There is also a considerable variation in terms of the proposed levels of discourse, functional spectrum, or functional domains on which DMs can function (Dér, 2010; Fedriani & Sansó, 2017a; Fischer, 2006c). Perhaps, this is not surprising given the diversity of approaches and methodologies employed and the variety of linguistic elements that have been investigated as DMs. According to Brinton (2017), Fedriani & Sansó, (2017a), and Dér (2010), the proposed levels of discourse, functional spectrum, or functional domains on which DMs can function range from five levels such as proposed in Schiffrin (1987) to two levels with the majority of the functional levels ranging between two and three functional realms of discourse such as in Schourup (1985), Bazzanella (2006), Brinton (1996; 2017), González (2004), Müller (2005), Maschler (2009), and Redeker (1990; 2006). However, Brinton (2017), Fedriani and Sansó, (2017a), and Dér (2010) indicated that three functional dimensions can generally and roughly be distinguished within the functional spectrum covered by DMs. These functional domains include:
- Discourse/text-structuring (textual) functions;
- Interactional/interpersonal functions;
- Cognitive functions.

For example, important to the analysis and the functions of DMs in Schiffrin’s (1987; 2006) treatment is the model of discourse she proposed with different planes that systematically and integratively contribute to discourse coherence: exchange structure, action structure, ideational structure, participation framework, and information state. These discourse planes are represented in the following (Schiffrin, 2006, p.317; also see Schiffrin, 1987, p.24-29):

a) “An information state concerns what speaker and hearer know: their organization and management of knowledge and metaknowledge.

b) A participation framework focuses on the more social side of speaker and hearer: their identities, alignments, relationships to each other and to what they are saying.

c) An exchange structure—the organization of turns at talk—to involve interactional contingencies that are at least partially unique to the distribution of speaking/hearing rights.

d) An idea structure—the most semantic structure—involving not only propositions but also topic/comment and information status.”

e) An action structure concerns the order and sequence of speech acts.

DMs, in Schiffrin’s view, function to create relations among utterances within each single plane and between the above planes contributing to the formation of coherent discourse—or discourse coherence. In Schiffrin’s discourse model, DMs also operate on
either a local level (i.e., connecting adjacent utterances) and/or global level (i.e., wider spans of discourse). Schiffrin’s later conception of discourse levels (i.e., local vs. global) was taken as the major points of analysis in Lenk (1998). According to Schiffrin (2006, p.317), “[r]elationships within these domains, and between them provide the system within which markers function as indexicals.” Comparable to indexicals, DMs can provide essential context and relevant information that can facilitate the interpretation of utterances containing them. That is, DMs can relate utterances to either a single level or different levels of the discourse model presented above. As indexicals, DMs can index an utterance to the prior talk (i.e., anaphorically or backward looking) and/or upcoming talk (i.e., cataphorically or forward looking).

Finally, Schiffrin considered how the functions of markers in her study tend to be constrained by their referential (semantic) meanings and their grammatical properties. The reflection of the referential and grammatical features of the markers motivated Schiffrin to suggest that markers can serve a primary function locating them on one plane of her discourse model and a number of secondary functions on other planes of discourse, e.g. the primary function of and on the ideational level and secondary functions on other levels of discourse.

On the multifunctionality of DMs, Jucker and Ziv (1998, p.1), posited the following list of a number of functions of DMs, which I believe is still relevant to current research on the functions of DMs. They are in table 5 for purposes of clarity.
Somewhat similar to Jucker and Ziv’s (1998) list of functions, Brinton (1996, p.35-40) postulated another detailed list of “fundamental set of functions” of DMs. Castro (2009, p.61) presented a nicely illustrative table for the list of the discourse-pragmatic functions reported by Brinton (1996). Castro’s table has been adopted here and is given in the following as table 6.

**Table 5**

*Functions of DMs Adopted from Jucker and Ziv (1998, p.1)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>- Discourse connectors,</th>
<th>- Boundary markers,</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Turn-takers,</td>
<td>- Fillers,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Confirmation-seekers,</td>
<td>- Promters,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Intimacy signals,</td>
<td>- Repair markers,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Topic-switchers,</td>
<td>- Attitude markers,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Hesitation markers,</td>
<td>- Hedging devices.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 6

*Discourse-Pragmatic Functions of DMs Adapted from Brinton (1996, p35-40) in Castro (2009, p.61)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Textual functions</th>
<th>Interpersonal functions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To initiate discourse, including claiming the attention of the hearer.</td>
<td>Subjectively, to express a response or a reaction to the preceding discourse or attitude towards the following discourse, including also back-channel signals of understanding and continued attention spoken while another speaker is having his or her turn.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opening frame marker</td>
<td>Response/reaction markers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To close discourse.</td>
<td>Back-channel signals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Closing frame marker</td>
<td>Confirmation-seekers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turn takers</td>
<td>Face-savers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Turn givers)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To aid the speaker in acquiring or relinquishing the floor.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fillers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To serve as a filler or delaying tactic used to sustain discourse or hold the floor.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turn keepers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To indicate a new topic, a partial shift in topic.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topic switchers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To denote either new information or old information.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information indicators</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To mark sequential dependence.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sequence/relevance markers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To repair one’s own or other’s discourse.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repair markers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Specifically, Brinton (1996; 2017) believed that markers in her study fall into two categories: the textual and the interpersonal modes of language as proposed by Halliday (1970; 1979). According to Brinton (1996, p.38), “[t]he “interpersonal” mode is the expression of the speaker’s attitudes, evaluations, judgements, expectations, and
demands, as well as the nature of the social exchange, the role of the speaker, and the role assigned to the hearer.” The textual mode of Brinton’s mainly included text- (and discourse) structuring functions equivalent to the global component in Schiffrin (1987) and Lenk (1998). Brinton’s synthesis and proposal was adopted and adapted in Aijmer (2002). In a similar fashion to that of Aijmer (2002), Müller (2005) took Brinton’s (1996) functional scheme as a point of departure for her analysis, though she (i.e. Müller) made a little modification and distinguished between an interactional level and a textual level of discourse in her study.

Summary

The previous review shows that, although there is no general consensus on defining and delimiting DMs, consensus can be seen related to a number of formal and functional features. These formal and functional characteristics are important and relevant in the sense that they will be used as a point of departure for the analysis of Arabic yaʕni in the current dissertation. The review shows that it is also better to view DMs as a functional category of linguistic items and that their word category membership is better viewed and understood in terms of scalarity, prototypicality, gradience, and degree. In addition, numerous number of lexical, syntactic, and grammatical linguistic elements are seen as sources for the inventory of DMs. Seen in the review is that DMs can fulfill a diverse number of linguistic and discourse-pragmatic functions on different levels of discourse. Overall, finding a terminological and definitional unification, functional descriptions and taxonomies, and sound theoretical basis is still a hope that can result from more empirical and theoretical research. The following section provides a
general review on research on DMs in Arabic. The section then provides a detailed review for the available research on Arabic yaʕni.

**DMs in Arabic Contexts**

This section has two main goals. First, the section generally reviews and classifies the available literature on Arabic DMs (early research vs. the recent move and understanding). Second, the section specifically reviews into the literature on DMs in spoken and written Arabic with significant emphasis, details, and evaluations for investigations conducted on Arabic yaʕni, the target of the current study. This review helps readers to locate the dearth of research, claims, and arguments about Arabic DMs and Arabic yaʕni, which motivate the current study.

**Early Research and the Traditional View**

The early body of research in Arabic centered around investigating conjunctions, sometimes called connectives (Kammensjö, 2006; Waltisberg, 2006). Examples of these conjunctions or connectives are:

- **wa-** ‘and,ʼ
- **fa-** ‘then; so,’
- **aw** ‘or,’
- **thumma** ‘then,’
- Adversative conjunctions: **bal, lakin(na), wa-lakin(na).**

Early research on such linguistic elements was significantly influenced by the views of early and traditional Arabic grammarians (Ghobrial, 1993; Kammensjö, 2006; Waltisberg, 2006). That is, the focus of inquiry and research was mostly on the morphological properties (e.g., the morphological structure of conjunctions such as the
distinction between simple and complex *conjunctions*) and the syntactic types of conjoined linguistic categories and elements (e.g., words, phrases, clauses, and sentences). There was also scholarly concentration on the asyndetic type of connections (i.e., relationships between words, phrases, clauses, and sentences without the use of *conjunctions*, but by virtue of juxtaposition between these syntactic segments). The focus slowly and timidly included investigations on the semantic relationships that conjunctions create between elements (Bidaoui, 2015; Ghobrial, 1993; Kammensjö, 2006; Watlisberg, 2006). This tradition of research largely benefited from either using introspection and intuition or using data drawn from written texts such as the *Holy Quran*, *Hadith* literature, and early written texts and available documents of Arabic literary prose or poetry. As a result, a dedicated body of research accumulated on Classical Arabic and Modern Standard Arabic since these are the types of language varieties featuring the later mentioned sources of data. Overall, Kammensjö (2006) and Waltisberg (2006) commented that no attempt was made to go beyond the confines of the sentence level.

**The Recent Move and the Recent Understanding**

According to Kammensjö (2006) and Waltisberg (2006), it is not until the late 1980s and the early 1990s that a recent move and a new understanding in scholarly efforts related to Arabic linguistics started emerging, but very slowly expanding. “A number of studies on Arabic have appeared that attempt to treat conjunctions and conjunctive phrases from a *discourse perspective*, i.e. as workers of cohesion in text” (Kammensjö, 2006, p.472; emphasis is mine). Note, however, that Ghobrial (1993) noted that the Arabic scholarship and literature on linguistic elements equivalent to DMs still lack theoretical and analytical frameworks that appropriately accommodate and account
for the linguistic and discourse-pragmatic behavior of these linguistic elements. I also add that the case is still the same since then with more recent Arabic scholarship and research borrowing theoretical and analytical frameworks that have been proposed and developed using empirical data significantly coming from English.

Consequently, conceptions of Arabic linguistic elements equivalent to English DMs have emerged in the Arabic literature. These can be found under the following designations: connectives (Al-Batal, 1985; 1990; 1994; Kammensjö, 2004), discourse markers (Alkhalil, 2005; Alkohlani, 2010; Bidaoui, 2015; Ghobrial, 1993; Marmorstein, 2016; Sarig, 1995), discourse particles (Mughazy, 2003; Rieschild, 2011), and presentative particles (Ingham, 1994; Sowayan, 1996). The selection of one terminology over another is not surprising given the scope of the investigated linguistic elements/units, the forms of discourse where these elements were investigated (e.g., written vs. spoken), and the methodological and the analytical aspects guiding the investigations and their objectives. I believe that the discussions and the problematic aspects regarding the terminological options and terminological issues in English, which were seen earlier in this review, are roughly the same to those of Arabic, for example discussions concerning labels such as particle and connective.

Three additional scholarly trends seem noticeable within the recent Arabic literature on DMs:

1) The investigated elements as DMs expanded from conjunctions or connectives to include lexicalized verbal linguistic expressions (e.g., yaʕni ‘he/it means’; ʔagṣud/ʔaʔṣud ‘I mean’; and ʔinta ʕaarif ‘you know’), phrases (e.g., ʔalmuhim ‘importantly/anyway’ and šu ʔismu/šismu ‘what’s its name), adjectives (e.g.,
ṭayyib ‘well/OK’ and ṣahīh ‘correct/right/yes’), religious invocations (e.g., Insha’Allah ‘God willing’; Masha’Allah ‘God has willed’; and wallahi ‘by God’) to name just a few; and

2) Although there is still a predominant attraction for investigating DMs in written forms of Arabic discourse (e.g., Al-Batal, 1985; 1990; Alkohlani, 2010; Basheer, 2016; Sarig, 1995), Arabic DMs have also received a growing attention in spoken forms of Arabic discourse (Al-Batal, 1994; Alkhalil, 2005; Bidaoui, 2015; Ghobrial, 1993; Ingham, 1994; Kammensjö, 2004; Marmorstein, 2016; Owens & Rockwood 2008; Reschild, 2011; Sowayan, 1996).

3) Throughout the growing research on spoken Arabic, there is one Arabic linguistic and discourse-pragmatic element that started to catch the recent attention from discourse and pragmatic perspectives rather than grammatical perspectives. Not only that it became the center of attention in the Arabic literature, but also scholars started to single this linguistic item out and examine it in relation to its form, meaning, and function in spoken forms of Arabic discourse. This linguistic element is Arabic yaʕni (Al-Batal, 1994; Alkhalil 2005; Bidaoui 2015; Ghobrial, 1993, Owens & Rockwood 2008, Marmorstein, 2016; Rieschild, 2011). The following is devoted to introducing the available literature on Arabic yaʕni.

**Previous Studies on Arabic Yaʕni**

The linguistic and the discourse-pragmatic behavior of Arabic yaʕni is the focus of this dissertation. Therefore, the following review reports scholarly treatments that surveyed and investigated Arabic yaʕni. The review starts with the forms and origins suggested for Arabic yaʕni in the literature followed by a report on the frequency of
occurrence of this linguistic element in spoken Arabic. While the review shows the meaning(s), function(s), and functional ranges and contexts of occurrence of *yaʕni*, it also displays the vast number of suggested glosses and translations accordingly. The review presents the claims associated with Arabic *yaʕni*. These sections altogether should show how Arabic *yaʕni* can be regarded as a linguistic and a discourse-pragmatic phenomenon that needs further scholarly attention, not only from discourse and pragmatic aspects, but also from other aspects of linguistic research including etymology, morphology, semantics and syntax.

**Form and Origin**

The origin, the genesis, and the historical development of *yaʕni* is still indeterminate given the different suggestions and claims found in the literature. As such, this is an area that needs further future scholarly research. To begin with, it is important to know some informative background about verbs and their morphology in Arabic since *yaʕni* was seen to be developed from a lexicalized verb phrase (Marmorstein, 2016; Rieschild, 2011). A verb in Standard Arabic can be prefixed or suffixed depending on the person, number and gender of the subject (i.e. agreement in terms of person, number, and gender). The verb can also have prefixes and/or suffixes for tense/aspect. The verb in Arabic can also be cliticized for objects. Let us take *yaʕni* as an example. The following table adopted from Alkhalil (2005, p.134) is illustrative. I have added new information to the table and modified some of the phonetic representations used by Alkhalil (2005).
Table 7

*Form yaʕni among forms of the verb ʕana*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I mean</td>
<td>ʔaʕni</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He means</td>
<td>yaʕni</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>She means</td>
<td>taʕni</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It means</td>
<td>yaʕni (if ‘it’ refers to a masculine noun)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It means</td>
<td>taʕni (if ‘it’ refers to a feminine noun)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We mean</td>
<td>naʕni</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You mean</td>
<td>taʕni (if ‘you’ refers to one male/female)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You mean</td>
<td>taʕniyan (if ‘you’ refers to two males/females)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You mean</td>
<td>taʕnun (if ‘you’ refers to plural masculine)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You mean</td>
<td>taʕnin (if ‘you’ refers to plural feminine)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They mean</td>
<td>yaʕniyan (if ‘they’ refers to two males)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They mean</td>
<td>taʕniyan (if ‘they’ refers to two females)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They mean</td>
<td>taʕnun (if ‘they’ refers to two males)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They mean</td>
<td>yaʕnin (if ‘they’ refers to females)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to Alkhalil (2005, p.133-134), table 7 shows that as a verb, the form *yaʕni* can be used “when the subject of the sentence is a) the third person singular masculine ‘he’, b) any other name that can be substituted by the pronoun ‘he’, or c) ‘it’ (provided that ‘it’ refers to a noun that is categorized in Standard Arabic as masculine).” However, *yaʕni* has gained an invariable form and a discourse-pragmatic categorical status in a wide range of varieties and contexts of spoken Arabic, provoking several scholars (Al-Batal, 1994; Alkhalil, 2005; Bidaoui, 2015; Ghobrial, 1993; Marmorstein, 2016; Owens & Rockwood, 2008; Reschild, 2011) to classify and investigate this invariable form as a DM. This form was called invariable for one fundamental reason:

- Formally, *yaʕni* is only used in the third-person masculine singular active imperfect form of the verb. That being said, this form does not show any kind of subject agreement in terms of person, number, and gender. It cannot be
conjugated according to the tense/aspect of the sentence. It cannot be negated and/or passivized. It cannot be cliticized for objects.

With the aforementioned formal invariability of the form *yaʕni* in mind, there are two views about the derivation of the DM *yaʕni* in the literature. On one hand, Ghobrial (1993, p.46 -47) argued that *yaʕni* is “derived from the classical form *maʕna* (meaning).” Similar to Ghobrial (1993), Alkhalil (2005, p.133) pointed out that Arabic *yaʕni* “is derived from the Arabic root *maʕna*, which means ‘meaning.’”

On the other hand, Rieschild (2011), Bidaoui (2015), and Marmorstein (2016) disagreed with the view that *yaʕni* is derived from the classical Arabic noun *maʕna*. Rather, they argued, and I agree with their views, that the Arabic verb root *ʕana* ‘to mean/intend/signify’ is more plausible to be the lexical and the grammatical source through which both the noun *maʕna* ‘meaning’ and the DM *yaʕni* were derived. Compared to other scholars, Marmorstein (2016, p.75) distinguished between two readings (intransitive vs. transitive) of the lexeme; these readings provide two denotations: “to contain meaning” as intransitive reading and “to intend” as a transitive one. With the previously mentioned arguments in mind, I reiterate that this is still an area for further research from an etymological and historical linguistic point of view.

**Frequency of Occurrence**

The fact that *yaʕni* is frequently used in spoken Arabic discourse has motivated several scholars to select it and study its use in different varieties of Arabic. Ghobrial (1993, p.75), for example investigating DMs in Cairene Egyptian Arabic, noted that “it is no exaggeration that almost any utterance-initial or mid-utterance pause could be a potential context for the marker *yaʕni*.”

Establishing the focus of their treatment, Owens and Rockwood (2008, p.3) stated that “the DM we have chosen to look at in detail is yaʕni, a particle of high frequency in our texts.” Owens and Rockwood (2008, p.6) added that yaʕni “is also by far the most frequent discourse marker in the corpus.” They also contended that yaʕni dominated “the top five” DMs in their material (p.6). In a similar vein, Alkhalil (2005) based his selection of the DMs to be investigated on their frequency of occurrence. Alkhalil (2005, p.12) stated that “[a]ttention thus will be focused on four discourse markers; the selection was largely guided by their frequent occurrence in the data used in preparation for a MA\(^2\) dissertation.”

**Form, Meaning(s), and Function(s) of Yaʕni**

It is appealing here to start with the basic lexical-semantic meaning of the form yaʕni as demonstrated in the previous available literature. In their treatment of yaʕni, Owens and Rockwood (2008) were the first and only scholars to posit the following illustration and figure for the very basic lexical-semantic meaning and structure of the form yaʕni.

\(^2\) MA dissertation is comparable to master’s thesis in US terms.
According to what they termed a “minimalist perspective,” Owens and Rockwood (2008, p. 15) claimed that “yaʕni signals that what is coming is of a semantic nature comparable to what has gone before” as illustrated in Figure 1 above. By their illustration above, Owens and Rockwood recalled the signifying and explicating lexical-semantic and propositional content of the form in which yaʕni can be used to signify or explicate A concept with a semantically comparable and a pragmatically relevant B concept. Owens and Rockwood provided a second more illustrative figure for the basic signifying and explicating sense of yaʕni accompanied by the information bidirectionality that can be construed on the conceptual level. Rieschild (2011), Bidaoui (2015), and Marmorstein (2016) also referred to the signification sense of yaʕni.

In the following, an illustrative example of the signifying and explicating sense of yaʕni is presented, although neither Owens and Rockwood (2008) nor any of the other scholars did so:
The above example is believed to demonstrate the basic signifying and explicating senses of *yaʃni* illustrated in the above two figures. *Yaʃni* was positioned and used to signify and explicate the meaning of the first word (or A concept) *ʔibtikar* with the second word (or B concept) *ʔixtiraʃ*, which are semantically comparable carrying the meaning of a noun ‘invention/innovation.’

The verb *yaʃni*, derived from the root *ʕana*, has also a second lexical-semantic meaning, which has been overlooked by scholars in earlier research on the form involving Ghobrial (1993), Al-Batal (1994), Alkhalil (2005), Owens and Rockwood (2008), Rieschild (2011), and Bidaoui (2015). Yet, Marmorstein (2016, p.75) recently pointed out and acknowledged this meaning: the lexical-semantic meaning ‘to mean/intend’ in which intention refers to “the intention of a subject,” i.e. “the underlying intention of the speaker” (Marmorstein, p.76) but not the signification and explication sense illustrated above. Marmorstein (2016) did not offer an illustrative example, but consider the following constructed dialogue between Ali and Hasan:

*(Hypothetical context: With Hasan’s presence, Ali was unsure about the teacher’s response regarding his exam’s grade. So, Ali requested Hasan’s understanding of the teacher’s response.)*

Ali: maḏa *yaʃni* *ʔlʔustaɡu* bi raddih (author example)

what *3M.mean/intend* the.teacher by response.his

---

3 *Author example(s)* mark(s) my own example(s) to illustrate the *signifying and mean/intend* original propositional meanings of the form *yaʃni*. 
what does the teacher *means/intends* by his response?

Hasan:  

\textit{yaʕni ʔlʔustaḏu bi raddih ʔannaka najaḥt}

**3M.mean/intend** the.teacher by response.his that.you passed.you

the teacher *means/intends* by his response that you passed

In the constructed dialogue between Ali and Hasan above, both instances of the form *yaʕni* have the ‘to mean/intend’ reading in which the reference is for the meaning/intention of *ʔlʔustaḏu* ‘the teacher’s response to Ali regarding the exam’s grade.

Although it has gained an invariable form as mentioned earlier, Arabic *yaʕni* features significantly variable meanings and discourse-pragmatic functions that can be interpreted depending only on the specific context where it is used. This variability in terms of meanings and functions is an indication of the multifunctionality, which is one defining characteristic of a linguistic element developing discourse and pragmatic functions as seen in Schiffrin (1987), Brinton (1996; 2017), Sankoff et al. (1997), and Schourup (1999).

Realizing *yaʕni* as a multifunctional DM, scholars who investigated this discourse phenomenon seemed to take two routes in terms of its lexical-semantic status and discourse-pragmatic representation. To explain, except for Al-Batal (1994), Rieschild (2011) and Bidaoui (2015), there is an implicit assumption across the majority of scholars (Alkhalil 2005; Ghobrial, 1993; Owens & Rockwood 2008; Marmorstein, 2016) that *yaʕni*, as a DM, tends to inherit meaning and functional aspects from the original lexical-semantic content of the form. An arising suggestion among these scholars is that *yaʕni* seems to have a core and invariable meaning or function, which influences its discourse-pragmatic functions.
There seemed a(n) (implicit) general agreement across Ghobrial (1993), Alkhalil (2005), Owens and Rockwood (2008), and Marmorstein (2016) that *yaʕni* tends to have a core or basic function through which different interpretations can be derived and related depending on the context. Yet, there is some variation upon the suggestion of the primary function of *yaʕni* between these scholars. On one hand, a tentative and developing suggestion can be found across Ghobrial (1993), Alkhalil (2005), and Owens and Rockwood (2008) that *yaʕni* tends to function as a qualifier, i.e. *yaʕni* serves in discourse to signal a qualification of a speaker’s previous contribution(s). On the other hand, Marmorstein (2016, p.60) claimed that the core function of *yaʕni* “is to signal the speaker’s cognitive efforts to get to her point, that is, to produce the most satisfying expression of her intended meaning, relative to the local or global topic of discourse.” This basic function has the following distinct realizations: 1) stating the point; 2) elaborating on the point; and 3) stressing the point.

While the above proposals seem essentially relevant for a wide range of discourse-pragmatic functions such as continuation and expansions, repair contexts, and elaborative, clarifying, and specifying (specification) functions of *yaʕni* (Al-Batal, 1994; Alkhalil, 2005; Bidaoui, 2015; Ghobrial, 1993; Marmorstein, 2016; Owens & Rockwood, 2008; Rieschild, 2011), several new and unconsidered discourse-pragmatic functions appear hardly accountable through the lens of the aforementioned proposals. In addition, the fate of the propositional sense, its influence on the spectrum of the functions of *yaʕni*, and the historical development or the existence of any directionality in the evolution of the marker with other discourse-pragmatic functions is still un(der)determined.
Polysemy is a semantic approach through which a single form, like *yaʕni*, can have different senses but related interpretations and meanings (Aijmer, 2002; Fischer, 2006c). Compared to the other scholars, Rieschild (2011, p.319) argued for a polysemous approach taking into consideration the view that if the core meaning cannot “adequately account for all occurrences of the word,” polysemy could solve this problem.

Regarding the discourse and pragmatic functions of Arabic *yaʕni*, the variability of data collected, e.g., recordings of natural conversations with a group of friends and acquaintances (Alkhalil, 2005; Ghobrial, 1993), workplace interviews (Rieschild, 2011), and sociolinguistic interviews (Bidaoui, 2015; Marmorstein, 2016; Owens & Rockwood, 2008), and the variability of approaches and methods of analysis, e.g., Fraser’s approach (Ghobrial, 1993), conversation analysis (Alkhalil, 2005; Rieschild, 2011), Natural Semantic Metalanguage (NSM; Rieschild, 2011), relevance theory (Bidaoui, 2015), Owens and Rockwood’s eclectic approach (2008), and Marmorstein’s (2016) discourse-cognitive “featural framework,” yielded similar and different functional ranges.

Similar to other DMs investigated cross-linguistically (e.g., Beeching, 2016; Brinton, 2007; Hansen, 1998; Maschler, 2009; Schiffrin, 1987), the discourse-pragmatic functions of Arabic *yaʕni* are reportedly sensitive to contextual parameters including: utterance or turn position and prosodic cues (e.g., intonation, pauses, vowel lengthening). This contextual sensitivity and vastly reported distributions made, for example, Owens and Rockwood (2008) state that “[c]ommensurate with its high overall frequency, the distribution of *yaʕni* is virtually unrestricted, either in grammatical terms, or relative to its position in an utterance” (p.6-7).
Scholars widely acknowledged that *yaʕni* binds parts of discourse together (Al-Batal, 1994; Alkhalil, 2005; Bidaoui, 2015; Ghobrial, 1993; Marmorstein, 2016; Owens & Rockwood, 2008; Rieschild, 2011). As a DM, *yaʕni* mostly reserves utterance-initial (or turn-initial) position; it can also appear in utterance-medial positions and very rarely in utterance-final positions. Elaboration, explanation, and clarification are functions found across scholars who have worked on *yaʕni* (Al-Batal, 1994; Alkhalil, 2005; Bidaoui, 2015; Ghobrial, 1993; Marmorstein, 2016; Owens & Rockwood, 2008; Rieschild, 2011). Owens and Rockwood (2008, p.37) commented that “these are functions par excellence of *yaʕni*.” *Yaʕni* can also serve as mitigation, hedging, and politeness (Alkhalil, 2005; Ghobrial, 1993; Owens and Rockwood, 2008; Rieschild, 2011). Table 8 summarizes a typology of the major discourse-pragmatic functions of Arabic *yaʕni* I found in the literature.

