The Jordanian Arabic discourse marker *bas*:
A pragmatic analysis

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The present study aims at discussing the various pragmatic functions of the Arabic discourse marker (DM) *bas* in Jordanian Arabic (JA). The DM *bas*, which literally means "enough", has over time accumulated a variety of contextual meanings, and has become one of the most commonly used discourse markers in the daily interactions of JA native speakers. In order to meet the purpose of this study, a corpus of 22 dyadic conversations by native speakers of JA was compiled. 605 instances of the DM *bas* were extracted from the data. An eclectic analytical methodology has been adopted as a theoretical framework in the analysis of the DM *bas,* particularly Fraser's (2006a) grammatical-pragmatic approach*.* In pragmatically marked contexts, the results revealed that the DM *bas* can be considered multifunctional serving twelve different functions: Denying of expectation; making a repair; indicating insufficiency of information; returning to main topic; signaling topic shift; showing a threat; mitigating a face-threatening act (FTA); indicating a completion of cognitive process; and acting as a filler marker, directive marker, expressive marker, and modifier.

1. Introduction

Among the many aspects of pragmatics, discourse markers (henceforth: DMs) such as *oh, well, y'know, but, inšāʔallah, ʕādī,* etc. have become part of a growing body of work in the last four decades or so. Despite the disagreement between researchers (Fraser 2009, Redeker 1991, Schiffrin 1987, among others) on a single all-inclusive definition of discourse markers, some have nonetheless posited definitions to account for the nature and functions of these discourse elements. Schiffrin (1987: 31), for example, defines them as "sequentially dependent elements that bracket units of talk." Redeker (1991: 1168) maintains that a discourse marker is

> a word or phrase that is uttered with the primary function of bringing to the listener's attention a particular kind of linkage of the upcoming utterance with the immediate

discourse context. An utterance in this definition is an intonationally and structurally bounded, usually clausal unit.

Schiffrin (1987) and Zwicky (1985) set forth a number of characteristics for DMs. These characteristics can be summed up into three: Non-truth conditionality, optionality, and connectivity:

1. DMs are syntactically detachable from a given sentence since they do not contribute to the truth conditionality of the propositional content of utterances.

2. DMs are syntactically optional, in that their removal does not change the grammaticality of a sentence nor the semantic relationship between sentence constituents. DMs have to have a range of independently prosodic contours, i.e. DMs are both accented and separated from their surrounding context by pauses, intonation breaks, or both.

3. In order to add textual coherence, DMs have to be able to signal relationship between discourse units at both local (the host discourse unit) and global levels (situational context).

Schiffrin (1987: 24-25) argues that DMs have to be able to operate on different planes of discourse: participation framework, information state, ideational structure, action structure, and exchange structure. Schiffrin's five-plan model is roughly equivalent to Halliday and Hasan's distinction between external and internal relations within texts (Halliday and Hasan 1976). External relations, which are basically oriented to what happens outside the text rather than within, relate to Schiffrin's ideational structure plan; whereas internal relations, oriented to what is being said rather than to what is being done, are expressed somewhat on the other plans that she suggests.

DMs have a multiplicity of functions on the textual, interpersonal and cognitive discourse levels. To begin with, the textual level, DMs relate discourse units semantically at both the local and global levels of discourse. In other words, they create coherence among discourse units, for instance the DM 'after all' in *I think it will fly. After all, we built it right* relates the latter clause deictically to the former one. Interpersonally, DMs express solidarity between interlocutors and show attitudes, feelings, and evaluations towards the illocutionary force of the discourse units, such as *just* in *I am just proud of you.* Finally, on the cognitive level, DMs allow a speaker to buy time in order to solve cognitive problems or to reformulate previous utterances such as *anyway* in *Anyway, I was wondering if you can lend me your car tonight.*

The aim of this study is to examine the pragmatic funtions of the DM *bas* in Jordanian Spoken Arabic (JSA). The DM *bas*, which is apparently widely used across the Arab World, is virtually equivalent to *but, enough, well, as soon as, only, just, stop it.* It is mostly used in spoken informal discourse since it is not considered part of the Standard Arabic lexicon. Most probably the lexical expression

bas has been borrowed from Indian languages during spice trading era since the same term is still found in today's Urdu and Hindi languages of India. However, it is highly likely that the expression might have entered these languages' lexicon from the Persian (Oxford 2021). The variety of pragmatic meanings and functions that *bas* encodes will be the focus of the discussion under section 7. Next section discusses some of the available literature relevant to the focus of this study.