Table 8

*Table 8: A Typology of the Discourse-Pragmatic Functions of Yaʕni*

- Elaboration, explanation, and clarification;
- Management of turn-taking;
- Repair contexts/organization;
- Mitigation, hedging, and politeness with disagreements;

*Glosses and Translations*

*Yaʕni* is primarily glossed as a DM throughout the reviewed literature (Al-Batal, 1994; Alkhalil, 2005; Bidaoui, 2015; Ghobrial, 1993; Marmorstein, 2016; Owens & Rockwood, 2008; Rieschild, 2011). Owens and Rockwood (2008, p.6) assumed and classified “axiomatically” all occurrences of *yaʕni* in their corpus as a DM. In fact,
Owens and Rockwood (2008, p.25) stated that *yaʕni* has lost its verbal status (i.e., as a verb). Not surprisingly, the complexity and the ambiguity of the “multifarious” (Owens & Rockwood, 2008, p.13) lexical meanings accompanied with the multifunctionality found on the discourse and pragmatic levels has led Owens and Rockwood (2008) to suggest a vast range of glosses and translations, specifically into English. Owens and Rockwood (2008) postulated the following in their treatment of *yaʕni*: *just, I mean, yaʕni, like, y'know, because, you might say as it were, in fact, in sum, as a result, shall we say.*

Focusing exclusively on the clarification function, Bidaoui (2015) glossed all the instances of *yaʕni* as a DM and translated them only with the English *I mean* in his dissertation.

In some other occurrences, it became so hard to gloss and/or translate *yaʕni* which motivated these scholars and others like Ghobrial (1993), Alkhalil (2005), Owens and Rockwood (2008), and Marmorstein (2016) to keep the substance of Arabic *yaʕni* in the examples used with no glosses and translations. Ghobrial (1993, p.45) matched the form, meaning, and functions of *yaʕni* to English *I mean*. He also related the functional range of *yaʕni* to the English discourse marker *well*. Al-Batal (1994) glossed *yaʕni* in relation to its Arabic morphological construction, which also equalized/aligned with its literal meaning *he/it means*.

Rieschild (2011) suggested that *yaʕni* can be translatable with *well, I mean, that is, you see, like, sorta, and so*. Specifically, Rieschild (2011, p.340) showed that “similarity in semantic and pragmatic meanings can predict potential translation candidates [of Arabic *yaʕni*] across languages.” Yet, Rieschild (2011) highlighted the fact that there are subtle semantic and pragmatic nuances resulting from the subtle
semantically polysemous, pragmatically polyfunctional, and socio-culturally specific connotations associated with \textit{yaʕni}. These subtle nuances can complicate the task of looking for similar or potential translation candidates of a DM (DP in her terminology) across other languages such as Arabic and English. Therefore, Rieschild (2011) advised translators to consider the “social and cultural resonances” (p.314) in addition to the semantic and pragmatic meanings while glossing and rendering Arabic \textit{yaʕni}.

In contrast to the earlier mentioned authors, their glosses, and their translations of \textit{yaʕni}, Marmorstein (2016), following Bazzanella (2006), kept \textit{yaʕni} in its original form in the translated examples in order to avoid any ad-hoc associations between Arabic \textit{yaʕni} and particular English DMs. Such an association, according to Marmorstein (2016, p.61), might obscure “the functional essence of \textit{yaʕni}.”

Alkhalil (2005) refrained from glossing and translating the DMs he investigated in Syrian Arabic including \textit{yaʕni}. As part of the analysis process, Alkhalil (2005) preferred giving detailed descriptions of the contexts of use for \textit{yaʕni} and the other investigated DMs justifying that by:

Still, the decision was taken to provide the reader with a straightforward translation, running the risk of not sounding like idiomatic English sometimes, to allow a better understanding of where speakers use the discourse markers under investigation and to depict as close as possible how talk is managed, overlapped or interrupted. (Alkhalil, 2005, p.22)

\textbf{Claims Associated with Yaʕni}

\textit{Yaʕni} has regularly been classified as a DM (a DP or a connective) found in informal, casual, unrehearsed, and colloquial settings of spoken Arabic. That is, the use of \textit{yaʕni} was associated with informal and colloquial speech. The aims and the sources of data motivated some of the previous investigations of \textit{yaʕni} to posit claims related to the
exclusive use of *yaʕni* to colloquial Cairene Egyptian Arabic (Ghobrial, 1993), to Lebanese Arabic (Al-Batal, 1994), and to colloquial Syrian Arabic (Alkhalil, 2005).

However, Bidaoui (2015), Marmorstein (2016), Rieschild (2011), and Owens and Rockwood (2008) offered insightful views related to the use of *yaʕni* in spoken Arabic and other languages. Bidaoui (2015, p.127) stated that “*yaʕni* is shared by many dialects of Arabic” and that it “spread to many if not all the dialects of Arabic.” Using similar terms, Marmorstein (2016, p.61) stated that *yaʕni* “is very frequent in spontaneous talk in many Arabic dialects.” Marmorstein (2016, p.61) added, “and [it] also made its way outside Arabic, to languages such as Hebrew, Turkish, and Persian, which have long been in contact with various Arabic vernaculars.” The borrowing discourse-pragmatic phenomena of *yaʕni* was underscored in Hebrew by Maschler (2009) on the variants *ya’aní* and *ya’anu* and in Kurdish by Berot (Berot, 2018⁴) on the variant *yaʕni*. Rieschild (2011) remarked that Farsi, Urdu, Pashtu, and Hindi borrowed the DM *yaʕni*. Owens and Rockwood (2008) reported the existence of *yaʕni* in a selection of Arabic dialect grammars and dictionaries such as:

- Iraqi Arabic,
- Yemeni and Gulf Arabic,
- Algerian Arabic,
- Soukhne in north east Syria,
- Khaweetna in north east Syria and north-west Iraq,
- Negev Arabic,

⁴ Through personal communication in February 2018 with Fatima Berot, who was researching *yaʕni* among other Kurdish DMs at the University of Leicester, UK.
• Libyan Arabic,
• Moroccan Arabic, and
• Nigerian Arabic.

Summary

This review of literature seems to suggest that yaʕni is a discourse-pragmatic phenomenon in many varieties and contexts of spoken Arabic. Except for Bidaoui (2015) and Rieschild (2011), the other available works on Arabic yaʕni rarely, if ever, reference each other. It is in this current dissertation that the available literature is brought together and the available and developing views on yaʕni are highlighted. The current upsurge of research and interest in this linguistic element is remarkable. Each piece of research on Arabic yaʕni advances our understanding and knowledge of this linguistic element in one way or another. For example, indicated in this literature are some characteristics that culminate together to suggest yaʕni as a discourse-pragmatic phenomenon including:

• The increase of frequency of use as a marker,
• Multifunctionality in discourse,
• Invariable form,
• Weak association with the sentence,
• Movability in discourse,
• Lack of referential or semantic meaning,
• The absent influence on the propositional meaning of an utterance,
• Optionality, and
• Sensitivity of aspects of the context, e.g. prosody.
However, by bringing and analyzing data from novel contexts of language use, considering the data sources and contexts where yaʕni was investigated in previous research, and considering the available literature on Arabic yaʕni, it definitely seems that we just started to scratch the surface of this extremely elusive but highly robust linguistic element in spoken Arabic. To put it differently, there is still huge room for (socio)linguistic and discourse-pragmatic research that should contribute to our understanding of this linguistic element. The consideration of yaʕni in new contexts of language use has a number of advantages: 1) enriching the literature on this discourse-pragmatic element; 2) contributing to the theoretical, methodological, and/or applied sides of knowledge and understanding; and 3) highlighting several (socio)linguistic and discourse-pragmatic aspects that merit further investigations.

Chapter Three describes the data collected, the data selected for analysis, the methods, and the analytical procedures taken to investigate yaʕni in this dissertation.
CHAPTER THREE: DATA AND METHODS

In this chapter, the overall methods and procedures taken to investigate Arabic *yašni* in this dissertation are described in detail. This chapter has the following organization: The first section is an introduction which starts with restating the aims and research questions that guided this dissertation. The primary interest in this dissertation was to explore and investigate the use of Arabic *yašni* in new contexts of spoken language use. This implied a specific focus on spoken discourse. Therefore, in the following section, the sources of spoken data and the initiatives taken to compile a spoken corpus with the strategies used to manage and store the corpus are discussed. In the next section, the data selected and used for this dissertation are described. That is followed by a section explaining how the data were transcribed. Outlined in a number of stages, in the final section the analytical procedures used in the inquiry of Arabic *yašni* are described.

Before proceeding further in this chapter, I shall reiterate the aims and the research questions that guide my inquiry in this dissertation. My aim in this dissertation was:

- To highlight *yašni* as a discourse-pragmatic phenomenon in many varieties and contexts of spoken Arabic. This discourse-pragmatic phenomenon merits further investigations compared to its available literature;
- To expand research on Arabic *yašni* into novel, yet accessible and available, contexts of language use;
- To explore the linguistic use and the discourse-pragmatic use of Arabic *yašni* in a novel context of language use; and
To account for contextual factors that might have a potential influence on the linguistic use and the discourse-pragmatic use of Arabic *yaʕni* in the data selected. The following research questions guided my inquiry of Arabic *yaʕni* in this dissertation:

- **Linguistic category**: What is the linguistic categorical status of Arabic *yaʕni* in the data segment selected for analysis in this dissertation?
- **Functional**: What kinds of functions does Arabic *yaʕni* fulfill in the data segment selected for analysis in this dissertation?
- **Distributional**: What kinds of functional distributional patterns does Arabic *yaʕni* exhibit in the data segment selected for analysis in this dissertation?
- **Contextual**: What kinds of contextual factors might have potential influence on the use and the distribution of Arabic *yaʕni* in the data segment selected for analysis in this dissertation?

In the following, the data sources and collection steps for the compilation of spoken corpora to investigate Arabic *yaʕni* in this dissertation are described.

**Data Sources and Collection**

This section describes in details the overall methods and procedures taken for initial data collection and selection in this dissertation. In addition, it lays out the winnowing process that ended with the decision to use the data from the two episodes of *Alkura Tatakallam* sports show for the analysis guided by the research questions above.

**Initial Data Collection**

There were a number of factors that guided the data collection, selection, and the procedures of data gathering for this dissertation. First and foremost, as the literature
review showed, *yaʕni* is a discourse-pragmatic phenomenon in spoken Arabic that has been investigated in limited contexts of language use, specifically investigated in data gained from sociolinguistic or work place interviews. The contexts where Arabic *yaʕni* has been investigated motivated me to look for novel contexts of language use which could contribute to Arabic linguistics, Arabic linguistic research, and scholarship on DMs, in general, and Arabic *yaʕni*, in particular.

Ethical and practical considerations associated with the collection of spoken language data for investigation and analysis (Cameron, 2002) were factors that motivated me to look for novel contexts of spoken Arabic language use. As stated earlier, one goal of this study was to pinpoint and expand research on language use to publicly accessible and available data sources of spoken Arabic through which analysis and findings would contribute to our understanding of Arabic language use, in general, and Arabic DMs, in particular. Therefore, YouTube and its available broadcast channels were both a convenient alternative and a significant data resource for this dissertation (see Davies, 2013) and allowed the development of a corpus.

Initially, 10 episodes of 5 different one-hour-long (or relatively close to one-hour) Saudi TV shows were compiled and archived into a YouTube account and playlist. In this initial step, the compiled TV shows and the episodes featured different contexts of language use featuring different language users, different communicative purposes, and different linguistic registers and styles. The process of this initial data collection resulted in the following distribution of TV shows and episodes which composed the raw data/corpus (See Table 9).
Table 9

**A Summary of Initial Data Collection**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TV show</th>
<th>Episode</th>
<th>Show category</th>
<th>Publication date</th>
<th>Length Min:Second</th>
<th>Broadcast channel</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Althaminah</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Talk show</td>
<td>4/1/2015</td>
<td>45:06</td>
<td>MBC 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Talk show</td>
<td>1/25/2016</td>
<td>42:30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alusbuʕ fi Saʕah</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Talk show</td>
<td>3/12/2016</td>
<td>46:26</td>
<td>Rotana Khalijiah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Talk show</td>
<td>10/29/2016</td>
<td>48:19</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Sports show</td>
<td>11/20/2016</td>
<td>55:57</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Almustashar Attaʕlimi</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Education/academic show</td>
<td>12/5/2015</td>
<td>59:55</td>
<td>iEN TV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Education/academic show</td>
<td>2/14/2016</td>
<td>49:50</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fatawa</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Religious/social show</td>
<td>11/30/2015</td>
<td>55:20</td>
<td>Saudi TV 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Religious/social show</td>
<td>6/19/2016</td>
<td>45:24</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following provides brief information about the TV shows in Table 9:

- *Althaminah* ‘lit. the eighth’ broadcasts daily except the weekends at 8 pm on MBC 1. The show takes its name from its broadcast time in Saudi Arabia.

- *Alusbuʕ fi saʕah* ‘lit. the week in an hour’ broadcasted on Saturdays at 10 pm on Rotana Khalijiah.

- *Alkura Tatakallam* ‘lit. the ball speaks’ broadcasts every four days on Sports 24.

- *Almustashar Attaʕlimi* ‘lit. the academic consultant’ broadcasts on Tuesdays at 6 pm on iEN (academic/educational) TV.

- *Fatawa* ‘lit. religious explanations’ broadcasts daily at 4 pm on Saudi TV 1.

There were additional considerations within this process of data collection. The whole set of collected episodes were watched in order to check the broadcast quality and make sure that there were no broadcasting problems and/or interruptions/cutoffs that might interrupt the flow of the interactions. TV shows that featured background music
that might present some difficulties for the transcription and analysis processes were avoided in the collection process. Fragmented episodes uploaded on YouTube were also avoided. For example, one episode might be uploaded as ‘part 1’ and ‘part 2.’ Episodes in which there were technical problems and interruptions were also avoided. These steps and procedures of data collection were important in order to collect data samples that did not present problems for listening and understanding the interactions. Such problems might have had a negative influence on stages of transcription and analysis which, in turn, would have meant influencing and blurring the analysis of the contexts where Arabic ْنِ ياءً might occur. The best effort was made to gather data that ensured attentive and satisfactory analysis of ْنِ ياءً and the contexts where it was used within an interaction.

Note that the tentative frequency of ْنِ ياءً in this stage of data collection was tested. That is, the tentative frequency was based on a frequency test through which I initially watched and counted the occurrences of ْنِ ياءً without any kind of interpretations and/or analysis. The purpose of doing this was to ensure that the linguistic variable that was being targeted in the study was present. However, as a matter of fact, when testing the tentative frequency in the above, and other, episodes, ْنِ ياءً was used in every episode that was tested.

**Corpus Management and Storage**

Storing and managing the collected data was essential for this dissertation. For purposes of convenience, ease of access, managing, storing, and preventing the loss of data, all of the above episodes were downloaded, stored, and backed up in several storage places. These places included my personal laptop, external data storage devices, and my
web storage accounts. The episodes were converted into MP3 sound files in order to be compatible with sound applications for the purpose of accurate analysis. In terms of transcription, all of the collected episodes in Table 9 were submitted to a transcription service (www.gotranscript.com) for a rough transcription.

Data Selected/Used in This Dissertation:

Initially, doing an analysis of two episodes of two different Saudi shows, the sports show and the religious one, was considered. These shows were initially selected for the following reasons: First, the two TV shows were comparable in terms of the broadcast length. Second, the two TV shows offered two novel contexts that were likely to differ in order to gain some sense of possible contrasts, which might help in discovering any ad hoc linguistic and discourse-pragmatic functions that might help deepen our understanding of the use of yaʕni. These two novel, yet different, contexts of language use could also help understanding, if any, the influence of contextual factors on the use of yaʕni.

However, initial comparisons of the categories, functions, distributions, and contexts and considerations of the sample size led me to select the sports show for analysis. The decision for narrowing to the data set of the sports show was motivated by the following reasons: First, the sports show has the greatest number of usages compared to the fewer number of usages in the religious show. Also, working through the sports show, I realized that this data set had important information on the linguistic category and on its function. And it offered sizable opportunities for determining categories and functions. Second, the sports data set also allowed for some control over the distribution and context. For example, there was the same hosts in both episodes, but different guests.
The topics were stated in advance so there was a kind of agreed upon talk order between the hosts and the guests in advance. In addition, demographic information about the participants (hosts and guests) in the sports show was accessible and easy to retrieve. There was greater equality among speakers in the sports show given that all are involved and known throughout the sports world.

In the religious show, the topics were partly determined by the caller or whoever screened the callers. There were larger number of participants in the religious show, and gender differed. Also, the distribution of words or time per turn was much less balanced among participants in the religious show so that meant greater complication in deciding idiosyncratic usages and functions by gender, topic, and number of speakers and turn types. In addition, the difficulty of obtaining accessible demographic information, specifically for the religious TV show, made a comparison with the sports TV show unlikely to be effective. Therefore, there was much less control over the distributions, functions, and contexts in the religious show.

The following sections provide detailed background information about the sports TV show, which was primarily selected and analyzed in this dissertation. The sections also give background information about the religious TV show, which was initially considered for analysis and initially compared and contrasted with the sports one.

**Broadcast Shows and Episodes: Background Information**

This section introduces background information about each of the two TV shows and the two episodes of each TV show selected/collection for analysis in this dissertation. This background information includes information about the structure and production of the TV shows. Provided within this background is the available and accessible
demographic information about the speakers in each episode. The background information to be presented here is highly relevant in the sense that it is an important step in contextualizing the data used in this study as well as helping to locally situate the analysis of Arabic ِِyaَغْنِيَّ.

Table 10 provides an overview of the data from the two TV shows used or considered in this research.
### Table 10

**Overview of Data Used or Considered in This Dissertation**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TV show</th>
<th>Episode</th>
<th>Number of participants including host (gender)</th>
<th>Age range</th>
<th>Show category</th>
<th>Topics discussed</th>
<th>frequency of yaSni</th>
<th>Publication date</th>
<th>Length Min:Second</th>
<th>Broadcast channel</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alkura Tatakallam</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3 (males)</td>
<td>Adults</td>
<td>Sports show</td>
<td>Saudi soccer topics</td>
<td>163</td>
<td>4/6/2016</td>
<td>54:22</td>
<td>Sports 24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3 (males)</td>
<td>Adults</td>
<td>Sports show</td>
<td>Saudi soccer topics</td>
<td>248</td>
<td>11/20/2016</td>
<td>55:57</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fatawa</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2 (males) and several callers (males and females)</td>
<td>Adults</td>
<td>Religious/social show</td>
<td>Religious matters</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>11/30/2015</td>
<td>55:20</td>
<td>Saudi TV 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2 (males) and several callers (males and females)</td>
<td>Adults</td>
<td>Religious/social show</td>
<td>Religious matters</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>6/19/2016</td>
<td>45:24</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Data from the Sports TV Show:**

This section provides background information about the Sports TV show and the two episodes that went under analysis in this dissertation. The following four sources provided the information about the Sports TV show:

1) Information provided on the channel website (http://sports24.tv) that broadcasts this TV show;

2) Information provided by the host of the TV show in the beginning of each episode;

3) Information that unfolded, oriented to, and was ratified between speakers within the moment-to-moment of the interaction; and

4) Information brought from verified social media accounts for the host and the guests in both episodes.

In Table 11, the background information about the episodes and demographic information about the speakers on the *Alkura Tatakallam* sports TV show are shown. Table 11 also shows the sports data set was drawn from two episodes of this Saudi sports TV show. *Alkura Tatakallam* is a Saudi TV show broadcasted by the Sports24 Saudi channel. The length of broadcasting this TV show ranges from 55 minutes to one hour. This program is structured and produced as follows: there is a host and there are two guests. Generally speaking, these speakers discuss, comment on, and evaluate Saudi sports events and/or issues happening at the time of the episodes. The episodes also featured sarcasm and ironic language at several junctures.
Table 11

*Background and Demographic Information About Alkura Tatakallam*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Speaker</th>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Gender/sex</th>
<th>Work</th>
<th>Specific Discussed Topics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ahmed (AH)</td>
<td>Host</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Journalism and media</td>
<td>- Elections for SAFF*;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Candidates for the elections;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Derby between Al-Nassr and Al-Ittihad</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Episode 1 (KEP1)**

| Khalid (KH) | Guest | 43  | Male | Journalist, lawyer, consultant | - Elections for SAFF*;                                                                    |
|             |       |     |      |                             | - Candidates for the elections;                                                            |
|             |       |     |      |                             | - Derby between Al-Nassr and Al-Ittihad                                                   |

| Fahad (FA) | Guest | 49  | Male | Business, sports analyst,     | - Elections for SAFF*;                                                                    |
|           |       |     |      |                             | - Candidates for the elections;                                                            |
|           |       |     |      |                             | - Derby between Al-Nassr and Al-Ittihad                                                   |

**Episode 2 (KEP2)**

| Sultan (SU)| Guest | 43  | Male | Team manager and a previous football coach | - Elections for SAFF*;                                                                    |
|           |       |     |      |                                             | - Candidates for the elections;                                                            |
|           |       |     |      |                                             | - Derby between Al-Nassr and Al-Ittihad                                                   |

| Nawaf (NA) | Guest | 35  | Male | Lawyer, sports business agent              | - Elections for SAFF*;                                                                    |
|           |       |     |      |                                             | - Candidates for the elections;                                                            |
|           |       |     |      |                                             | - Derby between Al-Nassr and Al-Ittihad                                                   |

* Saudi Arabian Football Federation

Ahmed Al-Ajlan is the general host of this TV show. Ahmed is a Saudi journalist and a sports anchor whose work resides primarily within the Saudi athletic field and sports affairs. He was 37 years old at the time this program was broadcast.

In episode 1, Ahmed hosted Fahad Al-Tukhim and Khalid Al-Babtin. Fahad is a businessman and a sports analyst. He is also on the board of directors for the Saudi football team, Al-Nassr. At the time of the episode, Fahad was 49 years old. Khalid is a sports journalist, a sports lawyer, and an athletic consultant. He chaired the sanctions
committee in the Saudi Arabian Football Federation (SAFF). He was 43 years old at the
time of this episode. The elections for the SAFF and the candidates for these elections
were the featured topics of discussion in this episode, which also covered topics related to
the language influence of the sports media and journalism on the Saudi society and the
derby between two Saudi football teams, Al-Ittihad and Al-Nassr.

For episode 2, Ahmed hosted Sultan Al-Khamis and Nawaf Al-Mahdi. Sultan is a
former Saudi soccer player. He was also a coach and a manager for a Saudi local team. 
At the time of the episode, he was 43 years old. Nawaf Al-Mahdi is a Saudi sports lawyer
and a business agent for some Saudi sports players. He was 35 years old at the time of the
episode. The mutual responsibilities and obligations between Saudi soccer players and
their clubs was the major topic that guided the discussion for this episode. There was also
a reference to a problem that ensued between the Al-Ittihad’s club administration and
some of the players because these players did not receive their payments in a timely 
manner.

The analysis in this dissertation was primarily focused on the data gained from
Alkura Tatakallam. Note that table 11 provides codes for each episode (KEP1 for episode
1 and KEP2 for episode 2) and each speaker (AH for Ahmed, KH for Khalid, FA for
Fahad, SU for Sultan, and NA for Nawaf). It is important to refer to these codes because
they are used throughout the analysis, the representation, and the exemplification of the
data in this dissertation. Unless notated, names of the Saudi football teams unfolded in
the analysis are provided in the following:

- Al-Fateh,
- Al-Ittihad,
Data from the Religious TV Show:

This section provides background information about the religious TV show and the two episodes that underwent analysis in the initial stages of this dissertation. The following four sources provided the information about the religious TV show:

1) Information provided on the channel website (http://saudiatv.sa) that broadcasts this TV show;

2) Information provided by the host of the TV show at the beginning of each episode;

3) Information that was unfolded, oriented to, and ratified between speakers within the moment-to-moment of the interaction; and


As Table 12 shows, the religious data set was drawn from a Saudi religious TV show named *Fatawa*. *Fatawa* is a Saudi religious TV show produced and broadcast daily by the Saudi TV1 channel. The broadcast length of this TV show ranges from 45 minutes to one hour. This program is structured and produced as follows: there is a Sheikh and a moderator, and the later’s job is to moderate callers’ questions to the Sheikh in order to be answered. The callers ask a wide range of questions related to religious issues and jurisprudential matters/concerns of relevance to their lives. For example, callers might ask about the religious and moral consequences of divorce. The use of injections and
Using their expert knowledge in Islamic law, religion, and jurisprudence, Sheikhs provide answers containing instructions, pieces of advice, suggestions, and opinions based on religious scriptures, which are usually accompanied by interpretations, explanations, and justifications.

Ahmed Al-Ahmari was the moderator for Episode 1 in the data. He was 45 years old at the time of the broadcast. He works as a moderator specifically for the *Fatawa TV* show broadcast on the Saudi TV1 channel. Khalid Al-Rmih was the moderator for the Episode 2 in the data. He was 44 years old at the time of the broadcast. He also works as a moderator specifically for the *Fatawa TV* show broadcasted on the Saudi TV1 channel. Table 12 presents the background and demographic information for *Fatawa*.
Table 12

Background and Demographic Information of Fatawa

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Speaker</th>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Gender/sex</th>
<th>Work</th>
<th>Specific Discussed Topics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ahmed (AH)</td>
<td>Moderator</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>TV moderator</td>
<td>Sheikh provided answers for questions related to religious matters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sa’d (SA)</td>
<td>Sheikh</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>GPSRI*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Callers (CA)</td>
<td>Posed questions for the Sheikh</td>
<td>Not accessible</td>
<td>Males and females</td>
<td>Not accessible</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Speaker</th>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Gender/sex</th>
<th>Work</th>
<th>Specific Discussed Topics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Khalid (KH)</td>
<td>Moderator</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>TV moderator</td>
<td>Sheikh provided answers for questions related to religious matters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abdullah (AB)</td>
<td>Sheikh</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>GPSRI*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Callers (CL)</td>
<td>Posed questions for the Sheikh</td>
<td>Not accessible</td>
<td>Males and females</td>
<td>Not accessible</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* General Presidency of Scholarly Research and Ifta

In the collected episodes, two Sheikhs provided answers (in this religious context known as fatawa) for the callers’ questions and concerns. Sa’d Al-Khathlan was the Sheikh for Episode 1 in the data. Abdullah Al-Mutlaq was the Sheikh for Episode 2 in the data. Before getting into demographic details about the two Sheikhs, it is important first to provide some general information about the Sheikhs that describe both of them together. Both Sheikhs belong to and work for the General Presidency of Scholarly Research and Ifta (henceforth, GPSRI; http://www.alifta.net; http://www.ssa.gov.sa), established and located in Saudi Arabia. GPSRI involves a council composed of a limited
group of senior and highly qualified scholars specializing in Islamic law, religion, and jurisprudence. Besides preparing, conducting, and supervising scholarly research related to Islamic religious affairs, the council also engages with the public through different media outlets (e.g. TV, radio, and social media) to give answers and interpretations for particular questions and concerns pertaining to the Islamic law.