2. Review of related literature on discourse markers

Studies into the nature and function of discourse markers can be divided into two main groups:

1. coherence studies in which scholars, such as Schiffrin, Redeker, and Fraser, investigate DMs' contribution to discourse coherence on the local and global levels;

2. relevance studies, spearheaded by Blakemore, Sperber, and Wilson, have analyzed DMs as encoding procedural rather than conceptual (or representational) meaning.

Fraser (2006b) has challenged the latter claim on DMs by suggesting that any linguistic form, DMs included, encodes not just a procedural and conceptual meaning, but in fact three types of semantic information, namely, procedural, conceptual, and combinatorial. Procedural deals with the role constituents play in processing propositional representation for the sake of creating a coherent mental representation between the hearer and the speaker. Conceptual specifies the mapping of constituents onto concepts. Combinatorial indicates the relationship between constituents in order to produce more complex semantic structures.

With regard to the individual meaning of a DM, Hansen (1997, 1998a) argues that each DM encodes a core meaning (monosemic) of a general nature, for instance the DM *but* has the core meaning of a "simple contrast;" in addition to subtle meanings being derived from the core meaning depending on the context (polysemic). Such approach to the meanings of DMs, which is known as a polysemic approach is different from the "polyfunctional approach" to the analysis of DMs. Polyfunctional approach stipulates that certain DMs may fulfill many different functions motivated by pragmatic domains, such as the epistemic domain, speech act domain, or propositional domain. For example, in *Sue is hungry, so she must be grumpy* the knowledge of S1 *Sue is hungry* justifies the inference of S2 *she must be grumpy.*

In her relevance theory, Blakemore (2002: 5) rejects the contribution of DMs (she later designates them as discourse connectives) to discourse coherence. She introduced the distinction between two types of semantic meaning, viz. procedural meaning and conceptual meaning. Blakemore claimed that discourse connectives encode procedural meaning only, something which

influences future DM research. Blakemore's theory of procedural and conceptual seems to echo Grician notion about what is explicitly said and what is conventionally implicated.

English DMs, such as *well, so, I mean, but, y'know, hey, oh,* etc., have attracted considerable attention from those interested in this phenomenon. Studies into the nature and functions of DMs have gained traction in tandem with the development of many linguistic disciplines, especially pragmatics and discourse analysis.

Many linguists have adopted Relevance theoretical framework (RT) into investigating the functions of DMs in verbal communication. Schiffrin (1987) analysed DMs *well, y'know, and, because, then, but, I mean, oh, or,* and *so.* Under the label "discourse connectives," Blakemore (1987) discussed DMs *and, all, you see, after, moreover, but, so*, and *furthermore.* Watts (1988) discussed various uses of DMs *actually, really,* and *basically.* Moreover, Jucker (1993) covered some pragmatic uses of the DM *well.*

Other linguists adopted a pragmatic-functional approach in order to highlight the role DMs play in the coherence of the discourse segments in which they appear. As an example, many studies have analyzed the DM *yeah* (Drummon and Hopper 1993, Wong 2000, Fuller 2003). These studies have revealed four pragmatic functions of the DM *yeah*:

1. *yeah* as a continuer, i.e. to encourage the speaker to continue speaking;

2. *yeah* as an agreement marker to yes/no question;

3. *yeah* as a turn taking marker during conversation; and

4. *yeah* as a pause or repair marker.