As for Sheikh Saṣad and Sheikh Abdullah, both have doctorate degrees in Islamic law and jurisprudence. Sheikh Saṣad was 50 years old at the time of the broadcast. Sheikh Abdullah was 63 years old at the time of the broadcast.

The availability of and accessibility to the demographic information and characteristics of the speakers can be relevant and helpful for deeply understanding the interaction, in general, and, in particular, the discourse-pragmatic functions of *yaṣni*. However, the case was not uncomplicated in the portion of the data gained from the religious TV show. That is, with all resources that were used to gain demographic information about speakers in context, there was difficulty gaining demographic information about the callers. The only available information was the gender of the caller. Other demographic information was impossible to gain. About their age, one might speculate “adults” from the fact that adulthood is an important condition/factor for asking about, negotiating, and engaging in religious matters in Islam.

Whenever noted in the analysis and results chapter, codes were provided for episodes of *Fatawa* (FAT1 for episode 1 and FAT2 for episode 2) and speakers (AH for Ahmed, SA for Sheikh Saṣad, KH for Khalid, AB for Sheikh Abdullah, and CL for the callers).
Limitations Associated with the Data

Although episodes were broadcast live and subsequently uploaded to YouTube, it is not known if these episodes had some editing done before uploading them to YouTube. The following section gives information about the transcription protocol and the transcription steps used as a starting point for the analysis.

Transcription Protocol and Steps

Rough Transcription

These data sets were among data I sent to a transcription service (www.gotranscript.com) as part of an ongoing personal and scholarly effort to build an Arabic spoken corpus that could open new venues for studying, investigating, and researching linguistic features of spoken Arabic. The data were roughly transcribed using an Arabic transcription protocol. The rough transcription of the data consisted of what was similar to written Arabic texts without any specific features related to spoken discourse. The decision to utilize an Arabic transcription protocol was motivated by the following practical and methodological considerations:

1. The utility of this corpus for future linguistic and discourse-pragmatic research purposes in Arabic contexts; and
2. To facilitate receiving scholarly assistance, for example, from either colleague raters and/or others who might enhance the linguistic analysis and the discourse-pragmatic analysis.

Ensuring Verbatim/Content Accuracy

After receiving the rough transcription from the company, I started a process of ensuring verbatim/content accuracy. I have checked and verified the transcription several
times, specifically for data selected for analysis, to ensure the verbatim accuracy of what was said through watching and re-watching the episodes available on YouTube as well as repeated listening to the MP3 files of the episodes I had downloaded. The process of ensuring verbatim/content accuracy was very important because it enabled me to detect and recover any missing salient and/or subtle verbal content, which on several occasions meant missing a speaker’s contributions (e.g. continuers, minimal responses such as, but not limited to mhm and huh, and other DMs, such as, but not limited to, sahih “lit. correct” and jamil “lit. beautiful”) and missing turns as well as inaccurate and misplaced distribution of turns. Therefore, the significance of this process resided in restoring the correct order of talk and the distribution of turns. Doing so was a major step towards understanding the interactions. This process also helped to initially identify and determine the contexts of use of yaʕni, which enabled identifying and determining more delicate discourse-pragmatic functions of yaʕni later in my analysis. I also included a rough transcription for the pauses and aspects of speech delivery in order to assist in knowing the Turn Construction Units (TCUs) that build up the turns of talk and, eventually, the turns and the sequential organization of each episode in the materials selected for analysis in this dissertation.

**Detailed Transcription**

The transcription process should have been better described as ongoing and accumulative, with repeated listening and familiarizing myself with the data. I did a detailed transcription for the contexts where yaʕni was used. Because this part is analytically essential, a detailed account of this stage of transcription will be given in the

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5 More elaboration on TCUs and turns is in the following sections.
section on analytical procedures. Whenever needed, I re-transcribed portions of the interactions where the speech delivery and speech tempo were essential and very challenging to catch with the Arabic transcription protocol. My detailed transcription was also aided by the use of the Audacity sound application (Audacity, 2017; see ten Have, 2007, p. 102 on sound applications and p. 112 on software support) and its available features, specifically its waveform features, which helped locating and measuring pauses and places of loudness and emphasis either on yaʕni itself and/or anywhere in the surrounding context where yaʕni was used. This application has also helped to locate delicate speech perturbations of functional relevance to the use of yaʕni in the analyzed episodes.

Limitations Associated with the Transcription Protocol

Although my data were drawn from video interactions and contain multimodal/visual aspects which might enhance the analysis, the transcription and analysis were limited to verbal aspects of talk. Therefore, multimodality and the use of yaʕni is beyond the scope of this dissertation and can be tackled in future research. From a related side, transcription is only a subjective and selective representation of the data/materials and is dependent on one’s purposes and decisions on relevant features of talk (Green et al., 1997; Heritage & Atkinson, 1984; Liddicoat, 2011; Ochs, 1999; Psathas & Anderson, 1990; Sidnell, 2010; ten Have, 2007). The transcription process is best to be described as evolving and accumulative and can never be final (Liddicoat, 2011).
Analytical Procedures/Steps

The primary aim in this dissertation is to explore the linguistic and the discourse-pragmatic functions of Arabic *yaʕni* in new, novel, and practically and ethically accessible contexts of spoken language use. In addition, the aim in the study is to reveal distributional patterns in terms of the discourse-pragmatic functions of Arabic *yaʕni* found in the data. Doing so will potentially contribute and enrich the growing body of linguistic research on Arabic DMs used in spoken discourse. Specifically, it was expected that this study will provide new knowledge and advance our understanding of the ubiquitous use of discourse *yaʕni* in Arabic discourse from new and novel contexts of language use.

In order to identify and determine the linguistic functions, the discourse-pragmatic functions, and the distributional patterns of *yaʕni* in the data, a number of qualitative, functional, and interpretative procedures and steps were utilized. The following describes in detail the qualitative functional, and interpretative procedures and steps taken to identify and analyze instances of Arabic *yaʕni* and determine the linguistic and the discourse-pragmatic functions found in the data.

Qualitatively, I pursued an inductive and interpretive (i.e., corpus-based; heuristic) bottom-up and discourse-pragmatic functional methodology (see Aijmer, 2002; 2013; Beeching, 2016; Fedriani & Sansò, 2017a; Fischer, 2006c; Hansen, 1998; Maschler, 2009; Müller, 2005; Schiffrin, 1987). The data were approached without making a priori inferences and/or assumptions about the contexts and the linguistic and the discourse-pragmatic functions of *yaʕni* in the data.

Generally speaking, the qualitative analytical process can be described as an
ongoing and accumulative process that was accompanied by repeated listening to and
detailed transcription of the materials, specifically in the contexts where Arabic \( \text{yaʕni} \) was used. In order to establish the functions of Arabic \( \text{yaʕni} \) in my materials, I followed the following analytical steps and procedures which were informed by concepts drawn from
the research traditions of conversation analysis (Sacks et al., 1974; Schegloff, 2007) and
discourse analysis (Brown & Yule, 1983; Johnstone, 2008; Stubbs, 1983). To best
understand the qualitative analytical procedures taken in this dissertation, the following
describes the step-by-step process of analysis (i.e. stages/rounds of analysis) adopted to
investigate \( \text{yaʕni} \) in my materials. The organization that follows should by no means be
understood as representing a hierarchical analytical process. Rather, the data analysis was
a back-and-forth process.

**Stage One**

The initial qualitative and functional analysis started at this stage. This stage included reading and reviewing the transcripts on both digitized and printed copies of the
data, and watching and re-watching the episodes on YouTube, and listening repeatedly to
the converted MP3 sound files for each episode, along with ongoing transcription and
note-taking. This stage served the following:

1. To gain initial impressions of the data;
2. To enable the researcher become familiar with the data; and
3. To mark, generally count, and document initial observations of all instances of
   \( \text{yaʕni} \) in the materials.

**Stage Two**

In this stage, I approached not only each data set but also each episode as both a
unique piece of discourse and as a unique piece of talk-in-interaction. I unlocked the turn-taking system (i.e., the distribution and organization of turns-at-talk) and the sequential/sequence organization that underlies the organization of talk or the overall structural organization of talk. That is, with each episode of my materials, I have paid close attention to both how the overall interaction unfolded and to how the sequence organization and discourse flow proceeded from the very beginning of each episode of each show until the end of each episode. This was done in order to locate placements/occasions of yaʕni in relation to the overall sequential context of use.

**Stage Three**

I identified all the tokens of Arabic yaʕni and the contexts in which the tokens were used in my materials. Using a combination of linguistic clues (i.e., formal) and extra-linguistic clues (i.e., functional) reported and attested in the literature of DMs (Aijmer, 2002; 2013; Beeching, 2016; Blakemore, 2002; Brinton, 1996; 2008; 2010; 2017; Degand et al., 2013; Fedriani & Sansó, 2017b; Fischer, 2006a; Jucker & Ziv, 1998; Heine, 2013; Lenk, 1998; Maschler, 2009; Müller, 2005; Sankoff et al., 1997; Schiffrin, 1987; Schourup, 1999), I distinguished between instances of yaʕni functioning on the semantico-grammatical level (i.e., as a verb) and instances of yaʕni functioning on the discourse-pragmatic level (i.e., as a DM). Linguistic clues included:

- **Verb** yaʕni has lexical content and referential meaning which contributes to the truth-conditionality and, therefore, adds to the propositional meaning in the utterance where it is used. Discourse yaʕni exhibits relative to complete lack of referential meaning that contributes to the truth conditionality of an utterance.

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6 For examples, see pages 47-48 and the analysis and discussion in Chapter Four.
Discourse *yaʕni* gains more of a procedural and pragmatic meaning;

- Verb *yaʕni* has a syntactically fixed position, which contributes to the grammaticality of an utterance. As a transitive verb, *yaʕni* requires a complement. Thus, verb *yaʕni* can be followed by nominal complements or modified by adverbial complements. Discourse *yaʕni* exhibits syntactic detachability or unintegratedness which suggests movability and optionality within an utterance;

- *Yaʕni* is a verb in Arabic which suggests that grammatically it can be cliticized for gender, number, tense/aspect, subject, and object. In addition, *yaʕni* as a verb can be negated, passivized, and/or relativized. Discourse *yaʕni*, however, exhibits morpho-syntactic invariability where it is seen as a “frozen form” (Brinton, 2008; 2017; Heine, 2013; Sankoff et al., 1997) of the third person singular imperfect form of the verb *ʕana* ‘to mean/intend’ or ‘to signify.’

In terms of the extra-linguistic clues, unlike the verb *yaʕni* which can be located and described using semantico-grammatical terms, discourse-pragmatic *yaʕni* has a discourse-pragmatic scope in which context plays a central role in the identification and interpretation of *yaʕni*’s meaning(s) and function(s). Stage four of my analysis provides more details about the extra-linguistic and contextual factors that can influence and shape the use of *yaʕni* in the data.

However, the process of identifying and distinguishing between the verb *yaʕni* and discourse *yaʕni* has been a challenging task, with some tokens where *yaʕni* can be seen functioning and, therefore, can be related to the sentential and propositional levels (i.e. semantico-grammatical levels) and the discourse-pragmatic level simultaneously (e.g., explicative and elaborative *yaʕni* specifically found in the religious segment and the
sports segment of the materials; see Aijmer, 2002; Beeching, 2016; Müller, 2005; Schiffrin, 1987; 2006; to name a few, for similar cases).

**Stage Four**

This stage featured an in-depth case-by-case analysis of all the tokens of discourse 
_yaʕni_ found in my materials in order to determine the discourse-pragmatic functions of 
_yaʕni_. Each instance of _yaʕni_ was examined in relation to the particular discourse, sequential, and interactional contexts where it was used. The analysis was attentive to the following aspects of context:

- **Utterance position**: The discourse-pragmatic functions and the interpretation of DMs were seen to be affected by their placements in talk and their utterance positions. Therefore, it was crucial to look for structural or discourse units of relevance for spoken data (i.e., units of spoken discourse/unitization of spoken discourse), which can inform the analysis of Arabic _yaʕni_ in the data. Therefore, I adopted the conversation analysis conceptions of turns-at-talk and the minimal units that build turns-at-talk, called Turn Construction Units (TCUs), as heuristic structural and discourse units where _yaʕni_ can be located.

  Sacks et al.’s (1974) work on the construction of turn units in conversation (or conversational data) and talk-in-interaction served as a point of departure for the unitization of turns and utterances where Arabic _yaʕni_ was used in my materials. In turns-at-talk, TCUs are possible points of completion which speakers and hearers orient to in order to project a possible transition relevance place (TRP) where change in speakership might be possible, but not necessarily, a relevant next action. Speakers and hearers orient to various resources that
contribute to the projectability of possible points of completions (or TRPs) including syntactic, intonational, and pragmatic elements. These later-mentioned resources may sometimes converge to produce TCUs (Liddicoat, 2011, Sidnell, 2010). According to Sacks et al. (1974), TCUs are not confined to sentences or clauses. Rather, phrases or lexical constructions can formulate TCUs when considering their sequential contexts. The decision of what might count as a TCU in a spoken interaction is highly context-dependent (Liddicoat, 2011).

- Prosody and speech delivery: The analysis was sensitive to the features of speech delivery and prosody, including: pauses, intonation, speech perturbations/interruptions, emphasis, voice quality, vowel lengthening, and loudness.

- Preceding talk/actions and talk/actions following Arabic yaʕni were considered. Additionally, and in contrast to the previous treatments of yaʕni, I saw the relevance of, and therefore included, other linguistic and contextual clues in my analysis. These factors and clues included:
  
  - Users of yaʕni and their social characteristics: that is, who used/produced yaʕni (i.e., the user), and to whom (i.e., the recipient(s) or the overhearing audience);
  
  - Combinations of yaʕni with other discourse markers as well as collocations with other linguistic elements noticed to disambiguate the linguistic and discourse-pragmatic use of Arabic yaʕni;
  
  - The institutional context: I also considered the relevance of the institutional context and institutional particularities of essential relevance for the use of yaʕni in each TV show, including: the goals and expectations of the interaction, the
speakers’ emergent orientations to each other, and their emergent institutional roles.

- Power relations: Moreover, observing, understanding, and attending to power relations (whether symmetrical or asymmetrical) that emerged and were perpetuated throughout the interactions helped in understanding and disambiguating the functions of yaʕni in my materials.

- Background knowledge: Furthermore, some strategic and delicate uses needed some hands-on socio-religious as well as socio-athletic knowledge/background of significance/relevance to the analyzed episodes.

- Alternative analytical procedures: I also used some alternative methods such as paraphrase analysis and the translation method or translation technique (Aijmer et al., 2006; Brinton, 2007) to (re)construct relations and functions in some of the most difficult to recover places of the functions

**Stage Five**

In this stage, I had several sessions with trained Ph.D. colleague raters, who were also native speakers of Arabic, for the sake of assessing and affirming the linguistic and the discourse-pragmatic functions of yaʕni in the data. My rationale for these sessions runs parallel with that of Brinton (2008), that native speakers have readily available linguistic and discourse-pragmatic knowledge that can help in identifying and determining the linguistic and the discourse-pragmatic instances as well as the functions of DMs. As was happening with the analysis, assessing and affirming the linguistic and the discourse-pragmatic functions has been an ongoing and accumulative process. In this process, I presented and discussed the assigned and
annotated linguistic and discourse-pragmatic functions of *yaʕni* on printed copies of the data with the details of transcription and contexts where *yaʕni* was used. Whenever needed, the public availability and accessibility of the data greatly facilitated playing and replaying the video and MP3 sound files of the data for the raters. The public availability and accessibility of the data also facilitated sharing portions of the data with the colleague raters through emails and social media outlets such as WhatsApp in order to get more expedited analytical views. However, this process was significantly helpful in disambiguating the linguistic and discourse-pragmatic functions of *yaʕni*, the inter-rater variability sometimes complicated the discourse-pragmatic picture of Arabic *yaʕni* found in the materials. Whenever this was the case, I tried to make the best decision in order to classify such instances.

**Stage Six**

This was the last stage of the data analysis. In this stage, all instances and functions of *yaʕni* found in the data/corpus were categorized and classified in order to report the linguistic and discourse-pragmatic functions.

**Rationale for the Methods of Analysis**

To this point, I have not provided the rationale for this method of analysis among other methods and approaches to DMs (see Fischer, 2006 for an overview of approaches and methods). First, it seemed that there is a preference in the literature for an inductive, corpus-based, and bottom-up approach over other approaches (Aijmer, 2002; 2013; Beeching, 2016; Fedriani & Sansó, 2017b; Fischer, 2006c; Hansen, 1998; Maschler, 2009; Müller, 2005; Schiffrin, 1987). Most recently, Fedriani and Sansó (2017a, p.5) delineated and justified such preference in the following words:
There appear to be many advantages in the preference for a semasiological [i.e. form-function analysis] over onomasiological [i.e. function-form analysis], an inductive over deductive, and a corpus-driven over a top-down approach, especially when comparing different instantiations of this complex functional domain across languages and when dealing with incipient and fully grammaticalized PMs [Pragmatic Markers] and DMs [Discourse Markers]. There is also evidence that purely deductive approaches, i.e. those which list what formal/functional are necessary for a given expression to be a member of these classes of linguistic items, are much less powerful than approaches based on more flexible categorization principles.

Along similar lines related to the preference and the advantages of a corpus-based approach in the investigation of DMs, Beeching (2016, p.27) provided the following:

The advantages of a corpus approach are well known and are particularly apposite in the case of pragmatic markers as their uses are not easily amenable to intuition, to grammaticality judgments or even to realistic assessments of who uses them, when and why. Using corpora allows the researcher to see usage in context, and to uncover regularities and patterns of usage, both with respect to the class, age and gender of speakers, to text types and genres, as with respect to collocation (which words occur along with which other words).

Second, the exploratory discourse analytic and (socio)linguistic nature of this dissertation is one major justification for taking on this method of analysis. Third, this method of analysis was fruitful in bringing and considering contextual factors that were seen to have potential influence on the functions and use of Arabic yaʕni in the analyzed data (e.g., the institutional context of the data and characteristics of speakers and their institutional roles, to name a few). Such contextual factors have been neglected in earlier investigations of Arabic DMs and Arabic yaʕni, the target of this study. Fourth, the need for considering these contextual factors contributes new insights that advance the theoretical, analytical, and applied perspectives of relevance for Arabic DMs and Arabic yaʕni.

**Limitation Associated with the Data Analysis**

My aim was to provide the most thoughtful analysis for Arabic yaʕni and the
contexts of its occurrence. There appeared some highly ambiguous and elusive situations where neither linguistic analysis of verbs nor discourse-pragmatic analysis have proven useful. There were also some instances of this DM which are deeply embedded in a TCU (i.e., TCU-medial) where even discourse-pragmatic or paraphrase analysis could hardly explain their functions. Therefore, some subjectivity impinged on the analysis and the interpretations of some of *yaʕni* instances in the data.

**Presentation of Examples and Translation**

In this subsection, I present an example of how examples and extracts of the data are presented throughout this dissertation. That is, I conducted my analysis on a corpus that used an Arabic transcription protocol. However, after several attempts to represent and contextualize the data, as well as speaking of syntactic structure, glosses, translation, and linear and sequential consistency, there appeared a need to represent the examples in transliterated lines. The transliteration conventions used in this dissertation were adopted from the *Encyclopedia of Arabic Language and Linguistics* (EALL; Versteegh, 2006, p.viii) with minor modifications adapted from the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA). The modifications were done in order to establish more of a compromise between the Arabic transliteration conventions and the Jeffersonian transcription notations (Jefferson, 2004) used to represent aspects of talk in this dissertation. A key list of the Arabic transliteration conventions, the Jeffersonian transcription notations, the glosses, and abbreviations used in this dissertation are presented earlier and can be found in the beginning of this dissertation (see pp. xiii-xiv). Depending on the points of analysis, some extracts or examples are longer and/or more detailed than others.

Extracts follow this layout: (a) the first line is an original transliterated utterance
of the data, (b) the second line is a rough glossing, and (c) the third line is a translation.

For convenient reference, numbers were provided for the original lines of utterances of the data. I provided detailed grammatical glosses (i.e., for grammatical properties) whenever they were needed and seen to illustrate a relevant point in the analysis. Since the data segment from the sports show is the focus of this dissertation, we also need to recall the codes I used in Table 3 to represent the source of the extract (i.e. which episode?) of *Alkura Tatakallam* and the codes for the speakers:

- KEP1 for the first episode;
- KEP2 for the second episode;

The following is an illustrative example for my representation of extracts throughout this dissertation:

**Illustrative extract**

*(Talk was about an old coach-player relationship between Sultan and Nawaf. Nawaf talked about Sultan's good deeds for him)*

1 NA: yimkin hu ma yiḍkir ḥaṣya kthir=

   probably he NEG he.remember things many

   he probably does not remember many things

2 =lakin a::: .hh bilmuşadafa *yašni* ana ?aštabir ha liqa bilmuşadafa

   but a::: .hh by.accident *DM* I I.consider this meeting by.accident

   but a::: .hh by accident *yašni* I consider this meeting by accident

*(Talk continued regarding the coach-player relationship between Sultan and Nawaf)*
Note that the extract has a **bolded** and *italicized* instance of *yaʕni*. This is the way I aimed to refer to instances of *yaʕni* of interest in my analysis. Because of the ubiquitous use of *yaʕni* in the data, some extracts may have a number of instances. Where this is the case, **bolding** and *italicizing* again serve to indicate the instances of interest.

The analysis of *yaʕni* in this dissertation was carried out on data that featured long, and on many occasions, unwieldy stretches of talk. This should not be surprising given the inherent nature of the lengthy talk contributions and the multi-unit turns found in institutional settings (Drew & Heritage, 1992; Heritage & Clayman, 2010). Nevertheless, the later-mentioned nature of the data caused some challenges about how to present and importantly contextualize stretches of talk which are contextually and analytically significant for the interpretation of some of the linguistic and the discourse-pragmatic functions of *yaʕni*. Looking for practical solutions to such challenges, however, I tried to utilize examples and extracts that are not strikingly long. In addition, I offered descriptions that help in the contextualization of the extracts and the examples used.

Finally, because DMs are widely acknowledged to lack referential meaning and lexical content, and that their interpretation is highly context-dependent, these discourse-pragmatic elements “are not easily glossed and may pose a difficulty for translation” (Brinton, 2008, p. 16; also see Aijmer, 2008; Aijmer & Simon-Vandenbergen, 2006; Bazzanella, 2006; Beeching, 2016; Brinton, 2017). Regarding instances of *yaʕni* as a DM, I followed Marmorstein’s (2016, p. 61) reasoning in which “the marker *yaʕni* is left in the original in the translations of the examples to avoid its association with a particular discourse marker in English, an association which might be ad-hoc and obscuring of the
functional essence of yaʕni.” Similar to the process of validating and verifying the linguistic and the discourse-pragmatic functions of yaʕni, I had sessions with and shared transliterated, glossed, and translated extracts with the Ph.D. colleague raters in order to assess and affirm the translations provided for my extracts and examples.

**Summary**

This chapter started with restating the research aims and the research questions that guided this dissertation. The chapter also provided a detailed account of the compiled data, the methods, and heuristics taken to approach the data and to investigate the linguistic and discourse-pragmatic functions of Arabic yaʕni found in the data. Additionally, the chapter included the limitations associated with the methodological and analytical procedures taken in this dissertation. The next chapter introduces the analysis and the findings. The chapter also suggests and interweaves discussions associated with the linguistic and the discourse-pragmatic functions of yaʕni.
CHAPTER FOUR: ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter primarily presents a linguistic and discourse-pragmatic functional analysis of *yaʕni* as found in the data analyzed solely from the sports TV show *Alkurah Tatakallam*. The chapter begins with reporting the use of *yaʕni* as a verb with arguments supporting the categorical status of the verb, a function largely neglected in the previous literature on *yaʕni*. The chapter, then, reports the use of *yaʕni* as a DM. As a DM, *yaʕni* was found to perform a number of several discourse-pragmatic functions. The following table gives an overview of the linguistic and discourse-pragmatic functions of *yaʕni* that will be reported and discussed in the current dissertation and throughout this chapter.

Table 13

*Overview of the Functions Reported in This Study*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>- Yaʕni as a verb</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Discourse-Pragmatic functions:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Elaboration and turn expansion;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- <strong>Yaʕni</strong> in repair contexts:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o The use of <em>yaʕni</em> to recover from self-interruptions and disfluencies;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o The use of <em>yaʕni</em> with word searches and as a turn holding device;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o The use of <em>yaʕni</em> to correct grammatical errors;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o The use of <em>yaʕni</em> to correct lexical choice;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o The use of <em>yaʕni</em> with self-rephrase;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o The use of <em>yaʕni</em> with specification/insertion;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o The use of <em>yaʕni</em> to accomplish self-repair that was other-initiated;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- <strong>Yaʕni</strong> in the dynamics of the turn-taking system:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o The use of <em>yaʕni</em> in turn onsets;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o The use of <em>yaʕni</em> in turn endings;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- <strong>Yaʕni</strong> to mark alleviation and hedging:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o The use of <em>yaʕni</em> in contexts of epistemic uncertainty/likelihood;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o The use of <em>yaʕni</em> to signal approximations or estimates;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- <strong>Yaʕni</strong> to signal contrast and/or concession;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Emphatic <em>yaʕni</em>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Ambiguous/unclassified cases.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The chapter also interweaves discussions and views regarding the reported linguistic and discourse-pragmatic functions of *yaṣni*. Building on related developing views from the available literature on DMs, in general, and Arabic *yaṣni*, in particular, three major views seem to be gradually solidifying from the following analysis and discussions and throughout this chapter:

- First, there is a suggestion of a categorical cline/gradation ranging from verb *yaṣni* to the discourse marker *yaṣni*. There seems a bridging categorical context between the verb and the DM. In this bridging categorical context, convergence and overlaps can be located related to categorical features (i.e., meanings, interpretations, and functions) of both categories, specifically in the instances of *yaṣni* found with elaboration.

- Second, there is an additional suggestion of a discourse-pragmatic functional cline through which the discourse-pragmatic functions can be seen as gradations of less-to-more prototypical discourse-pragmatic markerhood located from close-to-faraway from the verb.

- Third, there is a suggestion that, synchronically and diachronically, *yaṣni* as a form has been wildly drifting from its categorical verb status, lexical source, propositional meaning, and even its discourse-pragmatic markerhood. On one hand, *yaṣni* seems to have been gradually acquiring, yet unstable, phraseological and idiomatic qualities found within emphatic and evaluative use of language. On the other hand, such emphatic and evaluative language use seems to be a reflection of the institutional context and the type of text of the data analyzed for this dissertation.
The above three views need more scholarly consideration in order to be established so we can reach a good understanding of the linguistic and discourse-pragmatic use of *yaʕni*. The presentation and the discussion of the linguistic and discourse-pragmatic functions in this chapter flow from the aforementioned views. Such suggestions motivate several implications and questions about the historical development of *yaʕni* to be pursued in future research. The analysis and discussions underscore the importance of considering the institutional context and the type of text in potentially motivating and accounting for the linguistic and the discourse-pragmatic functions of *yaʕni* reported in the current dissertation. Recognizing the potential effects of the institutional context and the interactants’ emergent roles in shaping and re-shaping the use of *yaʕni* is an important observation of this research. The following analysis and discussions will also show the significant role of collocation as an interpretative tool for the categorical as well as the discourse-pragmatic behavior of Arabic *yaʕni*.

The following section starts with reporting the use of *yaʕni* as a verb as found in the data of the sports TV show *Alkurah Tatakallam*.

*Yaʕni as a Verb*

Let me first reiterate that the previous investigations on Arabic *yaʕni* never mentioned the use and the existence of *yaʕni* as a verb. Recall that Owens and Rockwood (2008, p.25) stated that the use and the status of the verb use might have been lost in spoken Arabic. However, I found a few instances in my data where *yaʕni* was clearly used as a verb. These were only 5 instances found and analyzed in my data of the sports TV show. These 5 instances were also found in episode 1 of the data (KEP1). Note that Khalid was the speaker who used *yaʕni* as a verb in the identified 5 instances. These 5
instances, however, were identified in different temporal stretches of discourse/talk. The
categorical status of verb *yaʕni* is evidenced by grammatical and semantic analysis in
addition to the affirmations I received from my consultation sessions with the trained
native speakers of Arabic. The following extracts will illustrate these instances of verb
*yaʕni*.

**Extract (1) KEP1**

*(Talk was about SAFF’s elections and the contestations between the candidates)*

1 KH: ...lakin *la yaʕni* – *la yaʕni* ḏalik ʔin ḫna nihmilha tamaman=

   but NEG *mean* – NEG *mean* that.DEM that.REL we neglect.it entirely

   but it does not *mean* – that does not *mean* that we neglect it entirely=

2 FA: =mhm=

3 KH: =ykun *laha wazn yaʕni* (.)

   be for.it weight DM

   =there is weight for it *yaʕni* (.)

*(Talk continued with Ahmed taking the next turn)*

As stated earlier, Khalid in KEP1 was the speaker who used the 5 instances of
*yaʕni* as a verb. In the above extract, there are 2 notated instances of *yaʕni* as a verb. The
elections of SAFF and the contestations happening between the candidates were the
topics discussed by the speakers in the above extract. The first notated *yaʕni* in the above
extract in line 1 was preceded by the Arabic negative particle *la* used to negate verbs in
the imperfect aspect (or the present tense). Khalid, then, self-interrupted himself and used
a second instance of *yaʕni* preceded again by the Arabic negative particle *la*. In addition
to negation, there is more evidence for the verb categorical status of *yaʕni* in the second
notated instance. Yašni appeared to be followed by a subject, which is the demonstrative pronoun ǧalik ‘that.’ That yašni was negated and has a subject is an indication for the syntactic contributing values of yašni to the utterances. Semantically, these instances of yašni contribute semantic and lexical meaning to their utterances. To throw more light into the instances of yašni as a verb, let us also consider the instances of yašni in the following extract.

**Extract (2) KEP1**

(Talk was about suspicious practices conducted by SAFF’s election candidates)

1 KH: ...huna la yašni ḥatman Ḱannu Ḵaxal bi l-

      here NEG mean surely that disrupted with the

      … here it doesn’t mean surely that it disrupted the-

2 la yašni bi Ḵkthar diqqah la yašni ḡâḍa xiyant Ḱmanah=

      NEG mean with more accuracy NEG mean this betrayal integrity

      it doesn’t mean more accurately this doesn’t mean a betrayal of integrity=

3 =aw zay kiḏa (.)

      or like this

      =or like this (.)

(Talk continued with Khalid)

This extract was taken from KEP1. The speakers were discussing some of the suspicious financial practices conducted by the candidates applying for the position of chairing SAFF. They were also discussing the qualifications and the requirements for the candidates applying to the position. As notable in the extract, we can see the use of yašni preceded by the Arabic negation particle la. Being negated by the negative particle la,
negation is an important evidence of the verb categorical status cross-linguistically. It is also an excellent evidence for the syntactic integration of the verb within the syntax of the uttered sentence. More evidence for the syntactic integratedness might come from the adverbial complements following yaʕni in line 1 hatman ‘surely’ and bi ḵkthar diqqah ‘more accurately’ for the first instance of yaʕni in line 2. In addition to negation, the second instance of yaʕni in line 2 was followed by a subject of the demonstrative pronoun haḏa ‘this’ and a noun phrase complement xiyant ʔmanah ‘betrayal of integrity’ appearing in what might be considered as an object position. Taken together, the subject and the noun phrase complement represent evidence for the syntactic integratedness of the second instance of yaʕni in line 2. Not only that, but also note that the semantic and lexical content of the verb yaʕni is present in this extract, i.e. ‘it/he means.’

Furthermore, an important feature of DMs is their syntactic mobility as well as that DMs can be removed from an utterance without affecting the syntax and the semantic or propositional content of the utterance. The case is totally different with the negated yaʕni in the above extracts. That is, removing yaʕni or trying to mobilize it will result in an ill-formed utterance. Therefore, it is important for yaʕni in the above extracts to stay preceded by the negative particle, and therefore formulating an important evidence for yaʕni as a verb but not as a linguistic item functioning as a DM.

To summarize, yaʕni identified in the above 5 instances functioned as a verb and not as a DM. The following were crucial attributes which indicated the verb categorical status of yaʕni in the above extracts:

- Negation of yaʕni with the Arabic negative particle la used to negate verbs in the imperfect aspect (or the present tense);
• *Yaṣni* reserved a specific syntactic position in the utterances where it is used as the matrix verb of the utterance. First, it was preceded by the negative particle *la*. Second, it was followed by two kinds of syntactic complements fulfilling the complement/transitivity requirement of *yaṣni*: an adverbial complement modifying the verb and a noun phrase complement in place of an object;

• Semantically, *yaṣni* carried propositional and lexical meaning, which contributed to the propositional content and meaning of the utterance;

• As a result of the syntactic role and semantic significance, mobilizing and/or removing any of the above instances of *yaṣni* would yield either a difficulty in comprehending the utterance and/or a grammatically ill-formed utterance.

Now, compare the instances of verb *yaṣni* in the above to the following instances in the following section and the following functional analysis.

**Yaṣni as a Discourse Marker**

It seems that grammatical and semantic analysis provide little account for a significant number of instances of *yaṣni* found in my data of the sports TV show *Alkurah Tatakallam*. In this section, I illustrate that the typical diagnostic characteristics with verbs, in general, and categorical characteristics of verbs discussed in the previous section have little relevance and cannot account for the following instances of *yaṣni*. Rather, the remaining instances are better to be discussed in terms of characteristics regularly found in the literature of DMs, and identified in my review of the literature on Arabic *yaṣni* including:
The increasing frequency of the invariable form of the imperfect third person singular form of the verb ʕana;

The weak syntactic association with the utterance structure;

The lack of referential or semantic meaning;

The lack of influence on the propositional meaning of the utterance;

Movability and optionality in the utterance and discourse;

Multifunctionality in discourse;

The interpretation of yaʕni is dependent on the specific context where it is used.

Let us now look at an extract that elucidate the discourse-pragmatic status, rather than the verb category, of yaʕni that was found in my materials and to be expected in my analysis of the discourse-pragmatic functions of yaʕni in the following sections. The following extract is illustrative.

**Extract (3) KEP2**

(Talk was about former coach-player relationship between Sultan and Nawaf)

1 AH: zziyadah wiinha? wiin zziyadah hhhh=
   the.addition where.it where the.addition hhhh
   where is the addition? Where is the addition hhhh=

2 NA:=y^aʕni↓ jiib bebsi šawarma yaʕni.=
   DM bring Pepsi shawarma DM

   =y^aʕni↓ bring Pepsi or shawarma yaʕni.=

3 AH:=hhh ṭayyib mušahdina lkiram …
   hhh DM viewers.our dear
(Ahmed took the next turn to introduce the topics of the episode)

There are two instances of *yaʕni* classified as DMs in the above extract in line 2, which was an utterance or a turn contributed by Nawaf. There are several reasons to consider these instances as DMs. First, the form *yaʕni* occurred in positions where an utterance already has a main verb *jiib* ‘bring.’ Second, we can note how both instances were used in the invariable form of the imperfect third person singular form of the verb *ʕana*. This gives an indication about the frequency of occurrence of DM *yaʕni*. Third, *yaʕni* as a DM shows greater syntactic flexibility and freedom in being able to appear in different utterance positions such as utterance-initial and utterance-final in the above extract. Fourth, these instances of *yaʕni* are semantically non-referential in which case that they do not add to the propositional meaning of the utterance that contains them. Rather, these instances add information on the discourse-pragmatic level which can be interpreted given *yaʕni*’s context of use. Functionally, we can see that the first *yaʕni* in the utterance (or utterance-initial) functions as a turn initiation device; the second instance in the utterance (or utterance-final) signals turn transition (or turn-yielding device) evidenced by the position of *yaʕni* and the next relevant action of turn-taking by the next speaker, Ahmed. More characterizations and discussions of the discourse-pragmatic functions of *yaʕni* will be elucidated in the following sections.

The task of determining instances of *yaʕni* that function as DMs from instances that function as verbs was by no means straightforward. This is why it is also important to recall the prototype approach where some DMs and/or some instances of DMs can be viewed as scalar from more-to-less prototypical of the class of DMs (Brinton, 2008;
Jucker & Ziv, 1998). That is, while the analysis showed that the majority of instances of *yaʕni* were found to function as prototypical DMs by virtue of the diagnostic characteristics presented above, the analysis also revealed that the propositional meaning and the lexical reading of the form *yaʕni* and the qualifying attribute inherent in the semantics of *yaʕni* can be gradually transparent in a number of instances. The functional category of elaboration and turn expansion identified for the current study represents bona fide examples of those later instances. Ghobrial (1993), Alkhalil (2005), Owens and Rockwood (2008), and Marmorstein (2016) postulated similar views. Since the foregoing analysis and discussion touched on the functional category of elaboration and turn expansion and its implications for the discourse-pragmatic functions of *yaʕni*, this functional category will be the focus of the following section.

*Yaʕni to Signal Elaboration and (Turn Expansion)*

Elaboration, sometimes divided into several realizations (e.g., Marmorstein, 2016; Owens & Rockwood, 2008; Rieschild, 2011), is a discourse-pragmatic function that was repeatedly reported and widely acknowledged in the previous available literature on Arabic *yaʕni*. As for the data analyzed for this dissertation, speakers, specifically the guests, used *yaʕni* to initiate utterances of elaborative moves where speakers provided additional information related to a directly preceding move in talk (or preceding utterance or discourse unit). Explanations, clarifications, exemplifications, justifications/accounts, and support for preceding claims or assertions are among the elaborative moves that were classified and categorized under this functional category. These elaborative moves were sometimes accompanied by expansions in the turn in which case a guest speaker added more additional utterances (or TCUs) after *yaʕni* for the purpose of elaborating,
delivering, and conveying a preceding component of discourse/talk. This discourse-pragmatic function can be schematized in the following:

- Preceding proposition(s), actions(s), discourse unit(s) +
- (pause/micropause) +
- 
- yaʕni +
- Following proposition(s), action(s), discourse unit(s): Explanations, clarifications, exemplifications, justifications/accounts, and support for preceding claims or assertions.

Consider extract (4) and extract (5) for an illustration of the elaborative discourse-pragmatic function with yaʕni.

**Extract (4) KEP2**

*(Talk was about controlling the budgets of the Saudi football teams)*

1 SU: labud labud ʔinnu yiʃir fi ha lumur kullaha (.)

should should that happen in these matters all.them

[control] should happen in all these matters (.)

2 xalina ngul lʔandiya law taʕamlat mathalan a::

let.us say the.teams if dealt for example a::

let us say the teams if dealt for example a::

3 lajnat lihtriaf aw littihad assʕudi yatʕamal maʕa

committee profession or the.federation the.Saudi deal with

the profession committee or the Saudi federation deals with

4 lʔandiya fi niẓam maktab lʕamal (. ) nitqik ʔaḥmar=

the.clubs in system office the.workforce ambit.your red
the clubs as the system of the workforce office (.) your ambit is red

5 AH:=mhm=

6 SU:=yaʃni šalik iltizamat (.) ma  tigdar tsajjil la  laʃib Sʃudi

DM have violations NEG able register NEG player Saudi

yaʃni you have violations (.) you are not able to register a Saudi player

7 wa  la  laʃib ?ajnabi wa  la  tnassiq

and NEG player foreign and NEG plan

and no foreign player and you cannot plan

8 wa  la  tzif wala ḫatta laʃib naʃʔiin

and NEG add NEG even player young

and you cannot add even a young player

9 ma  tigdar (.) law tabbagt  haði

NEG able if you apply this

You cannot (.) if you apply this

(Talk continued about proposing policies to control the budgets of the Saudi football teams)

The target of this extract is yaʃni in line 6. Sultan in this extract talked about how SAFF should create policies to control the chaos in the registration of players in the Saudi professional league. First, it is important to note the talk preceding yaʃni in lines 1, 2, and 3. Yet, special attention should be given to line 4 and the end of line 4 nitaqik ahmar ‘your ambit is red.’ By using yaʃni in line 6, Sultan continued and expanded his turn after Ahmed’s continuer (or minimal response) shown in line 5 ‘mhm.’ In the meantime, Sultan seemed clarifying, explaining and elaborating on what he meant by nitaqik ahmar.
‘your ambit is red’ in the talk that followed yaʕni to the end of the turn exemplified above. For Sultan, nitaqik ahmar ‘your ambit is red’ means alik eltizamat ‘you have violations’ that, if put under strict athletic policies and applied, should help in controlling the registration of players in the Saudi professional league. The behavior of yaʕni in extract (4) can be represented in the following:

- Preceding proposition(s), actions(s), discourse unit(s): To control the registration of players in the Saudi professional league, SAFF should create policies similar to those of the workforce office where your ambit becomes red +
- (pause/micropause/continuer) +
- yaʕni +
- Following proposition(s), action(s), discourse unit(s): If your ambit is red, that means you have violations restricting the team’s opportunities to register any kind of players.

Also, consider extract (5).

**Extract (5) KEP1**

*(Talk was about Khalid’s proposal to control the work of the sports journalists and sports TV channels)*

1 AH: ʔiš kunt tabi tsawi bi leʕlamyin=

what were you want do with the journalists

what did you want to do with the journalists=

2 KH: =leʕlamyin ʔinhum ykunun yistifidun min dxulhum=

the journalists that they become benefit from entering
(Talk continued about regulating the work of the sports journalists and sports TV channels)

Extract (5) was taken from a stretch of talk between Ahmed and Khalid about
how to regulate the work and the role of the media in the field of Saudi sports. The target of this extract is the instance of \( yaʕni \) in line 3. We can see that Ahmed asked a question in line 1 which received Khalid’s response. We can also see how Khalid initiated the first TCU of his response. Then, using \( yaʕni \) in the onset of the second TCU, Khalid signaled the continuation of his turn. Moreover, by observing the talk that preceded and followed \( yaʕni \), Khalid, through exemplification \( mathalan \) ‘for example’, seemed to expand and elaborate on his previous TCU/talk giving an example on how to regulate the role and work of the media. Doing so would, in turn, create some equality on two sides: a) in terms of broadcasting and coverage; and b) in terms of media appearance among sports analysts. The following is a representation of the behavior of \( yaʕni \) in extract (5):

- Preceding proposition(s), actions(s), discourse unit(s): The proposal was that the journalists could benefit from entering the sports field +
- (pause/micropause) +
- \( yaʕni \) for example +
- Following proposition(s), action(s), discourse unit(s): There should be equality between the journalists, the analysts, and the TV broadcast channels.

As alluded to in the available literature on \( yaʕni \), specifically Alkhalil (2005), Ghobrial (1993), Marmorstein (2016), and Owens and Rockwood (2008), the function of \( yaʕni \) to initiate and preface elaborative moves is not unpredictable. Rather, the function of \( yaʕni \) with elaborations could be thought of and reasonably related to the form’s original lexical-semantic meaning. In other words, the elaborative function of \( yaʕni \) is remnant and reminiscent of the form’s lexical-semantic meaning related to both the
meaning and the signify meaning, which seems by and large similar to English *I mean* (see Beeching, 2016; Brinton, 2008).

Moving the analysis and discussion of *yašni* forward, it seems that the propositional content and the lexical input of the word associated with the *mean/intention* meaning and the *signify* meaning is vastly decreasing. At this stage, *yašni* is no longer featuring formal and categorical characteristics of the verb. Nevertheless, the qualifying attribute inherent in the semantics of *yašni*, of course with the development of new context-specific discourse-pragmatic meanings, can be discernable and therefore accountable to an extent. Of considerable interest and attention is the development of (inter)subjective and connective (ideational and textual) discourse-pragmatic meanings and functions. Equally important is the consideration of collocation and the type of collocation *yašni* combined with. To this end, the following analysis and discussion will provide detailed accounts and examples for the use of *yašni* in repair contexts. The first topic is self-repair, including:

- The use of *yašni* to recover from self-interruptions and disfluencies;
- The use of *yašni* with word searches and as a turn holding device;
- The use of *yašni* to correct grammatical errors;
- The use of *yašni* to correct lexical choice;
- The use of *yašni* with self-rephrase;
- The use of *yašni* with specification/insertion;
- The use of *yašni* to accomplish self-repair that was other-initiated;

**Yašni in Repair Contexts**

The data and the analytical methods used in this dissertation showed that *yašni*
was one of the most important devices used in repair contexts. Before getting into the findings and analysis of *yaʻini* in repair contexts, some brief background information about repair should be in demand here.

Repair or “an organization of repair” (Schegloff et al., 1977, p. 361; see Jefferson, 1987 for the concept of *correction*) is an interactional activity and a conversational process through which speakers become able to deal with problems and difficulties that arise in almost all levels of talk (Liddicoat, 2011; Schegloff et al., 1977; Sidnell, 2010; for recent treatments, see Couper-Kuhlen & Selting, 2018; Kitzinger, 2013). The kinds of problems that people frequently encounter in talk and that are usually resolved by the mechanism of repair include problems of speaking, hearing, and understanding (Schegloff et al., 1977). According to Sidnell (2010, p. 110),

Troubles of speaking arise, for instance, when a speaker uses the wrong word or cannot find the exact word they want. Troubles of hearing arise when a hearer cannot make out what the speaker has said. Troubles of understanding arise within a wide variety of circumstances, such as when the hearer does not recognize a particular word used, does not know who or what is being talked about, or cannot parse the grammatical structure of an utterance.

The overall repair phenomenon can be seen to consist of the following parts (Liddicoat, 2011; Schegloff et al., 1977; Sidnell, 2010):

- Trouble source or repairable: is the part of talk that needs to be repaired;
- Repair initiation: includes a number of devices that mark a possible problem in the preceding talk; and
- Repair completion or accomplishment: is the point of talk where the problem is either resolved and/or abandoned.

Of relevance to my analysis and findings is to mention that repair is distinguished
according to who initiates repair, who makes the repair, and the sequential locations of the repair. For the types of repair, we can have the following 4 possibilities, which can be found in Schegloff et al. (1977) and summarized in Liddicoat (2011, p.210):

1. Self-initiated self-repair: in which the speaker of the repairable item both indicates a problem in the talk and resolves the problem.

2. Self-initiated other repair: in which the speaker of the repairable item indicates a problem in the talk, but the recipient resolves the problem.

3. Other-initiated self-repair: in which the recipient of the repairable item indicates a problem in the talk and the speaker resolves the problem.

4. Other-initiated other repair: in which the recipient of the repairable item both indicates a problem in the talk and resolves the problem.

For the sequential locations of repair, we can have the following 5 possibilities, which can be found in Schegloff et al. (1977) and summarized in Liddicoat (2011, p.210):

1. Within the same turn as the trouble source (same-turn repair);

2. In the transition space following the turn containing the trouble source (transition space repair);

3. In the turn immediately following the trouble source (second position repair);

4. In a third positioned turn (third position repair);

5. In a fourth positioned turn (fourth positioned repair).

Keeping the information previously introduced in mind, it is also important to note the following from Schegloff et al. (1977):

- “[R]epair is relevant to all levels of talk” (Liddicoat, 2011, 208). That is, “it
appears that nothing is, in principle, excludable from the class ‘repairable’” (Schegloff et al., 1977, p.363).

- Repair can be initiated in situations where there is no indication of errors or problems in the talk such as a ‘word search.’
- Not every hearable error can receive repair or repair initiation.
- Not every repair initiation leads into successful repair. Therefore, repair may fail in some situations.

Turning to the previous available literature on *yaʕni*, only Alkhalil (2005), Owens and Rockwood (2008), Rieschild (2011), and Marmorstein (2016) are the scholars, who touched on *yaʕni* in repair situations. Each of these treatments offered good insights about *yaʕni* in repair situations. In his dissertation, Alkhalil (2005) subsumed the repair capability of *yaʕni* under what he called ‘explanation of intentions.’ He showed that *yaʕni* can be used in self-initiated self-repair and other-initiated self-repair with an explanation or a reformulation of a trouble source. *Yaʕni* can also be used as a word search and turn holder. Owens and Rockwood (2008) suggested that *yaʕni* can be used to recover from disfluencies and hesitations and can appear in contexts similar to word search although the authors acknowledged that their account of *yaʕni* needs to recognize phonetic gestures and hesitation markers associated with hesitation and repair. Rieschild (2011) referred to *yaʕni* with repair and word searches. Marmorstein (2016) also noticed the use of *yaʕni* in repair that was self-initiated. Unlike Alkhalil (2005) and Owens and Rockwood (2008), Marmorstein (2016, p.68) claimed that *yaʕni* was “only used in the context of message repairs” defined as “repairs in which the speaker replaces material that s/he deems as insufficiently accurate vis-à-vis his or her intended message.” To this
end, none of the above scholars showed that *yaʕni* can be used in the correction of errors in talk including phonological, grammatical, or lexical errors. While Owens and Rockwood (2008) did not bring this up into their survey of *yaʕni*, Alkhalil (2005, p.184) stated that *yaʕni* “is never used to correct a phonological or grammatical error.” Despite mentioning that “[t]he examined corpus did not provide any example of error correction involving *yaʕni*,” Marmorstein (2016, p.68) posited stronger claims that *yaʕni* is clearly incompatible with error corrections.

The analysis of the data considered in this dissertation showed that *yaʕni* can be used as a device to either accomplish self-initiated self-repair as well as word searches, and other-initiated self-repair. Self-initiated self-repair and word search comprise the two major contexts of repair which *yaʕni* appeared to be accomplishing in my data. In what follows, I begin with describing the variety of contexts of where I noticed the use of *yaʕni* as a self-initiated self-repair device corroborating such uses with extracts from the data analyzed. The analysis and discussion is expanded to include *yaʕni* in word searches and turn holding device. The discussion ends with considering a sequence of repair where *yaʕni* can be seen in other-initiated self-repair.

**Yaʕni in Self-Repair Contexts**

It is not an exaggeration to say that a significant majority of the instances of *yaʕni* can be classified as a self-repair device. The analysis revealed that *yaʕni* can be used in a wide range of self-initiated self-repair contexts within the same turn as the trouble source, i.e., same-turn repair. The interactional activity of self-initiated self-repair can be subcategorized into:

- *Yaʕni* after self-interruptions and disfluencies;
• Yaqni to correct lexical choice;
• Yaqni with insertion/specification;
• Yaqni to correct grammatical errors;
• Yaqni with self-rephrase or self-reformulation; and
• Yaqni in word searches and turn holding.

In the following, I describe how yaqni was found to be a good candidate and an important interactional resource in repair contexts, specifically self-initiated self-repair.

**Yaqni after Self-Interruptions and Disfluencies**

Self-interruptions and disfluencies followed by restarts or resumptions provide central contexts and loci for the appearance and use of yaqni. That is, yaqni can be used simply as a restart or a device to recover from self-interruptions and disfluencies. It was also notable that all speakers in the data used yaqni to recover from self-interruptions and self-disfluencies. This functional behavior of yaqni offers a significant interactional import in which the trajectory of the turn and the direction of the talk can be quickly resumed after some kind of suspension. Extracts (6) and (7) illustrate the use of yaqni as an interactional resource to recover from self-interruptions and disfluencies.

**Extract (6) KEP2**

(Previous talk was about initiating policies to control the registration of players in the Saudi professional football league)

1  SU: ?ana  lli  Ḱṣid  tasjil- ḥatta- ṣuf- ?ana-
   I       that       I.mean      registration      even      see      I
   What       I.mean      registration-      even-      see-      I-

2  kura- yaqni  labud  ykun  fiih  ṭumur  ma  ṣdar =
ball DM should be there things not I can
ball- yašni there should be things I cannot

I oblige the clubs with things or policies
oblige the clubs with things or policies

4 = yimkin- yašni qawanin lfifa lli lli lli mithl =
probably DM policies the FIFA that that that as
probably- yašni the FIFA* policies that that that as

5 = ma ḏakart lqasya lli yahbit lfariq
what I mentioned the strict that disqualify the club
I mentioned as strict that that disqualify a club

(Talk continued regarding the policies)

*FIFA is an abbreviation for the Fédération Internationale de Football Association, which is the International Federation of Football.

Sultan’s turn in the above was positioned within talk about how to control the registration of football players in the Saudi professional league. We can see the number of self-interruptions throughout lines 1 and 2 on words tasjil- ‘registration,’ ḥatta- ‘even,’ šuf- ‘see,’ ʔana- ‘I,’ and kura- ‘ball,’ respectively. Sultan, then, used yašni to recover from these interruptions and restart the trajectory of his turn. Proceeding no more than few words of the same turn in line 3, Sultan had another self-interruption in line 4 on the word yimkin- ‘probably’ that was also recovered by yašni. Also, consider extract (7).
Extract (7) KEP1

(Previous talk was about unsatisfied reactions towards some decisions of the sanctions committee of SAFF)

1 KH:… ?ljumhuur mumkin yist- ʔyaʃni yistfid min Ifikra haḍi… the.fans probably yist- DM benefit from the.idea this …the fans probably yist- ʔyaʃni benefit from this idea…

(Khalid continued his turn about such reactions)

Extract (7) was taken from a multi-unit turn for Khalid talking about how fans of the Saudi football can benefit from the decisions of the sanctions committee of SAFF. The self-interruption is apparent in extract (7) on yist-, which seemed to be the beginning of the word yistfid ‘benefit.’ After the cut-off, Khalid used ʔyaʃni as a restart to recover and pursued the trajectory of his turn.

Yaʃni to Correct Lexical Choice

Speakers used ʔyaʃni to initiate self-repair in order to correct and substitute the use of lexical items/choice leading to the selection of the appropriate lexical or word choice as extracts (8) and (9) illustrate.

Extract (8) KEP2

(Previous talk was about the problem between Al-Ittihad and the players regarding payments)

1 NA: haḍa ʔyuʔaʃ- ʔyaʃni yuʃir ʕila ?l ?l ma ʔakartuh = this indicate- DM point on the the what I.mentioned = this indicates- ʔyaʃni points to the the what I mentioned

2 = fi bayaʃnhum lʔawwal (.) innuhum wufiqu fi =
Extract (8) was taken from a long stretch of talk where Nawaf talked about the new policies for the Saudi professional football league and how these new policies should be related and applied to the problem that ensued in Al-Ittihad team between the administration and some of the players who stopped attending the team’s training sessions because of the reason that these players did not receive their agreed-upon payments in a timely manner. Noticeable in the extract is the use of *yašni* after a self-interruption and a cut-off on the word *yuʔaši*- which was an incomplete form of the word *yuʔašir* ‘to indicate.’ Nawaf used *yašni* to initiate a self-repair substituting the word, specifically the verb, *yuʔašir* ‘to indicate’ being the trouble source or the repairable with the word/verb *yušir* ‘to point to.’

Interestingly, there is another instance of *yašni* in line 5 used for the same purpose.
of correcting the use of lexical choice by Nawaf. On one hand, we can see that Nawaf
endorsed the time selected by the administration of Al-Ittihad team to deal with the
problem between the administration and the players being ‘after the match’ in lines 2 and
3. On the other hand, Nawaf commented that the administration’s treatment of the
problem was not successful as the treatment was, as first Nawaf mentioned in lines 4 and
5, ‘before revealing the result’ which might be used to refer to the ‘result’ of the match.
Note how Nawaf used yaʕni in line 5 with a repetition of the same preceding clause gabl
zuḥur ‘before revealing,’ however, with a lexical substitution for the noun nnatija ‘the
result’ to the noun lhal ‘the solution.’ Therefore, lhal ‘the solution’ seemed to be the
appropriate lexical selection to be used in this context as ‘the result’ of the match seemed
to have no relevance regarding the success for treating the problem. Also, consider
extract (9).

Extract (9) KEP1

(Talk was about Abdullatif Bukhari’s provocative tweet against SAFF)

1 AH: umhum, ʔint tudiin yaʕni tubarrir Bukhari=
       umhum you condemn DM exculpate Bukhari
       umhum, do you condemn yaʕni exculpate Bukhari=

2 = fi ḥal kan ʕindu mubarrirat muqniʕah
       in case was had justifications convincing
       = in case he has convincing justifications

(Khalid took the next turn to talk about possible convincing justifications that might
exculpate Bukhari)

Extract (9) was positioned within talk about Abdullatif Bukhari’s provocative
tweet. Bukhari was a candidate during the elections of SAFF; and he published a tweet about the possibility of unlawful proceedings by SAFF, which might favor some Saudi teams over others. Within the talk about Bukhari and his tweet, Ahmed asked Khalid if Bukhari would be condemned or exculpated because of the tweet. Ahmed’s questioning move is apparent in lines 1 and 2. Paying attention to line 1 in extract (9), Ahmed firstly used the word *tudiin* ‘condemn’ for the formulation of his question. However, he used an instance of *yaʕni* to correct his lexical choice to the word *tubarrir* ‘exculpate’ Bukhari in case he had convincing evidence for justifying his provocative tweet against SAFF.

**Yaʕni with Insertion/Specification**

Specification and insertion is a type of self-initiated self-repair that was notable with *yaʕni* in the data. By this type of repair, a speaker used *yaʕni* to insert following information and utterances that added more specification related to the preceding utterances—hence the use of insertion and specification together. This type of function can be distinguished from elaboration considering the insertion and specification features, which interrupt the trajectory of a speaker’s turn. The following extracts are illustrative.

**Extract (10) KEP2**

*(Talk was about a former coach-player relationship between Sultan and Nawaf)*

1  NA:… yimkin hu ma yiḏkir ?ašya kthiir,=

   probably he NEG remember things many

   … he probably does not remember many things,=

2  = lakin a::: .hh bi lmuṣadafa, *yaʕni* ?ana ?aʕtabir=

   but a::: .hh by accident DM I consider

   = but a::: .hh by accident, *yaʕni* I consider=
(Ahmed took the next turn and initiated some sarcasm about the relationship)

In extract (10), Nawaf described his meeting with Sultan in the TV show and the episode as a surprising event in lines 2-3. Note that Nawaf used the word *bi lmuṣadafa* ‘by accident’ without mentioning the thing that was ‘by accident.’ Using *yaʕni*, Nawaf inserted additional information *ha liqa* ‘this meeting’ that specified the thing that was ‘by accident,’ which was their meeting on the TV show and in the episode. Also, consider extract (11).

**Extract (11) KEP2**

(In the previous talk, speakers compared the responsibility and commitment of the Saudi football players to those of Europe)

1 AH: ʔabi ʔaʕṭik- jamiil, ʔana widdi ?agul lukum=
   I.want give.you beautiful I want say for.you
   I want to give you- beautiful, I want to tell you

2 = ʕala salfa ṣarat (.) w ?abğakum ?abğa taʕliiq=
   on story happened and I.want.you I.want commentary
   = a story that happened (.) and I want you I want commentary=

3 = minkum ?ath- *yaʕni* ba ʔaxiḏ Sultan baʕdiin ?int=
   from.you ?ath- DM FUT I.take Sultan then you
   = from you ?ath- *yaʕni* I will take Sultan then you [Nawaf]=

4 = ʕala salfa lli ṣarat li ʔana šaxşiyyan (.)
on story that happened for me personally

= regarding the story that happened for me personally (.)

(Ahmed continued his turn to tell the story for Sultan and Nawaf)

The use of yaʕni for insertion and specification can also be discerned from extract (11). This extract was taken from a turn where Ahmed oriented the guests Sultan and Nawaf to comment on a story that happened for him with a Saudi player. The story and the moral of the story was about the player’s non-commitment to sleep times. That is, the player was staying up late to like and unlike pictures on Instagram. The player was then made to account for such a behavior since it might be an indication of carelessness about morning exercises and the player’s duties towards his team.

Now, consider yaʕni in line 3 in extract (11). Preceding this instance of yaʕni, Ahmed mentioned generally that he wanted commentary on his story from both Sultan and Nawaf in lines 2-3. Another important indication to consider here is a partial pronunciation of and a cut-off on the word ʔathaniin ‘both of you; two of you,’ becoming ʔath-. Ahmed, subsequently, used yaʕni to preface a specification of the order of the speakers to comment on his story. As it appeared in line 3, Ahmed wanted Sultan to comment first on the story followed by Nawaf’s commentary. Such an interactional strategy was, in turn, an early pre-allocation for turn-taking that is characteristic of the turn exchanges in institutional talk.

**Yaʕni to Correct Grammatical Errors**

Yaʕni was also used to initiate self-repair for grammatical errors related to gender agreement as in extract (12) and a shift between active to passive voice as in extract (13).
Extract (12) KEPI

(Talk was about the reputation and the bias of SAFF’s sanctions committee)

1 KH: ḥaḍa-  yaṣni  ḥaḍi  hiiya  ḥiyya  fikrah (.) …
   this.3M.S  DM  this.3F.S  it  the.idea
   this-  yaṣni  this was the idea (.) …

(Khalid continued his turn about the reputation and the bias of SAFF’s sanctions committee)

In Arabic, ḥaḍa is a demonstrative for the third person masculine singular while ḥaḍi is a demonstrative for the third person feminine singular. The noun fikrah ‘idea’ in the above extract is a feminine singular noun that requires grammatical agreement in number and gender with demonstratives. In extract (12), we note that Khalid uttered the third person masculine singular demonstrative. The demonstrative ḥaḍa agrees with the noun fikrah in number, but not in gender. Realizing this, Khalid interrupted his speech and used yaṣni to initiate a self-repair correcting the demonstrative ḥaḍa being the repairable or the trouble source to agree with the noun in gender. Extract (13) offers another example for a grammatical correction using yaṣni, specifically a shift between active and passive voice.

Extract (13) KEPI

(Talk was about a hypothetical resignation situation in SAFF’s sanctions committee)

1 KH: ṭabʕan  hu  yatawafar  hu  yatawafar  fiih  ṣṣarṭ=
   of course  he  has  he  has  in.him  the.condition
   of course he has he has in him the condition=

2 = law  staqal  yaṣni  law  ʔuqiil,  biḥayth  ʔinnu=

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if ACT.resigned DM if PASS.resigned where that

= if he resigned yaʕni if he was made to resign, where that=

3 = ma yijmaʕ- la šak yatawafar fiih ššarṭ

NEG he.collect NEG doubt has in.him the.condition

= he does not collect- no doubt he has in him the condition

(Ahmed took the next turn and topicalized the rectification and ratification of SAFF’s policies through the FIFA)

Line 2 and the instance of yaʕni in line 2 are the targets of extract (13). This extract occurred within talk about a hypothetical resignation situation for the chair position in SAFF’s sanctions committee. The purpose of providing this hypothetical situation was to verify SAFF’s presidential procedures and policies in unpredictable work circumstances. In line 2 of extract (13), we can see that Khalid first used the verb staqal ‘resigned.’ The verb staqal ‘resigned’ was grammatically in the active voice as if the sanctions committee chair did his resignation by himself in the hypothetical situation. It seems, however, that this was not what Khalid wanted to say evinced by the grammatical correction after yaʕni in line 2. That is, Khalid corrected the use of the active voice and the form of the verb staqal ‘resigned’ to the passive voice using the form of the verb ʔuqiil ‘PASS.resigned.’ By so doing, Khalid changed the focus regarding the actor who carried out the resignation.

Yaʕni with Self-Rephrase

By means of this function, a speaker rephrases or reformulates a preceding discourse unit or an utterance using a related formulation in a discourse unit or an utterance following yaʕni, i.e. prefaced by yaʕni. I subcategorized this function under
self-repair for some reasons that make it more likely fit under this general category. First, by doing a self-rephrase, a speaker seemed to be looking for a more accurate and a more appropriate or revised formulation for a preceding utterance. Second, self-rephrase, as the term indicates, occurred in the same turn of a speaker—hence close to what might seem as the repaired (or repairable) utterance, which is the preceding utterance in this case. The following extracts are illustrative.

**Extract (14) KEP1**

*(Speakers talked about the ranking of the Saudi professional league)*

1 AH: hmm (.) kiif šift lyum a:: ʔl Al-Nassr (.)=

    hmm how you.saw today a:: the Al-Nassr

    hmm (.) how did you see a:: the Al-Nassr today (.)

2 = yaʕni kan muqniʕ lak baʕd fatrat tawagguf Abu Faisal

    DM was convincing for.you after period break Abu Faisal

    = yaʕni was [Al-Nassr] convincing for you after the break period Abu Faisal

*(Fahad took the next turn and talked about Al-Nassr’s performance)*

In extract (14), Ahmed posited a first formulation of a question for Fahad in line 1, ‘how did you see Al-Nassr today?’ Ahmed rephrased his question using *yaʕni* in line 2 by ‘was Al-Nassr convincing for you after the break period Abu Faisal? In other words, how was the performance of Al-Nassr today?’ The instance of *yaʕni* in line 2 can also have the ‘in other words’ reading. Also, consider extract (15).

**Extract (15) KEP2**

*(Previous talk was about the players’ professional awareness)*

1 NA: la la šif llaʕib waʕi (.) llaʕib waʕi=
no no see the player aware the player aware

no no see the player is aware (.) the player is aware=

2 AH:= daliil ?innu waʕi=

evidence that aware

= the evidence he is aware=

3 NA:= daliil ?innu waʕI, ʕarif ?innu muxṭi (.)=

evidence that aware know that wrong

= the evidence he is aware, he knows he was wrong (.)=

4 = yaʕni law muhu muxṭi ma kan ʕamal ha lxuṭwa

DM if NEG wrong NEG was did this step

= yaʕni he would not do this step if he was not wrong (.) …

(Nawaf continued his turn about the players’ professional awareness)

Extract (15) is related to extract (11) about the player who stayed up late to like and unlike pictures on Instagram. The behavior of this player moved Nawaf to generally talk about the players’ professional awareness. As shown in line 1, Nawaf responded to Ahmed and commented that the player was aware. In line 2, Ahmed questioned Nawaf about the evidence that the player was aware. In lines 3 and 4, Nawaf responded that the player’s knowledge about his mistake, which was staying up late, was the evidence of his awareness. Using yaʕni in line 4, Nawaf rephrased his preceding utterance in line 3 with the following utterance in line 4 although both utterances carried and delivered the same idea or proposition that the player was aware of his mistake giving the evidence that he regretted and apologized for his mistake. Those later actions of regretting and apologizing unfolded sequentially and progressively in the subsequent talk between the
Yaʕni in Word Searches and Turn Holding

With speech perturbations and delay markers including vowel lengthening/prolongation, syllable lengthening, cut offs, pauses, yaʕni appeared as a good candidate for word search in the middle of an utterance allowing a speaker sufficient processing time to look for an appropriate lexical item or formulation to be used in the interactional context of the talk. Yaʕni had another interactional effect in this context: it served as a turn-holding device (or a turn-holder) through which a speaker can signal his attendance and cooperativeness to the talk and that his turn or contribution is not complete yet. Extracts (16) and (17) elucidate this function of yaʕni.

Extract (16) KEP2

(Talk was about the report issued by Al-Ittihad’s administration regarding the players)

1 NA: ʔl lbayan a::: waẓih fih min a::: yaʕni:: majlis =

the the.report a::: clear in.it from a::: yaʕni:: assembly

It is a::: clear in the report from a::: yaʕni:: the assembly =

2 = idarat nadi Al-Ittihad (.) ?ana ?ana gaʕid aḥawil atḏakkar in administration team Al-Ittihad I I setting trying remember if =

= administration of Al-Iyyihad’s team (.) I am trying to remember if =

3 = lbayan gabl lmubahar ah baʕad (.)=

the.report before the.match or after

= the report was before or after the match (.)

(Talk continued between Nawaf and Ahmed about the report)

Nawaf in the above extract responded to the host’s, Ahmed’s, question about his
impression about the report issued by Al-Ittihad team’s administration regarding the absence of some the players and not attending the team’s training sessions. Note in line 1 the speech perturbations found in the context of *yaʕni* including the syllable *aːː* and lengthening of the syllable itself. We also can note the vowels prolongation of the word *yaʕniːː* itself. Importantly, note in line 2 how Nawaf acknowledged the act of remembering, which could clearly indicate, with speech perturbations, the function of *yaʕni* as a device used for word search.

Although KEP1 abounds with examples of *yaʕni* caught in the middle of word searches and as such served as a turn holding device, I preferred to provide the following extract from KEP2 for some reasons primarily related to the emergent circumstances of talk found relevant to the use and the interpretation of *yaʕni*.

**Extract (17) KEP2**

*(Talk was brought back about Al-Ittihad’s issue with the players)*

1  SU: … şuf, baʕẕ lmuʃaʃjuʕiin *yaʕniːː*[ːː]::  
    see some the.fans DM  
    … see, some fans *yaʕniːː*[ːː]::

2  AH: [ʕindhum l払いka=  
    have.they the.wisdom  
    [they have the wisdom=  

3  SU:= l払いka lʔidariya ʔinnak tiʕrif mita=  
    the.wisdom the.administrative that you.know when  
    = the administrative wisdom that you know when=  


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you take the decision and when tib- DM the the the a:::
= you take the decision and when tib- yaʕni the the the a::=

5 = ʔlbayan  ṭalaʕ  baʕd  lmubara (.)

the report issued after the match
= the report was issued after the match (.)

(Sultan continued his turn commenting on the issue)

There are two instances of yaʕni in extract (17). The first instance is in line 1 and
the second instance is in line 4. Both of these instances were classified as word search
and turn holding devices. The instance of yaʕni in line 1 should be considered while
paying attention to the surrounding context of yaʕni as well as the development of
Sultan’s turn through lines 1-3. First, it is notable that Sultan used yaʕni with lengthening
the /i/ final vowel of yaʕni—hence becoming yaʕni::::. Prolongation of the final vowel is
the first indication for Sultan’s engagement with the activity of word search. However,
what happened interactionally and sequentially in lines 2 and 3 is highly relevant to the
interpretation of yaʕni in line 1. Sensing Sultan’s word searching in line 1, Ahmed
overlapped with Sultan and provided Sultan with a candidate formulation ʕindhum
lḥikma ‘they have the wisdom.’ Latching with Ahmed’s provided candidate formulation
in line 2, Sultan picked up the candidate formulation. Not only that, but also note that
Sultan adopted the candidate formulation into his turn in line 3 with adding lḥikma
lʔidariya ‘the administrative wisdom’ and resuming the trajectory of his turn and talk.

Similarly, the second instance of yaʕni in line 4 should be considered with the
surrounding speech perturbations and delay markers. First, there was a cut-off on tib- in
line 4. Of course, guessing and inferring this word seems hard. After that, Sultan
employed *yaʕni* followed by four instances of the Arabic definite article *ʔl* ‘the’ and the syllable *ʔː*. These later mentioned linguistic devices seemed to serve as delay markers collaborating with *yaʕni* to sustain the activity of word search and achieve more of turn holding devices.

To summarize, the above analysis and discussion demonstrated the significant role of *yaʕni* in the organization of self-initiated self-repair. The following analysis will show the use of *yaʕni* in a sequence of self-repair that was other-initiated.

**Yaʕni in Other-Initiated Self-Repair**

In only one instance found in episode 1 (or KEP1) of the data, *yaʕni* seemed to function to introduce a self-repair that was other-initiated. Consider the following extract.

**Extract (18) KEP1**

*(Previous talk was about the opposition to Ahmed Eid to be elected the chairman for SAFF)*

1 AH: w nt ish rayak fi Ahmed Eid=
   and you what opinion. your in Ahmed Eid
   and you what is your opinion in Ahmed Eid=*

2 FA: =kif=
   =how=

3 AH: *yaʕni* Ahmed Eid tihisu fi ʔay muʕaskar

   **DM** Ahmed Eid you. feel. him in any group
   =*yaʕni* in what group do you feel Ahmed Eid?

*(Talk continued about the process of past elections related to the SAFF)*
This extract was taken from a stretch of talk where Ahmed and Fahad talked about how the media and the press motivated by their teams’ affiliations opposed Ahmed Eid to be elected as the chairman for SAFF. At first sight, one might note that yaʕni is in a position to signal turn initiation. However, by looking at the development of talk and the sequential context of this instance, it appeared that yaʕni was used in an inserted repair sequence evidenced by the following:

- Line 1 contains the trouble source, which is the first formulation of Ahmed’s question;
- Line 2 contains the repair initiator kif ‘how,’ which signaled an understanding problem with Fahad;
- Line 3 contains a reformulation of Ahmed’s question prefaced with yaʕni.

Fahad, then, continued the talk about the process of past elections in SAFF after the completion of this inserted repair sequence. The function of yaʕni in this inserted repair sequence should be compared to the instances of question-intoned yaʕni found in turn-final position in the following analysis and discussion.

**Interim Summary and Discussion**

The foregoing analysis, results, and discussions provide further supporting evidence for the interactional centrality of yaʕni with the organization of repair. This central interactional behavior of yaʕni to organize and manage the mechanism of repair was initially portrayed in the previous literature, including Alkhalil (2005), Owens and Rockwood (2008), Rieschild (2011), and Marmorstein (2016). However, by delving into the workings of repair with yaʕni in the data, the current research and analysis seems to highlight a number of observations:
• Self-initiated self-repair was the predominant type of repair associated with the occurrences of *yaʕni*. Other types of repair were possible such as other-initiated self-repair, yet with insignificant occurrences with *yaʕni*.

• In addition, the self-initiated self-repair can be subcategorized into:
  
  o *Yaʕni* to recover from self-interruptions and disfluencies;
  
  o *Yaʕni* to correct lexical choice;
  
  o *Yaʕni* with insertion/specification;
  
  o *Yaʕni* to correct grammatical errors;
  
  o *Yaʕni* with self-rephrase;
  
  o *Yaʕni* with word searches and turn holding;

• Out of the above types of self-initiated self-repair, the data analyzed abounded with examples of *yaʕni* to recover from disfluencies and interruptions as well as examples of *yaʕni* with word searches and as a turn holding device;

• The predominance of self-initiated self-repair and the prevalence of *yaʕni* after self-interruptions and disfluencies and the outcome of *yaʕni* with word searches might be a reflection of the spontaneous degree of the data and the talk that was analyzed although being institutionalized and preplanned to a certain extent. Such predominance might also result from the speakers’ emotional involvement, embarkation, and engagement with lengthy multi-unit turns, which is characteristic of institutional talk (Drew & Heritage, 1992; Heritage & Clayman, 2010). To illustrate, this kind of lengthy turns and turn-taking system with the emergent circumstances and requirements of talk seem
to place interactional burdens on the speakers through which they engage in real-time monitoring, reiterating, and editing their contributions, hence the prevalence of self-repair and its occurrence with \textit{yaʕni} in the data.

The analysis and discussion now proceed to report the use of \textit{yaʕni} in some closely related functions to that of repair organization; that is, the use of \textit{yaʕni} in turn boundaries, specifically the use of \textit{yaʕni} in turn onsets and turn endings.

\textbf{\textit{Yaʕni} in Turn Management and Turn Boundaries}

To begin with, Al-Batal (1994), Bidaoui (2015) and Marmorstein (2016) did not take into consideration the use of \textit{yaʕni} in turn boundaries. Likewise, in their survey of the functions of \textit{yaʕni}, Owens and Rockwood (2008, p.32) observed that there is a “lack of \textit{yaʕni} at turn-initial position.” By contrast, Ghobrial (1993), Alkhalil (2005), and Rieschild (2011) remarked the use of \textit{yaʕni} in turn management and turn boundaries. While Ghobrial (1993) noted exclusively the use of \textit{yaʕni} in turn-initial position, Alkhalil (2005) and Rieschild (2011) noted the use of \textit{yaʕni} in both discourse positions, i.e., turn-initial position and turn-final position. It is important to mention that there is a significant lack of research regarding the sequential, rhetorical, and pragmatic relevance of \textit{yaʕni} relevant to its turn positions.

Along similar lines to that of the previous literature on \textit{yaʕni}, the functional analysis of \textit{yaʕni} in this study showed that \textit{yaʕni} was an essential discourse-pragmatic resource used to manage the turn-taking system and functioned at turn boundaries, i.e. turn-initial position and turn-final position. The significant role of \textit{yaʕni} in the management of the turn-taking system was evident observing the kinds of connectivity, relevance, and progressivity produced by this marker between preceding and subsequent
contributions of talk. In what follows, the analysis and discussion start with yaʕni in turn onsets.

**Yaʕni in Turn Onsets**

In turn onsets, yaʕni was found to generally signal turn-initiation (or to introduce new turns-at-talk). In this study, turn initiator (or turn-initiating device) is meant to indicate the function of yaʕni in turn-initial positions or turn onsets. The common denominator of instances of yaʕni having this function is that they were used in turn-initial positions to initiate turns-at-talk.

The previous investigations on Arabic yaʕni provide no constraints on the sequential positions for the use of this marker. Although there was sequential variation in the number of the analyzed instances in my corpus, it seems that this discourse-pragmatic element can be constrained to specific and predictable sequential positions/places, which aided speakers to navigate emergent interactional and communicative needs.

Sequentially speaking, yaʕni appeared as a linguistic device that related contributions of talk or turns following it to the preceding contributions of talk or turns. Throughout the data, I found yaʕni to preface different kinds of turns including turns designed to be statements, questions, or answers/responses. The first thing to consider here is that yaʕni signaled an understanding relevant to and tied to the preceding as well as the following discourse. That is, once yaʕni was used in turn-initial position, it was already singling and marking a specific understanding that was constrained by sequential, interactional, stylistic, and rhetorical parameters of the surrounding activities and actions.

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7 Also building this observation are cases and observations brought from daily interactions with family, friends, and other data sources such as TV shows.
Therefore, it can be seen as a metalinguistic device and as a framing device, which assisted in making formulations about talk itself. In the data analyzed for this dissertation, *yaʕni* did not appear to start or signal new topics of talk, but tied related contributions.

Paying close attention to the sequential context, the development of the interaction, and the aspects of speech delivery added more significance and information to the analysis. In addition to the function of turn initiation, *yaʕni* seemed to serve some pragmatic or rhetorical effects such as mitigation, inferential activity, evaluative value, uncertainty, or evasion (or avoidance/resistance) value. It is the consideration of these rhetorical and pragmatic effects that bring the qualifying attribute of *yaʕni* into the foreground. The following extracts demonstrate the turn initiation function of *yaʕni* with some of the pragmatic and rhetorical effects as found in my data.

Extract (19) illustrates the turn initiation function of *yaʕni* in an answer with mitigation effects.

**Extract (19) KEP2**

(Talk was about former coach-player relationship between Sultan and Nawaf)

1 AH: zziyadah wiinha, wiin zziyadah hhhh=

the.addition where.it where the.addition hhhh

where is the addition, where is the addition hhhh=

2 NA:=*yaʕni* jiib bebsi šawarma *yaʕni*.

    DM bring Pepsi shawarma DM

    =*yaʕni* bring Pepsi or shawarma *yaʕni*.

3 AH:=hhh ṭayyib muşahdina lkiram …

    hhh DM viewers.our dear

    hhh ṭayyib our dear viewers …
(Ahmed took the next turn to introduce the topics of the episode)

Extract (19) was taken from the beginning of KEP2. Before this extract, Ahmed introduced the guests of this episode, Sultan and Nawaf. It seemed that there has been a kind of relationship between the two guests. Sultan was the coach of Nawaf for some time in the past. Knowing this kind of relationship, Ahmed started several sarcastic moves and comments about teasing Nawaf and his past relationship with Sultan. Such sarcastic moves can be indicated by describing Nawaf as mbazwit ‘a slacker’ and laughter throughout the talk leading up to the above extract. In another occasion, Ahmed mentioned that Sultan, before the beginning of the episode, said that Nawaf was mbazwit ‘a slacker.’ Nawaf responded that Sultan was a great teacher and great coach in which case Sultan gave Nawaf additional care more than expected from a teacher and a coach. Pursuing his sarcasm, we can see in extract (19) line 1 that Ahmed, with a sarcastic question, followed up on the additional care and the kind of additional care which Nawaf meant to imply. In line 2, Nawaf initiated his turn being an answer/response for Ahmed’s question using yaʕni. The talk that followed yaʕni and the way of pronouncing yaʕni added some rhetorical value in this context. In his answer, Nawaf aligned with Ahmed’s sarcastic moves and added that the kind of additional care might be to bring a Pepsi drink and a shawarma sandwich for Nawaf. This instance of yaʕni was uttered with a rise-fall intonation, y↑aʕni↓. Taken the context of the ongoing sarcastic moves, the emergent relationship between Nawaf and Sultan (i.e. coach-player), and the sarcastic contribution that followed yaʕni, yaʕni in this context seemed to mitigate and filter any negative effects of Nawaf’s sarcastic comment.
Note that there is another instance of ʻyaʕni appended to Nawaf’s turn. This instance will be discussed as a turn-yielding device in the following section.

Extract (20) illustrates the turn initiation function of ʻyaʕni with evaluative effects.

**Extract (20) KEPI**

*(Talk was about the work of SAFF’s general assembly regarding the elections)*

1 FA: bas ʻariba, jamʻiyat kurat qadam (.)=
    but strange  assembly  ball  foot
    but it is strange, a football assembly (.)=

2 = ittiḥad- ʻyaʕni jamʻiyat kurat qadam w tgallis min
    federation  DM  assembly  ball  foot  and  decrease  from
    = federation- ʻyaʕni football assembly and it decreases from

3 = rr- rrabṭah w tadʕam llajnah lʔulumbiyah (.)=
    rr- the.assembly and  support  the.committee  the.olympic
    = rr- the assembly and it supports the olympic committee (.)=

4 = šay ʻgariib=
    thing  strange
    = it is a strange thing=

5 KH:= ʻyaʕni wiš lhadaf minh=
    DM what  the.goal  from.it
    = ʻyaʕni what is the goal from it=

6 FA: = wiš alhadaf
    what  the.goal
    = what is the goal
(Talk continued about SAFF’s unclear vision regarding the elections)

Extract (20) was taken from a stretch of talk in which speakers discussed the unplanned work of the general assembly associated with SAFF and the assembly’s work regarding the elections and the contestations that happened between the candidates. Extract (20) shows that Fahad in lines 1-4 was evaluating and criticizing the assembly’s work. Following the interaction in extract (20), we can see that Khalid used yaʕni in line 5 to initiate his turn designed as an exclamative question aligning with Fahad’s evaluation and criticism. Without giving any answer, Fahad echoed Khalid’s question in line 6.

Extract (21) illustrates the turn initiation function of yaʕni in an answer with evasion and avoidance effects.

**Extract (21) KEP2**

(Talk was about the financial issue between Al-Ittihad players and the team’s administration)

1 SU: … masakiin, lli taxiir rawatib, w ttihamat,=

   poor.they that delayed salaries and accusations

   … they are poor, that their salaries were delayed, and they were accused,=

2 =w tašbihuhum bi šurrabat w tašbihuhum bi †muur kthira=

   and likened.them to socks and likened.them to things many

   = and they were likened to socks and they were likened to many things=

3 AH:= min lli šabbahum bi šurrabat =

   who that likened.them to socks

   = who likened them to socks=

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In extract (21), Sultan seemed to stand with Al-Ittihad’s players against their administration regarding the issue of salaries and payments. He described the players as poor. In addition to the delay in their salaries, they were also accused of carelessness and lack of responsibility, and they were likened to socks and many things. Note that in lines 1 and 2 Sultan either did not mention or use the 3rd person subjects or objects without referring to specific actors behind the salary delay, the accusations, or the demeaning socks analogy and other many analogies. In line 3, Ahmed picked up on Sultan’s non-naming behavior and asked specifically about the subject who likened the players to socks evidenced by the interrogative particle min ‘who.’ What came next in lines 4-6 seemed to be more of an evasive response initiated by yaʕni. The evasion in Sultan’s turn could be substantiated by resorting again to dropping the subjects of actors who likened
the players to socks and using the expression baʕẓ ‘some’ to pursue his avoidance and mark his resistance to name specific people.

To sum up, the above section demonstrated the use of yaʕni in turn onsets as a turn initiator, which could be motivated by sequential, pragmatic, or rhetorical effects of relevance to the communicative and the interactional context. The following section will report the use and the functions of yaʕni in turn-final positions as found in the data.

**Yaʕni in Turn-Final Position**

As alluded to in the previous analysis, there are a number of instances of yaʕni found in turn-final position. The functions of yaʕni in turn-final position has received very little attention in the previous literature. This is not surprising given its infrequency in this discourse position. Only Alkhalil (2005) and Rieschild (2011) commented on the use of yaʕni in turn-final position. Without pursuing its functions, Ghobrial (1993) noted that there was only one instance of yaʕni in turn-final position in his corpus.

In the corpus analyzed for the current dissertation, yaʕni was found to function as a turn-yielding device, which is a function that can be ascribed to the management of the turn-taking system. By means of this function, a speaker used yaʕni to project a transition relevant place (henceforth, TRP) and subsequently made a speaker change (or change in speakership/speaker transition) the next relevant action. Instances of yaʕni functioning as a turn yielding device primarily occurred in turn-final positions. This function was usually accompanied by other interactional clues which could add more information and determination into the projectability of this function (i.e. change in speakership/speaker transition). For example, yaʕni was accompanied by either a falling/final intonation as extract (22) shows. Yaʕni can also occur in turn-final position with a final intonation and
some kind of attrition in the talk, which make recognizable points of turn completion and allow for a speaker change (or change in speakership/speaker transition) in addition to the speaker change being the next relevant action as extract (23) shows.

**Extract (22) KEP2**

*(Talk was about former coach-player relationship between Sultan and Nawaf)*

1 AH: zziyadah wiinha, wiin zziyadah hhhh=

   the.addition where.it where the.addition hhhh

   where is the addition, where is the addition hhhh=

2 NA:= yَاʕniُ↓ jiib bebsi šawarma yaʕni.=

   DM bring Pepsi shawarma **DM**

   = yَاʕniُ↓ bring Pepsi or shawarma **yaʕni.**=

3 AH:= hhh ṭayyib mušahdina lkiram...

   hhh DM viewers.our dear

   hhh ṭayyib our dear viewers...

*(Ahmed took the next turn to introduce the topics of the episode)*

Returning to extract (19), for analysis and exemplification purposes as extract (22), should be useful for illustrating the function of *yaʕni* as a turn yielding device. Note the position of *yaʕni* as suffixed on Nawaf’s turn, and combined with final intonation as well as attrition in Nawaf’s talk. The interactional resources of the final intonation, talk attrition and the use of *yaʕni* worked together to project a recognizable point for turn completion or a TRP, and therefore allowing Ahmed to take the conversational floor

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8 Talk attrition or attrition in talk is meant to refer to the gradual and slow disappearance of words and voice by the end of a speaker’s turn.
marking a change in speakership. Similarly, consider the use of *yašni* in extract (23) in the following.

**Extract (23) KEP2**

*(Ahmed was topicalizing the issue of Al-Ittihad’s team)*

1 AH: … ḥa nitnaš lyum nḥawil nidxul fi ttafšıl=
   = ḥa nitnaš lyum nḥawil nidxul fi ttafšıl=
   = FUT we.discuss today we.try we.enter in the.details
   = …We will discuss today we try to enter in the details

2 = ʕasas nišrif wiš lli gašid yisir yašni (.)=
   = ʕasas nišrif wiš lli gašid yisir yašni (.)=
   = so we.know what that PROG happen DM
   = so we know what is happening yašni (.)=

3 = wiš lwajibat wish ḥuquq lli ḥaṣal kurat lqadam (.)=
   = wiš lwajibat wish ḥuquq lli ḥaṣal kurat lqadam (.)=
   = what the.duties what the.rights that on player ball the.foot
   = what are the duties what are the rights on the football player (.)=

4 = xususan bašḍ salfat Al-Ittihad (.=)
   = xususan bašḍ salfat Al-Ittihad (.=)
   = especially after story Al-Ittihad players team Al-Ittihad
   = especially after Al-Ittihad’s story (.=) Al-Ittihad’s players=

5 = w lbyan lli ḥaṣal min a::: tabšan ṭidarat nadi Al-Ittihad (.)
   = w lbyan lli ḥaṣal min a::: tabšan ṭidarat nadi Al-Ittihad (.)
   = and the.report that issued from a::: of course administration team Al-Ittihad
   = and the report that was issued by a::: of course Al-Ittihad club’s administration (.)

6 #w salfa mužhika ṣwayya yašni (.=) ṣaraḥa Sultan yašni. #
   = #w salfa mužhika ṣwayya yašni (.=) ṣaraḥa Sultan yašni. #
   = and report second and story funny little DM frankly Sultan DM
   = and a second report and a little funny story yašni (.=) #frankly Sultan yašni

7 SU: ((Sultan took the turn and started speaking))
(Sultan started his turn and continued the talk about the issue of Al-Ittihad’s team)

In extract (23), Ahmed, the program host, was introducing, backgrounding, and topicalizing the financial problem between Al-Ittihad’s administration and the players to be the main topic and issue to be discussed in the episode. In this extract, we can see the last instance in line 6, which occurred turn-finally with a transition in speakership to Sultan being the next relevant action. The final instance of yaʕni in line 6 was also accompanied by:

- A next speaker pre-allocation, i.e. Ahmed selected Sultan as the next speaker as appeared in line 6 directly preceding yaʕni,
- Creaky voice,
- A gradual falling rhythm in the voice delivery, and
- A falling/final intonation,

all of which could be used to mark a transition relevance place, and thereby a transition in speakership to Sultan. Therefore, the last instance of yaʕni in line 6 is an optimum candidate for a turn-yielding device. Note, however, that this instance of yaʕni might share some features with emphatic yaʕni by virtue of its occurrence with the evaluator saraha ‘frankly.’ More details about emphatic yaʕni will unfold in the following sections.

From another analytical angle, intonation played a significant role in the interpretation of yaʕni in turn-final position. In very few instances found in KEP1, yaʕni paired with questioning intonation or questioning contour in turn-final position. In addition to the function of turn-yielding explained previously, the questioning intonation placed on yaʕni in turn-final position tilted the turn into more of a terminal tag question
(i.e. question speech act) that necessitated next relevant answers, either yes/no or informative answers. The use of yaʕni in turn-final position combined with the questioning intonation/contour can invoke the ‘you mean’ reading. The ‘you mean’ reading can, in turn, evoke a sequentially relevant sense of repair related to understanding. Only Alkhalil (2005) recognized the role of the questioning intonation with yaʕni in turn-final position. The following extracts are illustrative.

**Extract (24) KEP1**

*(Talk was about how fans could practice pressure on SAFF’s administration)*

1  AH: bas mxaliinah taḥt Ḿzaḡṭ gaṣdak *yaʕni*?
   but leaving him under pressure mean you *DM*
   but they were leaving him under pressure you mean *yaʕni*?

2  FA: ?aywah
   yes

3  AH: aha

*(Fahad continued the talk about the fans practices against SAFF’s administration)*

Prior to extract (24), Fahad talked about how the fans of the Saudi football teams would place and practice pressure on SAFF’s administration specifically after knowing which teams the members of SAFF’s were affiliated with. Fahad referred to Abdulrahman Bin Musa’ad, who was SAFF’s chair at the time and was affiliated with Al-Hilal team, as an example of someone who received pressures from the fans of Al-Hilal’s opponent and rival team, Al-Nassr. Following on this, Ahmed positioned his turn in line 1 appended with a question-intoned *yaʕni* requiring a kind of confirmation response, which was received, from Fahad by *?aywah* ‘yes.’ Interestingly, note the use of
yaʕni with another Arabic cognate pertaining to the same semantic field, gaṣdak ‘you mean.’ From another side, these three turns can be seen as an inserted repair sequence initiated by Ahmed using the question-intoned yaʕni to check on his understanding of Fahad’s prior talk. Ahmed’s check on understanding can also be evidenced by his use of aha in line 3, which was an indication of understanding meanwhile a successful repair sequence followed by Fahad’s continuation of talk. Also, consider extract (25).

Extract (25) KEP1

(Talk was about the distribution of SAFF’s election votes between the Saudi teams)

1 FA: ʾImasmuubah li ʾašra ḏuula yaʕni?  
   the.allowed for the.ten those DM  
   the allowed [number of votes] for those ten [teams] yaʕni?

2 AH: naʕam lli min ẓimn ʾašra zay zay lli mithl lʔarbaʕṭaʕaš  
   yes that from within the.ten as as that as the.fourteen  
   yes that within the ten is as similar as that with the fourteen

(Fahad continued the talk giving examples of teams eligible for SAFF’s voting)

Extract (25) could sound and look odd to be considered. This is why it is important to first consider and explain the circumstances of its occurrence. The extract occurred within talk between Ahmed, Fahad, and Khalid about the distribution of SAFF’s election votes between the Saudi football teams. The speakers compared the number of the allowed votes between teams in the Saudi professional league, which is the top-level division in the Saudi football league system, and teams in the Saudi league first-division, which is the second-level division of the same league system. Doubtful about the number of the allowed votes for the teams in the first division, Fahad enunciated a turn that was
finally tilted into a confirmation seeking question using a question-intoned instance of \( yə̂ni \) in line 1. Fahad’s question received an answer from Ahmed affirming that the allowed number of votes for the ten teams in the Saudi league first-division is similar to the number of votes for the fourteen teams in the Saudi professional league.

All the above extracts, descriptions, and discussions showed that \( yə̂ni \), accompanied by other interactional resources, is an essential linguistic element that could project recognizable TRPs, signal turn completions, and fulfill a function of a turn-exit device leading into a change in speakership. The analysis and discussion showed that intonation played a role in the interpretation of \( yə̂ni \) in the turn-final position. The next section will advance the analysis and discussion of the discourse-pragmatic functions of \( yə̂ni \). The section will introduce \( yə̂ni \) in contexts of alleviation and hedging.

**Yašni with Alleviation and Hedging**

In the most recently published article on \( yə̂ni \), Marmorstein (2016, p.76) claimed that “hedging, [is] usually not reported for the \( yə̂ni/I \, \text{mean} \) type of markers.” It seems, however, that Marmorstein posited her claim without digging deep into the literature available on \( yə̂ni \) given the citations and references on which the author drew on. Ghobrial (1993) was the only reference Marmorstein used in her article without acknowledging Al-Batal (1994), Alkhalil (2005), Owens and Rockwood (2008), Rieschild (2011), and Bidaoui (2015).

The use of \( yə̂ni \) for hedging effects and mitigation and politeness effects has been reported in Ghobrial (1993), Akhalil (2005), Owens and Rockwood (2008), and Rieschild (2011), respectively. In these later mentioned treatments of \( yə̂ni \), hedging
effects and mitigation and politeness effects have been more specifically, and exclusively, associated with attenuating the face-threatening acts of disagreements.

The data collected and analyzed for this dissertation did not offer instances of yaʕni with face-threatening acts with disagreements but offered two other additional functions that can be grouped, discussed, and subsumed under the rubric of hedging and politeness. These two functions are:

- The use of yaʕni to either signal and/or found in the midst of contexts of epistemic uncertainty/likelihood; and
- The use of yaʕni to signal approximations or estimates of quantities or qualities.

My analysis begins with discussing and exemplifying the use of yaʕni in the contexts of epistemic uncertainty. Then, the analysis and exemplification will be expanded to the use of yaʕni to signal approximations and estimates of quantities and qualities. A general characteristic that runs across these two uses of yaʕni is that they were found in contexts where speakers engaged in downplaying the accuracy and the force of an utterance, an assertion, or a proposition. In both contexts of epistemic uncertainty as well as signaling approximations and estimates, a speaker alleviated his epistemic truthfulness, position, and commitment of an utterance, an assertion, or a proposition. On one hand, these two functions can be related to hedging and politeness effects by virtue of the reasoning that a speaker might not want to be committed to an assertion, an utterance, or a proposition that feature inaccurate knowledge or information. It is this kind of inaccuracy that might be considered a face-threatening act if not alleviated. On the other hand, these two functions can be related to the general qualifying attribute of yaʕni illustrated in the previous analysis and discussions.
Yaşni was found to signal epistemic uncertainty in a number of instances when collocated with expressions and acts, resources, cues and contexts that denoted and indicated epistemic uncertainty. When performing epistemic uncertainty, speakers used the following expressions with yaşni grouped in table (2) with variable occurrences.

Table 14

Yaşni with Expressions Denoting/Indicating Epistemic Uncertainty

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yaşni</th>
<th>Expression</th>
<th>DM</th>
<th>Yaşni</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yaşni</td>
<td>ʔaṣṭaqid</td>
<td>DM</td>
<td>I.think</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yaşni</td>
<td>mumkin</td>
<td>DM</td>
<td>probably/maybe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yaşni</td>
<td>yimkin</td>
<td>DM</td>
<td>probably/maybe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yaşni</td>
<td>ʔiḏa mani bġalṭan</td>
<td>DM</td>
<td>if not.I wrong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yaşni</td>
<td>ʔatwaggaʕ</td>
<td>DM</td>
<td>I.guess</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yaşni</td>
<td>rubbama</td>
<td>DM</td>
<td>probably/maybe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yaşni</td>
<td>ʔaḥyanan</td>
<td>DM</td>
<td>sometimes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yaşni</td>
<td>ma ʔadri</td>
<td>DM</td>
<td>NEG I.know</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Let us now consider the following extracts that demonstrate the use of yaşni in the contexts of epistemic uncertainty/likelihood.
Extract (26) KEPI

(Talk was about the English language as a main condition for SAFF’s elections and candidates)

1  FA: … w baʕdiin tara mawzuʕ lluḡa lʔingliziya,=  
and then you see topic language English  
… and then you see concerning the English language topic,=  

2 = ʔatwaggaʕ ʔl ʔl ʔustaḏ Salman ʔatwaggaʕ ʔinnu=  
I guess the the mister Salman I guess that  
= I guess the the mister Salman I guess that=  

3 = daaris fi ʔmriika, ʔatwaggaʕ yaʕni (.) …  
he studied in America I guess DM  
= he studied in America, I guess yaʕni (.) …  

(Fahad continued his turn commenting on learning English)

English language was among the main conditions for SAFF’s elections and the candidates of the elections; a topic that received discussion and commentary in KEPI. In extract (26), Fahad commented on one candidate, Salman Al-Malik, and his English proficiency. Yet, what becomes apparent through lines 2 and 3 is Fahad’s epistemic alleviation of his utterances and downtoning the propositions regarding Salman’s English proficiency; that Salman is proficient in English since he studied and graduated from the United States. Fahad used the Arabic epistemic downtoning expression ʔatwaggaʕ equivalent to the English ‘I guess’ in lines 2 and 3 not only to soften the epistemic validity of his utterances and commentary but also to place some emphasis by repeating the expression 3 times so that his utterances cannot be taken at face value. In line 3,
Fahad used a collocation of ʔatwaggaʕ with yaʕni indexing and prominently displaying his epistemic uncertainty. Also, consider extract (27).

**Extract (27) KEP2**

*(Talk was about the issue of paying the players irregularly)*

1 NA: … yaʕni ʔaʕtaqid fiih mubarah,

     DM I.think there match

     yaʕni I think there was a match,

2 ʔana ma ʔadri ʔiḏa ma txuni ḏakra

     I NEG know if NEG deceive memory

     I don’t know if my memory doesn’t deceive me

3 nadi Al-Ittihad ʂaraf thalathiin ʔalaf riyal li kul laʕib (.) …

     team Al-Ittihad paid thirty thousand riyal for every player

     Al-Ittihad team paid thirty thousand riyals for every player (.) …

*(Nawaf continued his turn giving proposals to regulate the players’ payments)*

Extract (27) was taken from a long turn where Nawaf talked about how the unstable nature in paying the players could cause financial problems for both the teams and the players. Nawaf added that such problems might negatively influence the performance of the players which generates some pressures on the team’s management. The negative influence might expand causing some players to even leave the team.

Nawaf suggested that at least a monthly payment for players could solve such problems. Nawaf, then, gave Al-Ittihad as an example of the teams, which irregularly paid their players; for example, Al-Ittihad’s administration paid thirty thousand Saudi Riyals for each player for only one match. However, note how Nawaf signaled his epistemic
uncertainty about his contribution prefacing the utterance with *yaʕni ʔaʕtaqid* ‘*yaʕni* I think’ in line 1. Importantly, Nawaf’s epistemic uncertainty was underlined by the insertion of the idiomatic expression *ʔana ma ʔadri ʔiḏa ma txuni ḏakra* ‘I don’t know if my memory doesn’t deceive me.’ in line 2.

The use of *yaʕni* to mark approximations and estimates seems highly relevant to that found in the contexts of epistemic uncertainty. *Yaʕni* was also used to signal estimates and approximations with expressions of time (e.g. durations) as in extract (28) and expressions of quantities or measurements involving numerals as in extract (29). Interestingly, *yaʕni* can also appear with approximations and estimates of qualities or practices as in extract (30). Throughout the following extracts, one could also note, and therefore, argue for the convergence of marking an estimate and an approximation with the function of signaling epistemic uncertainty.

**Extract (28) KEP2**

*(Talk was about some careless practices of Saudi football players)*

1 AH: … fa gal lu ruḥ ʔiṣrif li zay ma tgul
   so said for.him go withdraw for.me as what you.say
   so he said go and withdraw for me as what you say

2 ʔalf riyal ʔaw șay zay kiɗa *yaʕni* ma yuʕadil
   thousand riyal or thing like this *DM* what equal
   a thousand riyal or something like *yaʕni* what is equal to

3 ʔalf riyal (.) …
   thousand riyal
   a thousand riyal …
(Talk continued about the careless practices of Saudi football players)

Extract (28) was taken from a turn where Ahmed gave a story about the carelessness of a Saudi football player. The player asked a journalist to withdraw some money for him from the ATM (i.e. automated teller machine). We can see how Ahmed first used the expressions *zay ma tgul* ‘as what you say’ in line 1 and *šay zay kiša* ‘something like this’ in line 2 to indicate an estimate or approximation of the withdrawn money. Also, note that Ahmed repeated and signaled the same estimate of money with *yašni* followed by the expression *ma yušadil* ‘what is equal to’ in line 2. Also, consider extract (29).

**Extract (29) KEP1**

(Talk was about the negative influence of the sports media on the Saudi society)

1  KH: … w tantišir w tastimir li fatra ṭwilah
   and it.spread and it.continue for period long

2     min azzaman *yašni* sanawat yašni ṭahyānan tigʕid yašni.=
   from time DM years DM sometimes it.last DM
   of time *yašni* for years yašni sometimes it lasts yašni.=

3 AH: =našam=
   =yes=

4 KH: =fa bi la šak tuʔather ttarbiyah fi lbiyut
   so with NEG doubt it.influence the.education in the.homes
   so with no doubt it influences the education at homes

5  w kiša …
and like that

and like that ...

(Khalid continued his turn about controlling the Saudi sports media)

Extract (29) was taken from a turn where Khalid talked about the significant influence of the sports media on the Saudi society. The sports media significantly influences the Saudi society, according to Khalid, by feeding them with negative ideas and language. Such an influence could spread and extend for a long period of time reaching into unspecified number of years. Now, note how Khalid used yaʕni in line 2 to indicate the imprecise number of years the influence could extend. Extract (30) carries additional illustration for the use of yaʕni within contexts of approximations and estimates.

Extract (30) KEPI

(Talk was about qualifications for SAFF’s elections and candidates)

1 AH: lli jayiin judud, yaʕni luhum fi qiṭaʕ lʔaʕamal

those coming new DM have in sector the.business

those coming new [candidates], yaʕni they have in the business sector

(Fahad took the next turn to comment on the number of candidates)

In extract (30), Ahmed used yaʕni to indicate an estimate and an approximation of a quality or practice. The key to understanding the approximative function of yaʕni to indicate an estimate of a quality or practice in extract (30) is to first illustrate the meaning of the word luhum. Morphologically, the word luhum consists of the preposition l- ‘for’ and the Arabic 3rd person plural clitic –hum ‘them.’ The literal meaning of the word luhum is ‘for them,’ which developed morphologically and semantically into a
possessive. However, this form indicates a specific kind of possessive meaning. In addition to the explicit possessive meaning, an implicit meaning of impreciseness and estimation similar to the English *somewhat* is implicated in the form *luhum*. To say *those coming new candidates, yaʕni luhum in the business sector* indicates that the new candidates for SAFF’s elections were *somewhat* engaged, and they *somewhat* participated, in the business sector. Therefore, the new candidates of SAFF were *somewhat* business men. The estimate of these qualities and practices of SAFF’s candidates were marked by the use of *yaʕni* with the form *luhum*. Given the previous explanations, one might analytically pursue that Ahmed seemed to deprecate the new candidates for SAFF and their qualifications. However, such implication will not be pursued here.

To summarize, the analysis and discussion in the above showed that *yaʕni* can be found in contexts of alleviation and hedging. Specifically, the data offered patterns of alleviation and hedging relevant to marking epistemic uncertainty/likelihood. The data also provided patterns of alleviation and hedging related to approximations and estimates of quantities and qualities. Although the two functions can be distinguished to an extent, they can converge with each other if we consider epistemic uncertainty, but not necessarily, as the motivating reason for approximations and estimates of quantities and qualities. In addition to the qualifying sense of *yaʕni*, these two functions were also related to the mitigation and politeness effects found in the previous literature on *yaʕni* although not with the face-threatening acts of disagreements. The analysis and discussion highlighted the importance of considering the linguistic expressions collocating with *yaʕni* and the alleviating epistemic or approximative effects generated by such
expressions. The next section will introduce the use of *yaʕni* in contexts with contrast and/or concession readings.

**Yaʕni in Contexts of Contrast and/or Concession**

Signaling contrast and/or concession (henceforth, contrast/concession or contrastive/concessive) is another finding that deserves to be foregrounded and discussed related to research and contributions covering Arabic *yaʕni*. *Yaʕni* serving to construct contrastive/concessive relationships was a surprising finding in the data used and analyzed for this dissertation. Although contrast and concession can be distinguished on a relational level (see Mann & Thompson, 1988), it was not easy to differentiate between these two relationships (see Couper-Kuhlen & Kortmann, 2000) in the analysis of the functions of *yaʕni*. The reasons for this will become salient through my presentation and discussion of these relations with *yaʕni*. Of course, the qualifying import of *yaʕni* seems to afford an account for the behavior of *yaʕni* in marking contrast/concession. By virtue of this function, *yaʕni* can be construed to serve as a contrastive/concessive linkage device between preceding and following adjacent propositions, discourse units, or utterances. Not only that, but also more delicate analytical treatments and readings showed that *yaʕni* can function on one more higher level, i.e. the action level. Additionally, being part of a contrastive/concessive linkage device, *yaʕni* usually prefaces the second discourse unit. The general contrastive/concessive behavior of *yaʕni* can be visualized as in the following:

- Preceding proposition(s), discourse unit(s), action(s) +
- (pause/micropause) +
- Contrastive/concessive device, including *yaʕni* +
• Following proposition(s), discourse unit(s), action(s)

There are a number of functional indicators that led to my suggestion of this functional pattern of contrast/concession. First and foremost, \textit{yaʕni} clustered and collocated with a number of Arabic DMs that recurrently indicate contrastive/concessive discourse relations between adjacent discourse units without any kind of interactional break or cut-off. Such a clustering behavior is better analyzed and described as a combination of DMs (see Cuenca & Marin, 2009; Dér, 2010; Fraser, 2013; 2015) with a unified combination behavior and function, including:

• \textit{lakin} ‘but’;

• \textit{walakin} ‘but’;

• \textit{bas} ‘but’;

• \textit{InshaAllah} ‘God willing.’

The following extracts illustrate the contrastive/concessive discourse-pragmatic behavior of \textit{yaʕni} found within the data analyzed.

**Extract (31) KEP1**

*(In the previous talk, speakers talked about the performance of Al-Nassr team and the performance of Al-Ittihad team in the last match between the two teams)*

1. FA:… ʔna ma xašit min lttiḥad (.) \textit{yaʕni bas} kunt yaʕni:: ʔb- a::=

   I NEG afraid from Al-Ittihad \textbf{DM but} was.I DM \textit{b- a::}:

   … I was not afraid of Al-Ittihad (.) \textit{yaʕni but} I was yaʕni:: \textit{b- a::}:

2. = ttaʕadul huwa lli:: yaʕni yaṭruq bali …

   the.tie was that DM knock concern.my

   = the tie was yaʕni concerning for me …
(Fahad continued his turn commenting that Al-Nassr was better than Al-Ittihad in the match)

Extract (31) was taken from a multi-unit turn where Fahad commented on the performance of Al-Nassr and the performance of Al-Ittihad in a match between the two teams. As mentioned in the methodology chapter, Fahad is a member in the board of Al-Nassr administration. From a member’s and a fan’s perspective, Fahad commented that he ‘was not afraid of Al-Ittihad’ defeating Al-Nassr in the first part/discourse unit in line 1. Prefaced by the combination *yaʕni bas* ‘yaʕni but,’ Fahad commented that ‘a score of a tie was concerning for him.’ As such, Fahad seemed to concede and counter between the following and the preceding utterances and discourse units by using the combination *yaʕni bas* throughout lines 1-2. This concessive/contrastive discourse relation can also be seen on the propositional level as:

- Preceding Utterance(s)/Discourse unit(s)/Proposition(s): I was not afraid of Al-Ittihad defeating Al-Nassr. +
- (pause/micropause) +
- Concessive/contrastive device: *yaʕni bas* +
- Following Utterance(s)/Discourse unit(s)/Proposition(s): The tie was concerning for me. Or, I am afraid of the tie or a tied score between the two teams.

The following extract contains an interesting combination of DMs with *yaʕni*; a cluster that was believed to serve a concessive/contrastive relationship between adjacent preceding and following units and propositions.
Extract (32) KEP2

(In the previous talk, speakers touched on the participation of the Saudi football teams in the Asian tournament)

1 AH:… w InshaAllah Ittiḥad yigdar- yaği ni y- yin vasil ʔila=
   and DM Al-Ittihad can- DM y- continue to
   … and InshaAllah Al-Ittihad can- yağ ni y- continue to the

2 = ddawr thani maṣa ḥannu furṣtu ʔaṣbaḥat=
   the.round the.second with that chance.their became
   = second round although their chance became=

3 = zaʔila jiddan (.) yaği ni jiddan jiddan (.) walakin InshaAllah yaği ni=
   = little very DM very very but DM DM
   = very little/weak (.) yagi ni very very (.) but InshaAllah yagi ni=

4 = tixdumu żżuruf w yigdar yitʔahhal (.) …
   help circumstances and can qualify
   = the circumstances help and they can qualify (.) …

(Ahmed continued his turn. He pre-allocated the floor for Sultan to comment on the performance of the Saudi teams in the Asian tournament)

The topic of the participation of the Saudi football teams in the Asian tournament was triggered in the talk that preceded extract (32). Sequentially motivated by the preceding talk, Ahmed launched a multi-unit turn where he was topicalizing this participation to become the hub of discussion, specifically the participation of Al-Hilal and Al-Ittihad. Directly preceding extract (32), Ahmed praised Al-Hilal team over their last victory over the Emirati team of Al-Jazirah in the Asian tournament. Yet, in lines 1-3
of extract (32), Ahmed expressed his concern over Al-Ittihad’s results in the tournament. Within these lines, Ahmed seemed to be negatively evaluating and assessing Al-Ittihad’s chance of qualifying for the second round in the tournament. His negative evaluation was emphasized and intensified in line 3. In line 3, however, Ahmed used the DM cluster *walakin InshaAllah yaʕni* ‘but InshaAllah yaʕni’ to concede from and to contrast his preceding propositions and emphatically negative assessments of Al-Ittihad. Following this DM cluster, Ahmed pointed out that the circumstances of the tournament might still help Al-Ittihad to qualify for the second round. Extract (32) and the behavior of the DM combination *walakin InshaAllah yaʕni* ‘but InshaAllah yaʕni’ can be summarized in the following:

- Preceding Utterance(s)/Discourse unit(s)/Proposition(s): Al-Ittihad has a very little/weak chance to qualify for the second round of the Asian tournament. +
- (pause/micropause) +
- Concessive/contrastive device: *walakin InshaAllah yaʕni* ‘*but InshaAllah yaʕni*’ +
- Following Utterance(s)/Discourse unit(s)/Proposition(s): There is still a hope that the circumstances help Al-Ittihad to qualify to the second round.

The above behavior of *yaʕni* in extracts (31) and (32) paved the way for considering the contrastive/concessive discourse relation when *yaʕni* stood alone (i.e. not collocating with other contrastive/concessive DMs) in the onset of the second discourse unit and the interpretation of its function becomes challenging. Therefore, by using paraphrase analysis, using alternative Arabic DMs, and English translation equivalents, and testing for alternative discourse relations, the contrastive/concessive DMs were the ones that
appeared to fit the interpretations for the relations between the two adjacent utterances, discourse units, or propositions. The following includes expressions that helped in the understanding and the interpretation of yaʕni with contrastive/concessive relations:

- ʔilla ʔnnahu  ‘however; but;’
- lakin ‘but;’
- bas ‘but.’

Now, consider the following extracts.

**Extract (33) KEP2**

*(In the previous talk, speakers started discussing the pressures and demands on the Saudi football player in parallel with the players’ profits and salaries)*

1 AH: ḥadi t- tašʕur ʔinnaha mawjuda walla la=
   this you.feel that existing or NEG
do you feel that this is existing or not=

2 SU:= ʔkiid mawjuda kulluhum yiṭalib a::: ʕla ẓuʔ ma yataqaẓunah=
   sure existing all demand a::: on based what receive.they
   =sure it is existing all demand based on what the players receive=

3 = min mabaliɣ (.) yaʕni muhu ḏanb 1lašib, muhu ḏanb 1lašib
   from money  DM NEG fault the.player NEG fault the.palyer
   = from money (.) yaʕni it is not the player’s fault, it is not the player’s fault=

4 = šif muhu ḏanb 1lašib
   see NEG fault the.player
   = see it is not the player’s fault

*(Sultan continued his extended multi-unit turn regarding the matter)*
In line 1 of extract (33), Ahmed asked Sultan about if the pressures and demands on the Saudi football player, compared to the player’s performance and his profits and salaries, were still existing in Saudi sports. In lines 2-3, Sultan affirmatively responded that *all* people or fans practiced pressures, which became more demanding based on the players profits and salaries. However, in line 3 Sultan seemed to concede from as well as counter the previous part of his response by saying that *muḥu ḏanb ỉlašib* ‘it is not the player’s fault’ prefaced by *yaʕni*. Sultan also emphasized his stance regarding the matter through rhetorically repeating his statement in lines 3-4. From a related side, the instance of *yaʕni* analyzed and described in extract (33) can have a concessive/contrastive reading. As such, it can be alternated with Arabic DMs that indicate concessive/contrastive relations such as *lakin* ‘but,’ *bas* ‘but,’ and *ʔilla ʔnnahu* ‘however; but.’ Also, this instance seems to fit the English concessive/contrastive equivalents ‘however’ and ‘but.’ *Yaʕni*’s function in extract (33) can be illustrated in the following:

- Preceding Utterance(s)/Discourse unit(s)/Proposition(s): Sure pressures are existing and all fans/people make demands based on what the players receive from money (or profits). +
- (pause/micropause) +
- *yaʕni (lakin; bas/but; however)* +

- Following Utterance(s)/Discourse unit(s)/Proposition(s): It is not the player’s fault.

The contrastive/concessive reading can also be discernable from extract (34).
Extract (34) KEPI

(In the previous talk, speakers talked about the conditions and nomination procedures for SAFF elections)

1 AH: jamiil (.) ma ʕad ʕndi wagt staḏ Fahad (.) yaʃni lyum=
beautiiful NEG anymore have time mister Fahad DM today
beautiful (.) I don’t have anymore time mister Fahad (.) yaʃni today=

2 = jamhur Al-Hilal a: yaʃni a: ma liqu lak m- ma ʕṭithum=
fans Al-Hilal a: DM a: NEG found for.you m- ma you.gavethem
= Al-Hilal fans a: yaʃni: a didn’t find for you m- you didn’t give them action

3 = ʔkšin kthir (.) fa ma fi yaʃni magaṭiʃ ʕa titlaʃ (.) fa rtaḥ=
action lot so NEG there DM video clips FUT appear so relax
lots of action (.) so there are no yaʃni video clips that will appear (.) so relax

4 = ha ʔlsbuʃ
this week
this week

(Fahad took the following turn. He talked about some of Al-Hilal’s fans practices. The talk extended to more six turns)

Extract (34) happened only six turns before the end/closure of KEPI, i.e. very close to the end/closure of the episode. It is noticeable in line 1 that Ahmed, who was the host of the TV show, started preemptive and preparatory moves or actions jamiil (.) ma ʕad ʕndi wagt staḏ Fahad (.) ‘beautiful (.) I don’t have anymore time mister Fahad (.)’ to steer the episode into an end. Ahmed’s moves or actions are considered preemptive and preparatory by virtue of what might seem to be an inherent practice in institutional
talk of controlling and holding the turn-taking system. To illustrate, it looked apparent from line 1 that Ahmed alluded to suspending the turn-taking system, which might have two interactional and sequential implications considering the institutional context of the data and interaction: 1) to prevent the guests from taking more turns-at-talk that would take longer than the specified time for the show; and 2) to enable Ahmed to subsequently close the interaction of the episode.

By using *yaʕni* after a pause in line 1 of extract (34), it seemed that Ahmed diverted from the expected preemptive and preparatory direction of the turn and talk, and therefore he signaled a concession from his preceding moves or actions. Meanwhile, this instance of *yaʕni* seemed to imply a subtle and delicate contrastive relation on the action level. That is, Ahmed used *yaʕni* to mark a contrast between his preceding and following moves or actions. As a way of sarcasm that followed *yaʕni*, Ahmed commented that Fahad was not provocative enough against Al-Hilal’s fans in the episode. Prefaced by *yaʕni*, such a concessive/contrastive move or action by Ahmed opened a quick interactional space for few last comments and turns between Fahad and Ahmed.

Similar to the instance of *yaʕni* in extract (33), the token of *yaʕni* analyzed and described in extract (34) can implicate a concessive/contrastive reading. Thus, it can be interchangeable with Arabic DMs that denote concessive/contrastive relations such as *lakin* ‘but,’ *bas* ‘but,’ and *ʔilla ʔnnahu* ‘however; but.’ Correspondingly, English concessive/contrastive equivalents such as ‘however’ and ‘but’ seem to fit the construal of the instance of *yaʕni* in extract (34).

My illustration of extract (34) can be summarized, understood, and schematized in the following:
• Preceding Utterance(s)/Discourse unit(s)/Proposition(s): Beautiful, I do not have anymore time mister Fahad. So, I want to conclude the episode mister Fahad. +

• (pause/micropause) +

• 

• yaʕni (lakin; bas/but; however) +

• Following Utterance(s)/Discourse unit(s)/Proposition(s): You were not provocative enough against Al-Hilal’s fans in the episode today. Therefore, I open a quick interactional space for any few last comments you would like to deliver. Briefly, the previous analysis and discussion showed two discourse-pragmatic functional behaviors of yaʕni:

• The viability of this linguistic element to combine with DMs and expressions that indicate contrastive/concessive relations; and

• The feasibility of this linguistic element to function under the scope of contrastive/concessive relations when collocated with Arabic contrastive/concessive DMs.

As the previous analysis and discussion showed the behavior of yaʕni to signal contrast/concession, the analysis and discussion seem to motivate the view of the influence of the discourse slot (see Schiffrin, 1987) on the functional interpretation. Put it differently, is it yaʕni that has developed more of a concessive/contrastive meaning that procedurally constrains the functional interpretation into a contrastive/concessive relation, which might be remnant of its qualifying import? Or has yaʕni gained this meaning and function by virtue of the discourse slot where it occurred? Supported by the collocation of yaʕni with Arabic contrastive/concessive markers, it seems, though, that both views can work together as forcing factors to yield the construal of yaʕni as a
contrastive/concessive marker. The next section presents an interim summary and a
discussion followed by introducing the final function reported, analyzed, and discussed in
this dissertation—emphatic yaʕni.

**Interim Summary and Discussion**

Of course, multifunctionality is one outcome of the analysis of discourse yaʕni in
the current dissertation. Yet, multifunctionality is by and large a typical attested
conclusion for DMs. In my analysis and discussions, however, I would like to move to
issues beyond polyfunctionality of Arabic yaʕni. In addition to presenting analysis and
discussions concomitant with the previous available literature on yaʕni, I presented
analysis and considered perspectives that should make new contributions to the
discourse-pragmatic use of Arabic yaʕni from previously unconsidered contexts and data.

Taking a snowball analogy, our knowledge and understanding of yaʕni, given the
available number of investigations on the marker and the types of the data and the
contexts where it was investigated, are obviously in their initial stages. That being said,
the following pages will offer additional analysis and discussions that advance the
knowledge snowball of yaʕni into levels through which several new implications come to
the foreground. First, the analysis will show that collocations with yaʕni still present an
effective interpretative factor to be considered for the interpretation of the discourse-
pragmatic use of yaʕni. As an interpretative tool, collocations with yaʕni have further
implications for considering the synchronic as well as the diachronic historical
developments and the evolution of the marker. Although such a direction will not be
pursued in this dissertation, I suggest that yaʕni is wildly drifting from its propositional
meaning and its lexical source without scholars paying attention to its line of
development. In other words, *yaʕni* seems to be acquiring more of an idiomatic and phraseological status, where the lexical input of its source seems completely non-existence. Emphatic *yaʕni* identified in the following is a case in point that was found and reported in this dissertation. The collocational behavior of emphatic *yaʕni* seems robustly indicative for my suggestion. Discussed within the following lines are the potential effects of the institutional context and the type of text on motivating and manifesting the use of emphatic *yaʕni*. To this final discourse-pragmatic function, my analysis and discussion now turn.

**Emphatic *Yaʕni***

Compared to the previous research on Arabic *yaʕni*, the data and the analysis of the data used in this dissertation seemed to suggest a specific functional pattern and a functional category of— what I called— emphatic *yaʕni*. In other words, in my materials of the sports TV show, there seems a characteristic pattern where *yaʕni* recurrently collocated with expressions denoting intensity, intensification, emphasis, and extremity\(^9\). The significance of the discourse-pragmatic behavior of *yaʕni* in this functional pattern resides within the number of implications it has for the categorical status and the development of *yaʕni*, which is a line of inquiry that should deserve more future scholarly attention. The implications can be expanded to encompass the potential influence of the institutional context and the type of text or genre on the use of *yaʕni*. The following analysis and discussion present a pattern of characteristics that can consistently be related to this usage of *yaʕni*.

\(^9\) Again, see Cuenca & Mariín (2009), Dér (2010), and Fraser (2013; 2015) on the combination/clustering of DMs.
Table 15 shows emphatic adverbials, expressions, or phrases collocating with yaʕni in my materials with glosses and translations. Some of the glosses and translations were kept into a minimum of two lines since there seems good correspondence between the forms, the structures, and the meanings.
Table 15

Emphatic adverbials, expressions, or phrases collocating with yaʕni

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>KEP1</th>
<th>KEP2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- (yaʕni) fiʕlan (yaʕni) (yaʕni) actually (yaʕni)</td>
<td>- bi ttakiid yaʕni with sureness yaʕni</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- ḥaqiqa yaʕni actually yaʕni</td>
<td>- min jid yaʕni from seriousness yaʕni</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- ḥatman yaʕni absolutely yaʕni</td>
<td>- w la fi ƙalam kullu yaʕni and NEG in the.world whole yaʕni</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- ?iṭlaqan yaʕni absolutely yaʕni</td>
<td>- bi kul ?mana yaʕni with all honesty yaʕni with all honesty yaʕni</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- bi saraha yaʕni with frankness yaʕni frankly yaʕni</td>
<td>- yaʕni jiddan jiddan yaʕni very very</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- saraha yaʕni frankly yaʕni</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- bi kul wuẓuḥ yaʕni with all clarity yaʕni clearly yaʕni</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- mustaḥiil yaʕni impossible yaʕni</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- yaʕni taḥdidan yaʕni specifically</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- bi la šak yaʕni with NEG doubt yaʕni with no doubt yaʕni</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- ma fiilha ʔdna šak yaʕni NEG in.it minimum doubt yaʕni with no minimum of doubt yaʕni</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In terms of form and structure, emphatic yaʕni combined and/or collocated with what could be seen as more of stance adverbials and/or expressions or phrases that carry...
and/or indicate emphatic import or evaluative load. One might note that an important characteristic of such expressions collocating with *yaʕni* seem similar to a large extent to the English ‘lexical maximizers’ (see *inter alia* Biber & Finegan, 1988; 1989; Labov, 1984; Martin & White, 2005; Quirk et al., 1985; Thompson & Alba-Juez, 2014). These stance adverbials, expressions, and phrases are grouped in table (3) introduced above.

In terms of meaning, it is important to assert that the emphatic meaning did not seem to be an outcome of *yaʕni* in and of itself. Rather, this emphatic meaning seemed to be recognizable given the existence of the other functional indicators specifically collocations with emphatic adverbials, expressions, or phrases and emphatic/contrastive stress. The emphatic import was underscored by the kind of emphatic/contrastive stress placed, but not necessarily, in the surrounding context and sometimes placed on *yaʕni*. It seemed that *yaʕni*, associated with its collocation as well as the surrounding context of use, acquired and implicated a number of emphatic meanings including:

- Absoluteness;
- Emphasis;
- Intensity/intensification;
- Sureness, decisiveness, definiteness, and assertiveness.

In terms of utterance position, instances of emphatic *yaʕni* can be found in different utterance positions, for example: utterance-initial position and utterance-medial position. However, the majority of instances of emphatic *yaʕni* were found to be appended to the stance adverbials or the expressions and phrases indicated in the above table in utterance-final position. In terms of speakers, all speakers concerning the data analyzed, including the host and the guests, used emphatic *yaʕni* to a variable extent.
From a functional discourse-pragmatic perspective, when *yaʕni* collocated with such kinds of adverbials, expressions, or phrases, the collocations can be generally used to emphatically indicate and convey the speakers’ stances relevant to topics, issues, or matters that were brought up and discussed within the analyzed episodes. More specifically, speakers used the collocations to convey expressive and attitudinal functions such as:

- To emphasize a proposition;
- To emphasize an evaluative comment or act;
- To emphasize a state of affair or a situation;
- To emphasize a quality of something or someone;
- To indicate strong agreement, sometimes accompanied by strong affiliation and alignment with a point of view, a suggestion, or an opinion;
- The emphasis can sometimes combine or lump together any of the above cases;
- The emphasis can have prospective and/or retrospective scope(s) or effect(s) of relevance to the surrounding utterances.

From Table 15, we can make the following observations: First, the table shows that, as stated earlier, the majority of *yaʕni* instances collocated with a variety of what could be seen as adverbials of stance or expressions and phrases denoting evaluation and emphasis. Second, the table shows that the majority of *yaʕni* instances were appended to the adverbials, expressions, and/or phrases. However, there were some occasions where *yaʕni* seemed to precede or follow a construction such as:

- *(yaʕni)* fiʕlan *(yaʕni)*

  *(yaʕni)* actually *(yaʕni)*
Within the parentheses in the above, and also in Table 15, indicates that it was found to either precede or follow the word fiʕlan ‘actually’ in several occasions in the corpus. In two very rare occasions, yaʕni preceded the adverbial taḥdidan ‘specifically’ and jiddan jiddan ‘very very’ as shown in the table above and reiterated below for convenience:

- yaʕni taḥdidan
  
  yaʕni specifically

- yaʕni jiddan jiddan

  yaʕni very very

The English translations of the words fiʕlan, ḥaqiqa, ḥatman, and ʔiṭlaqan provided in Table 15 deserve some more attention and discussion. Although I provided some specific English one-to-one equivalents including actually and absolutely respectively for the sake of space in Table 15, the four words fiʕlan, ḥaqiqa, ḥatman, and ʔiṭlaqan can overlap in terms of their delivered and conveyed meaning, and therefore they can be interchangeable to a large extent. In addition, any of the following English equivalents seem to stand for the words fiʕlan, ḥaqiqa, ḥatman, and ʔiṭlaqan, of course depending on the particular discourse circumstances of the utterances hosting these forms: actually, indeed, truly, really, in fact, absolutely, definitely, and surely. The discussion here should by no means be meant to exclude the other adverbials or expressions and their emphatic meanings, specifically their discourse-pragmatic meaning. Put differently, the previous discussion of the Arabic forms and their English equivalents can be discourse-pragmatically and contextually expanded to include the other adverbials
and expressions in Table 15. A simple illustration is in order here. The English form definitely seems to be a good fit for the whole class of adverbials and expressions collocated with yaʕni and identified in Table 15.

Aside from the above discussions, it is important now to introduce and discuss some extracts that illustrate the linguistic and the discourse-pragmatic behavior of yaʕni found in the data as well as shown in Table 15. Consider the following extracts.

Extract (35) KEP2

(In the preceding talk, speakers engaged in the topic of administering financial matters by the teams’ administration and the teams’ presidents)

1 NA: ʕla ha lmawzuʕ haḏa, w la ?gtaʕ kalamk Abu Rashid= on this the.topic this and NEG I.cut s peech.your Abu Rashid regarding this topic, and I don’t want to cut your speech Abu Rashid=

2 =ʔbi ʔʕṭik mufajʔah fi lmawzuʕ haḏa (.) fi nadi lam= I.want I.give.you surprise in the.topic this there club NEG =I want to give you a surprise regarding this topic (. ) there is a team that didn’t=

3 =yatruk ʔay ltizam ʕla rraʔis lli baʕdu= leave any debt on the.president that after.him =leave any debt on the following president=

4 AH:= nadi Al-Fateh = team Al-Fateh =Al-Fateh team=

5 NA: := nadi Al-Fateh = team Al-Fateh
Regarding the topic of administering financial matters by the teams’ administration and the teams’ presidents, we can see in extract (35) that Nawaf and Ahmed through lines 1-5 referred to Al-Fateh team. Note that both Nawaf and Ahmed started positively evaluating the administration of Al-Fateh team and their president in the specified lines above. In line 6, Ahmed gave two upgraded positive assessments relevant to the discussion of Al-Fateh team and the administration and the president responsible for the team. In line 7, Nawaf gave a highly marked assessment: \( \text{nas tištiġil źla galb wahid} \) ‘people working with one heart.’ This assessment was delivered in a metaphoric way to indicate the togetherness and the teamwork of Al-Fateh administration. Note that the assessment was introduced by \( \text{bi kul ʔmana yašni} \) ‘with all honesty yašni’ with an emphatic stress. As mentioned earlier, Nawaf’s assessment introduced by \( \text{bi kul ʔmana yašni} \) seems to have a number of sequential/interactional and discourse-pragmatic effects including:
• Sequentially and relationally, this construction or linguistic cluster indicated a strong agreement accompanied by a strong alignment and affiliation with the preceding assessments in the extract.

• This construction or linguistic cluster added more emphasis to the general proposition and the general evaluation unfolded throughout the lines exemplified above. The proposition was that: Al-Fateh has a successful administration.

• Speaking from a speech act perspective, the construction or linguistic cluster seemed to emphasize Nawaf’s compliment in line 7. The compliment was that: Al-Fateh has people and administration that work tightly together to manage the team’s financial matters. This togetherness, in turn, has the effect of not leaving any debts on the team’s president and the administration.

• Therefore, such a construction or linguistic cluster seems to have both prospective and retrospective effects as indicated earlier among the characteristics of constructions.

Also, consider extract (36).

**Extract (36) KEP1**

*(In the preceding talk, speakers reviewed the elections and the candidates for SAFF and the contestations presented against the candidates. The speakers touched on unlawful practices by the general committee of SAFF)*

1 KH: … lakin iḍa ?iḍa ma kan fi mubarrir, fa haḍi haḍa šubha (.)

   but if if NEG was there justification so this this suspicion

   but if if there was no justification, so this this is suspicion (.)=

2 = haqīqa ṭaṣni(.) ?na ?gdar ?gulha bi kul wuzuḥ ṭaṣni=
Extract (36) was extracted from a multi-unit turn where Khalid responded to Ahmed’s question about his opinion related to the elections of SAFF, the candidates, and the contestations presented against the candidates. Khalid started his turn by commenting that SAFF’s vision was not clear and that it was not understood. He, then, commented on what might be counted as suspicious and unlawful practices regarding the elections, specifically in terms of the votes. In line 1, Khalid continued his comments and stated that the whole situation became suspicious if there was no justification for such practices. Note how in line 2 of extract (36) Khalid used *ḥaqiqa yaʕni* ‘actually/indeed yaʕni’ and *ʔna ʔgdar ʔgulha bi kul  wuẓuḥ yaʕni* ‘I can say it with all clarity yaʕni’ with emphatic stress to retrospectively emphasize his stance or attitude regarding the proposition in line 1: no justification means that there is suspicion in terms of the elections procedures. Similar to *yaʕni* in extract (35), the instances of *yaʕni* in extract (36) are collocated with and appended to adverbials of stance or expressions indicating emphasis. In contrast to the position of *yaʕni* in extract (35), which was close to a turn-initial position, instances of *yaʕni* in extract (36) were positioned within Khalid’s multi-unit turn, although these
instances might be seen to be positioned in utterance-final position evidenced by a pause with the first \textit{yaʕni} and a following continuer \textit{mhm} by Ahmed with the second \textit{yaʕni}.

To summarize, it seems that Arabic \textit{yaʕni} has been progressively and increasingly gaining some kind of conventional discourse-pragmatic behavior in which the form was familiarized, and subsequently legitimized, through frequent use to collocate with adverbials of stance and/or expressions or phrases that can carry and indicate evaluative load. Such emphatic and evaluative behavior might be explicit or implicit depending on the contextual circumstances of the discourse. The overall institutional goals and orientation of the program to entertain and to capture the audience’s attention are factors that should be considered for activating language use featuring affect, attitudes, and stance-taking. Such an institutional and goal-oriented environment seems to form a type of text as well as to formulate a discourse reservoir where \textit{yaʕni} can appear and collocate with adverbials, expressions, and phrases indicating emphasis and evaluation.

\textbf{Ambiguous and Unclassified Cases/Instances}

Müller (2005, p.87) wrote about the discourse marker \textit{so}, “it is an undisputed fact that language as it is used in the \textit{real world}, and \textit{spoken language in particular}, is not always an orderly matter. Therefore, is should not be surprising that there were a number in my data which could not be classified” (emphasis is mine). Müller (2005) also found the same issue with the DMs researched in her study including \textit{well, like}, and \textit{you know}. The same struggle in identifying and determining the discourse-pragmatic functions of DMs is also pointed out and can be found in seminal works such as Schiffrin on \textit{and} (1987; 2006), Macaulay on \textit{you know} (2002), Maschler (2009) on \textit{kei’lu}, Brinton (2007; 2008) on indeterminate instances, Aijmer (2002) on \textit{now}, and Beeching (2016).
Similar to the majority of the treatments of DMs listed above, and not surprisingly, there were a number of instances of *yaʕni* in my data, which clearly defied all attempts of functional analysis and classification. What is included in this category are instances of *yaʕni* where neither my analytical efforts nor the analytical efforts of the colleague raters proved fruitful. Interestingly enough, responses such as “meaningless,” “dummy,” indeterminate,” “ambiguous,” and “confusing” are exemplar responses typically received from my colleague raters. I termed such cases/instances ambiguous/unclassified instances. In the following, I present some cases/extracts with tentative analysis and speculations as it is believed in the great majority of the literature and as a part of research reflexivity and research practice that such discussions should open new directions and continue to enrich the developing scholarship on Arabic DMs, in general, and Arabic *yaʕni*, in particular. Of importance to mention here is that such a reflexive step and pointing the discourse-pragmatic reality of *yaʕni*, and of course, other Arabic DMs has been avoided in the literature. Such avoidance and the absence of pointing out the reality of this item would make an ideal field of linguistic research and investigations.

There are instances of *yaʕni* placed inside utterances, I would call them in utterance-medial position, with no specific clues of speech perturbations, prosody, or other functional indicators. Rather, these instances occurred within fluent speech. Pointing out the previous features for the talk surrounding *yaʕni* is highly important in which sense these need to be contrasted with the instances analyzed with speech perturbations and disfluencies as illustrated in the section on repair organization with *yaʕni*. In the majority of cases, *yaʕni* was placed utterance-internally in which sense that:
First, the utterance hosting *yaʕni* occurred within a stretch of talk (i.e. multi-unit turn); and second, *yaʕni* occurred in the middle of this hosting utterance. Such instances of *yaʕni* seems not to relate any discourse segments/utterances. It is better to view the analytical suggestions related to these instances in the following points:

1. One suggested analytical view is that these instances of *yaʕni* might be adjusting, modifying, and overall qualifying the utterance or proposition where it was hosted. However, it is not quite clear if *yaʕni* qualifies the utterance or the proposition either for emphasis or if it functions more of a downtoning device for the utterance or the proposition.

2. One would say about such instances that *yaʕni* was used to focalize/highlight a specific/particular part of an utterance or discourse similar to the functional behavior of English focuser *like* (Beeching, 2016; Underhill, 1988) and *ke’ilu* in Hebrew (Maschler, 2009). Sometimes, but not necessarily, *yaʕni* was placed inside the utterance before an adjective or an expression/phrase (e.g. adjective phrase, verb phrase, noun phrase, prepositional phrase) that carry evaluative load where a speaker evaluates another person, entity, quality, issue, a team, an organization, whether positively or negatively. In other words, an analyst might say that a speaker used *yaʕni* to highlight that specific adjective or expression/phrase.

3. We could think of this in another but related way that a speaker might also use such instances of inserted *yaʕni* to feature newness of information and/or comments within the discourse.
4. Such instances might also have pragmatic nuances of involvement and common ground similar to that of you know in English.

5. One might say that such instances might be working as a grammatical linkage device between parts of an utterance, which might indicate that yaʕni might not be a discourse marker anymore. Of course, it is not a verb, too.

These aforementioned points are only analytical possibilities. Examples of such utterances extracted from multi-unit turns are the following:

Extract (37) KEP2

(Nawaf commenting on a defense player. Interestingly, it is confusing where ‘is’ can be positioned in the third line in the following example, i.e. before or after yaʕni)

NA: … haḑa lašeb yaʕni lašeb namuḑaji …

this player DM player model

… this player is yaʕni a model/ideal player …

Extract (38) KEP2

(Sultan commenting on his relationship/friendship with Nawaf)

SU: … w haḑa šay yaʕni naftaṭir fiḥ …

and this thing DM we.pride in.it

… and this is something yaʕni we are proud of …

As an effect of lengthy turns-at-talk or multi-unit turns, it seems to me that yaʕni can be appended to or placed in utterance final-position within these turns. In other words, transition in speakership is not the next relevant next action so these instances can be judged as turn-yielding devices. These instances typically come with flat or final intonation and followed by a pause. The analytical suggestions suggested for the previous
instances of *yaʕni*, specifically (1-4), might be relevant for this type of instances. Additionally, it seems like these instances of *yaʕni* are projecting possible Transition Relevance Places (TRPs) which were not taken probably as a result of features related to the turn taking system in institutional talk. Another question is: Are these instances used to terminate utterances within turns?, i.e. utterance terminals. Meanwhile, they might have retrospective effect(s) on the utterances where these instances of *yaʕni* were hosted, e.g. as a retrospective attention getting device to evaluations or information preceding *yaʕni* in the utterance. However, it is not clear what kind(s) of retrospective effect(s). It is also not clear if a speaker would have used such instances as a kind of appeal for common ground and/or shared knowledge or involvement with other interactants/speakers, similar to that of English *you know*. It is also not clear if a speaker would have used such instances to guide the hearers/guests/audience through some assumptive/inferential work, and as such a speaker would invite the hearers/guests/audience to converge. Consider the following examples:

**Exatrcet (39) KEP1**

*(One of the candidates for the elections received an endorsement from the elections committee. Khalid commented on this endorsement.)*

1 KH:… min nnahiya lquanuniya ma lha ay qiimah (.)

   From the side the legal NEG have any value

   From the legal side, [this endorsement] has no value (.)

2 liʔannaha tabqa muxalafa *yaʕni* (. …

   because it stay violation DM

   because it stays as a violation *yaʕni* (. …

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Similar analytical views and questions revolve around the two instances of *yaʕni* in line 2 and the first instance in line 6 in extract (23) brought up here for convenience as extract (40). As explained earlier, the last instance of *yaʕni* in line 6 is an optimum candidate for a turn-yielding device evidenced by the group of cues combined with its occurrence.

**Extract (40) KEP2**

*(Ahmed was topicalizing the issue of Al-Ittihad’s team)*

1  AH: … ḥa nitnaqaš lyum nḥawil nidxul fi ttafašil=

   FUT we.discuss today we.try we.enter in the.details

   …We will discuss today we try to enter in the details

2  = ʕasas niʕrif wiš lli gaʕid yisir *yaʕni (.)=

   = so we.know what that PROG happen *DM

   = so we know what is happening *yaʕni (.)=

3  = wiš lwajibat wish ḫuquq lli ḥala laʕib kurat lqadam (.)=

   = what the.duties what the.rights that on player ball the.foot

   = what are the duties what are the rights on the football player (.)=

4  = xususan baʕd salfat Al-Ittihad (.) laʕibat nadi littihad=

   especially after story Al-Ittihad players team Al-Ittihad

   = especially after Al-Ittihad’s story (.) Al-Ittihad’s players=

5  = w lbayan lli ḥašal min a::::: tabʕan ḥidarat nadi Al-Ittihad (.)

   and the.report that issued from a::::: of course administration team Al-Ittihad

   and the report that was issued by a::::: of course Al-Ittihad club’s administration (.)

6  w bayan thani #w salfa muʕṣika šwayya *yaʕni (.) saraḥa Sultan *yaʕni.#
and report second and story funny little DM frankly Sultan DM
and a second report and a little funny story yaʕni (.) #frankly Sultan yaʕni

7 SU: ((Sultan took the turn and started speaking))

(Sultan started his turn and continued the talk about the issue of Al-Ittihad’s team)

To sum up, this section presented some instances of yaʕni that featured ambiguity and indeterminacy in the data selected and analyzed for this dissertation. Along similar lines to those of Beeching (2016) and Brinton (2017), I advise that this kind of extremely ambiguous functional behavior of yaʕni should not be taken as a limitation or an analytical failure. Rather, such ambiguity and indeterminacy related to the discourse-pragmatic functional behavior of yaʕni should indicate greater degrees of semantico-pragmatic and historical change through which the form seems to have been developing, as I suggested, wildly without scholars paying attention to the lines and pathways of development and change for such a linguistic and discourse-pragmatic phenomenon in spoken Arabic.

General Discussion

On one hand, the analysis and the findings related to the canonical verb instances of yaʕni seem to support Owens and Rockwood’s (2008) suggestion that verb yaʕni has lost its verbal status. This kind of de-categorialization of the verbal status of yaʕni, of course, along with a kind of semantic bleaching, should indicate a loss of the basic signifying/intending/meaning propositional meaning. The occurrence of verb yaʕni with negated forms only can add to the significance of losing the categorical verb status. This behavior might also suggest an answer for what I called earlier elsewhere as negligence from other scholars to address the verb status of yaʕni within their findings and analysis,
i.e. that verb *yaʕni* might have not actually been used in earlier data collected and analyzed (e.g., Al-Batal, 1994; Alkhalil, 2005; Bidaoui, 2015; Ghobrial, 1993; Marmorstein, 2016; Rieschild, 2011).

On the other hand, even if I found instances of verb *yaʕni* in my materials, the negated instances of *yaʕni* found in my data were mainly used by one speaker, Khalid in KEP1, mainly at specific junctures of talk that featured mixed/hybrid use of Arabic. That is, the use of a form of Standard Arabic mixed with or influenced by dialectal/vernacular form of Arabic that might be motivated by the emergent discourse circumstances and the emergent type of speaker identity embodied within the moment-to-moment of the interaction. The speakers seemed performing a style/type of language that fits the emergent (in)formality of the discourse situation, that fits the emergent interactional and communicative needs (e.g. considering the mutual intelligibility amongst speakers themselves and amongst speakers and the intended wide and large audience for the TV show), that fits the emergent type of identities embodied and performed within the interaction (e.g. authoritative; expert). But, this kind of speech can also be witnessed in the speech of the other speakers motivating the question: How valid is the relation between the use of the negated instances of verb *yaʕni* and the type of register of spoken Arabic used in this TV show?

My analysis of *yaʕni* showed that there are a number of instances where the categorical status of the verb and the categorical status of DM can converge together generating a number of major theoretical implications that should contribute influentially to methodological dimensions of relevance to the analysis and interpretation of *yaʕni*. First, the categorical status of *yaʕni* is not a matter of +verb or −verb or +DM or −DM.
That there seems a bridging categorical context (Beeching, 2016; Brinton, 2017; Fedriani & Sansó, 2017a) between the verb and the DM where the form can feature characteristics of both categories as illustrated in the examples of *yaʕni* found with elaborative moves. This categorical bridging status of *yaʕni* invokes the notions of prototypicality, scalarity, and gradience (Aijmer and Simon-Vandenbergen, 2011; Brinton, 2017; Jucker & Ziv, 1998; Hansen, 1998; Maschler, 2009) relevant to the functional class of DMs to be applied to the analysis and discussions of Arabic *yaʕni*. Such conceptions of prototypicality, scalarity, and gradience have never been taken adequately in the available Arabic literature on DMs. Therefore, I believe that such understandings and conceptualizations need to enter into and registered in the Arabic theoretical and analytical aspects of relevance to DMs. Not only that, but also such conceptualizations and understandings need to be investigated, compared, and contrasted in relation to other DMs to either more deeply develop and therefore verify the validity of these conceptions through discovering and comparing other Arabic discourse-pragmatic elements that might feature similar prototypical, scalar, or bridging categorical contexts. As Fedriani & Sansó (2017a) most recently mentioned, it is these understandings and conceptualizations of prototypicality and scalarity that enable us to enrich the theoretical and analytical aspects related to the functional classes of PMs, DMs, and MPs. A discussion of this categorical statuses has been overlooked in the previous available literature on *yaʕni*.

The kind of the categorical status of *yaʕni* discussed above put the binary distinction between conceptual meaning and procedural meaning of relevance theory (Sperber and Wilson, 1986; 1995) into question. The identification and investigation of DMs from a relevance-theoretic approach (e.g., Blakemore, 1987; 2002) rest on the
binary distinction between conceptual meaning and procedural meaning. Specifically, DMs are typically seen as linguistic elements that do not carry conceptual meaning. Rather, DMs are seen as linguistic elements that have procedural meaning that more or less provide cognitive instructions on how a specific segment of discourse could be related and interpreted in relation to other segments of discourse. This binary distinction has already been empirically challenged and problematized in the literature of DMs (e.g., Dér, 2010; Fraser, 2009; Ziv, 1998). My analysis of yaʕni also seems to challenge and problematize this binary distinction. Of course, my analysis and discussion stand in contrast to scholars (specifically, Bidaoui, 2015; Marmorstein, 2016) who argued for and claimed a clear-cut distinction for the procedural meaning of yaʕni. Therefore, we need to (re)consider the implications of analysis and discussion of yaʕni for research on Arabic DMs from a relevance theoretic approach. That is, the distinction between conceptual meaning and procedural meaning assumed in relevance theory related to DMs might not be always crystal-clear evidenced by the instances of Arabic yaʕni found in the bridging categorical context.

Bridging contexts can also be found amongst the discourse-pragmatic functions of yaʕni. However, I believe that we need to enrich the linguistic and the discourse-pragmatic functional aspects of yaʕni from a wide range of different contexts, analytical views, and functions so these can enable us to generate more systematic and detailed (re)construction of the linguistic and the discourse-pragmatic functional gradations. Such systematic and detailed (re)construction should contribute to our understanding of the evolution and therefore attempt to systematize the lines or chains of historical developments related to this element.
The bridging categorical context that seems to occur between the verb and the DM as well as the discourse-pragmatic bridging contexts between the discourse-pragmatic functions seem to support the gradualness and the directionality of the historical developments of DMs, and the chain-like developments of DMs. The aspects of gradualness, directionality, and gradations in terms of the categorical status and the discourse-pragmatic functional itinerary of yaʕni add fuel to the ongoing fire related to the process of change relevant to the development of DMs. This categorical and discourse-pragmatic behavior seems to challenge, problematize, and eliminate the cooptation hypothesis and theory proposed for the historical evolution and development of DMs (Heine, 2013). Heine (2013) defined cooptation as an operation of language change whereby a lexical item can instantaneously and spontaneously serve as a DM. The analysis and discussion of yaʕni in this research seem to have no support from the hypothesis and theory of lexicalization. Lexicalization is a process of language change whereby a linguistic element develops new referential or conceptual meanings (Brinton, 2007; 2008; 2010; 2017). Rather, the categorical and discourse-pragmatic behavior of yaʕni seems to have support from the hypothesis and theories that take gradualness, directionality, and gradations into account, such as grammaticalization and pragmatization (Beecing, 2016; Brinton, 1996; 2007; 2008; 2010; 2017). But, it seems that there is more into the historical development of yaʕni, which can be discussed and accounted for in terms of the hypothesis and theories of idiomaticization and phraseology relatively suggested and discussed for the historical evolution and development of DMs (Brinton, 2007; 2017). By the processes of idiomaticization and phraseology, linguistic elements collocate together and gain partial or full formal and
semantic stability. Therefore, Brinton’s (2017) question of whether some kind of a hybrid process for the historical development of DMs seems relevant for the situation of Arabic yaʕni. I advise that we need to find such bridging categorical and discourse-pragmatic contexts with other discourse-pragmatic elements in Arabic in order to enrich the slowly developing theoretical side related to DMs in Arabic.

From another angle, multifunctionality and the several overlaps between functions in which determining and specifying only one function for an instance have been inevitable (Beeching, 2016). Some suggestions have been that we should resort to the most salient function an instance of DM serves (e.g., Beeching; Müller, 2005). I reached the functional categories listed in my analysis and discussion based on decisions and judgements of what would be the most salient function in the particular/specific context where an instance was used by virtue of the functional indicators (or heuristics) described in my methods chapter. Even resorting and knowing the most salient function related to a specific context of yaʕni was not an easy and straightforward task because several discourse-pragmatic functions can overlap with each other having equal discourse-pragmatic effects (see Beeching, 2016). The functional overlap between yaʕni serving as a turn initiator jointly/equally with other discourse-pragmatic effects (e.g. mitigation or evasion) presents good examples.
CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

This chapter provides summaries for the contents of the dissertation chapters. The chapter highlights the major outcomes, discussions, and suggestions developed throughout the dissertation. Chapter one was an introduction that initiated the target of inquiry, the selected terminology, the objectives and the research questions of this dissertation. Chapter two provided a review of the literature on DMs, in general, while narrowing down the path of the review to focus on the available literature on Arabic DMs and specifically Arabic yaʕni. Chapter one and chapter two furnished the basis and the significance of this dissertation. Chapter three introduced the data collected, selected, and analyzed for this dissertation. The same chapter presented the analytical procedures and methods utilized to investigate yaʕni. Chapter four reported the findings of the functional and interpretative analysis with relevant discussions.

The aim of this dissertation was by no means to create any kind of (wild)/all encompassing generalizations as I believe that there is more to be learnt and understood in relation to Arabic yaʕni from a wide range of data, contexts, and analytical methods. The aim was rather to bring new insights to the linguistic and the discourse-pragmatic behavior of yaʕni from one novel context of spoken Arabic; insights that keep developing our knowledge snowball of this discourse-pragmatic phenomenon.

The findings and analysis of yaʕni in this dissertation suggest that it seems hardly enough to find the canonical verb use of yaʕni with the basic signifying and intend/mean referential meanings. Only 5 negated instances of the verbal use were found in the speech of one speaker, Khalid, in specific junctures of talk. In contrast, DM yaʕni was used by all speakers with variable discourse-pragmatic functional use.
Building on the literature available on *yaʕni* and informed by the most recent views in the field of DMs (e.g. Beeching, 2016; Brinton, 2007; 2008; 2010; 2017; Fedriani & Sansó, 2017a), the analysis and discussions seem to suggest three major linguistic and discourse-pragmatic behaviors of *yaʕni*. First, it seems that there is a categorical gradation between verb *yaʕni* and DM *yaʕni*. This kind of categorical gradation has never been invoked and explicitly discussed in the previous literature on *yaʕni*. It is this dissertation that forgrounds this scalar categorical status between the verb and the DM *yaʕni*. Second, gradations can also be located on the discourse-pragmatic functional aspects reported within this dissertation. Third, it seems that *yaʕni* is wildly moving and progressively developing into the scope of idiomatic and formulaic discourse/utterances; the extent of this change has never been recognized in the previous research on *yaʕni*. The extention of use reached in this dissertation is yet to benefit from and be enriched by further research on Arabic *yaʕni* itself as well as other Arabic discourse-pragmatic elements.

The analysis and discussion suggest several implications. First, we need to rethink our understanding of the categorical status of Arabic *yaʕni* and other Arabic DMs as the analysis and discussion seem to problematize the categorical binary distinction between the DM *yaʕni* and its canonical verb form, which were based most recently (Bidaoui, 2015; Marmorstein, 2016) on the notions of conceptual and procedural meanings. Second, the analysis and discussion suggest gradualness, directionality, and gradations regarding the linguistic and the discourse-pragmatic functional behavior of *yaʕni*. The aspects of gradualness, directionality, and gradations can find support under the processes of language change of grammaticalization and pragmaticalization rather than cooptation.
or lexicalization. The historical linguistic process of idiomaticization can also account for the very late developments of the marker evidenced by the collocational patterns found with *yaʕni*. Finally, as a DM, multifunctionality is inevitable in relation to discourse-pragmatic elements, and Arabic *yaʕni* is no exception. The multifunctional asset of *yaʕni* can pose analytical challenges related to interpreting and then deciding on the kind of the appropriate discourse-pragmatic function. Resorting to the most salient function has been a solution, of course, along with acknowledging any other witnessed discourse-pragmatic functions.

**Future Directions**

Of course, research and scholarship on DMs and other functional classes in Arabic, in general, are undoubtedly in the initial stages compared to the highly developed scholarship and literature found cross-linguistically; e.g. English. This field of linguistic and discourse-pragmatic inquiry is yet to benefit specifically from empirical investigations that should be dedicated to advance the slowly paced developed aspects related to theories and methodologies; areas which are in a dire need for explorations and investigations. The implications of investigations in this field should not be only restricted to theoretical and methodological aspects of research related to DMs and related functional classes of linguistic elements. Rather, the implications should be expanded into practical and more applied angles related to exploring the acquisition and use of DMs in Arabic first and second language, and pedagogical areas related to learning and teaching DMs to first and second and language learners. These aforementioned areas are still untouched for linguistic and discourse-pragmatic research of relevance to DMs and other functional classes of words.
From another side, additional research and scholarship wait to be conducted in order to understand Arabic *yaʕni* and move the developing snowball knowledge into new potentials that should broaden our understanding in terms of the linguistic and the discourse-pragmatic behavior of Arabic *yaʕni*. First, a discourse-pragmatic historical and analytic framework that combines synchronic and diachronic perspectives will bring new knowledge related to the general etymological and historical development of Arabic *yaʕni*. Such a framework will also enable an understanding and create a sense of relationship and directionality between the versatile, yet—I believe—accountable, linguistic and discourse-pragmatic behavior of Arabic *yaʕni*.

Second, broadening sources of data and bringing data from new contexts and settings can also bring new questions and complications into the foreground. For example, the use of DMs in general should initiate an ongoing rethinking process for the dynamic interactions between different levels of spoken Arabic across varieties and contexts. For example, a question that is still resonating in my mind is the following: DMs and other functional classes are seen primarily as linguistic elements associated with stigma and are always described with pejorative terms. However, the question is why language users such as Sheikhs use *yaʕni* and a whole range of DMs in such a highly formal and religious context of spoken Arabic? What kind of indications and implications would this have for the Arabic sociolinguistic landscape?

Third, studies of sociolinguistic and discourse-pragmatic variation of Arabic *yaʕni* and other Arabic DMs are still untouched. A variationist approach is expected to enable us to determine and evaluate associations between macro (e.g. age and social class) and micro (e.g. text type and speaker roles) social factors and the type of sociolinguistic
indexicality that can be related in intricate ways with discourse-pragmatic functions of ٍياَنِي. Not only that, but also bringing the variationist paradigm of sociolinguistics and discourse-pragmatics will highlight implications for the variation and language change of specific importance to ٍياَنِي. Sociolinguistic investigations of ٍياَنِي can also highlight the influence and effects of other never considered contextual factors and layers of context such as text type (also activity type, register, speech event, genre, etc.) and speaker roles within institutions on the linguistic and the discourse-pragmatic use of Arabic ٍياَنِي.

Fourth, although this dissertation did not consider the relevance of multimodality to the discourse-pragmatic functions of ٍياَنِي, there seemed a noticeable coordination between multimodal aspects/cues and the use of some discourse-pragmatic functions of ٍياَنِي. To give one example, the speakers used ٍياَنِي in contexts of word searches and turn holding collaborating this discourse-pragmatic function with multimodal eye and hands cues/movements that indicate engagement with thinking and self-editing. Therefore, hands should be on multimodality and the coordination between some of the discourse-pragmatic functions of ٍياَنِي and multimodal aspects/cues of talk-in-interaction.


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