3. Review of literature on Arabic discourse markers

There have been a good number of studies with substantive findings tackling the pragmatic functions of Arabic DMs in more details. The DM *inšāʔallah* "God's willing," for example, has been studied extensively (Nazzal 2005, Clift and Helani 2010, Mehawesh and Jaradat 2015, Al-Rawafi and Gunawan 2018). Arabs in general and Muslims in particular are inclined to use this DM very frequently in their daily speech as a confirmation of one's religious, linguistic, and cultural identity. Analysis of a collection of natural utterances using various research methodologies and frameworks (such as Conversation Analysis (CA), Relevance Theory RT, etc.), has revealed several pragmatic functions for the DM *,* as a result of its overuse in the daily interaction. Below are the main functions that are shared between these studies:

1. Threatening (e.g., *inšāʔallah you touch the TV*, meaning, *I dare you touch the TV).*

2. Consenting to a request (e.g., A: *Please bring me a cup of coffee.* B: *inšāʔallah*).

3. The DM *inšāʔallah* is most frequently associated with promising. The effect of the perlocutionary act of *inšāʔallah* depends on the close relationship between the interlocutor and the listener, the context of the utterance, and the likelihood of an event to happen in the future. The misuse of *inšāʔallah* between the interlocutor and the listener leads to face-threatening act, which is the failure to fulfill the promise. The studies concluded that the majority of the non-literal meanings of *inšāʔallah* flout Grician maxim of quality which stresses on speakers to be truthful.

Using CA and RT approaches, Kanakri and Al-Harahsheh (2013) analyzed the pragmatic functions and translatability of the DM *ṭayyib* and its cognate *ṭabb* (lit. "Okay, fine, good") in the Jordanian colloquial Arabic. They arrived at enumerating ten pragmatic functions: to fill in the gap, to give permission, to request patience, to signal end of discourse, to mark challenge or confrontation, to mitigate or soften disagreement, to introduce new topic, to show objection, to stop for evaluation of the situation, and finally to indicate acceptance or agreement.

Marmorstein (2016) investigated the DM *yaʕnī* (lit. "it means") in the Cairene Spoken Arabic of Egypt. Three pragmatic uses of *yaʕnī* were distinguished: stating new information, elaborating on the given information which the speaker assumes to be shared with the hearer, and finally stressing the point by repetition. It has been shown that *yaʕni* is not just a randomly used DM within speech, but that it has a distribution that is highly systematic and functionally motivated.

Al-Khawaldeh (2018) examined the uses of the DM *wallahi* "by God" in Jordanian Spoken Arabic. The data consisted of eight hours of spoken discourse. The findings revealed ten functions for the use of the DM *wallahi*: Introducing a threat, an apology or a compliment, mitigating a request, acting as a filler marker, etc.

Other Arabic DMs that have been treated include but are not limited to *yamʕawwad* "well, please, okay" (Alazzawie 2014); *maʕ nafsak* "leave me alone, get lost, mind your own business" (Al Rousan 2015); and *māšī* "alright" (Al-Shishtawi 2020).

4. Purpose of the study and research questions

The main objective of the present study is to investigate the pragmatic functions of the DM *bas* in Jordanian Spoken Arabic. It is the hope that this piece of work will add some value to the literature tackling the phenomenon of DMs within the context of spoken Arabic. The researchers attempt to answer the following questions of which the first one is very obvious and straightforward:

1. What are the pragmatic meanings and functions of the DM *bas* in the Modern Spoken Arabic discourse?

2. Since DMs can be identified by prosody as a "separate tone unit" (Fung and Carter 2007: 413), the following question must be asked: What effects do extralinguistic features (such as the stress, prosodic pause, etc.) have on the interpretation of the pragmatic functions of DMs?

5. Theoretical framework

Generally, DMs can have, besides a core meaning, a variety of pragmatic interpretations depending on the linguistic context that host them. The core procedural meaning carried by the DM *bas* is roughly one of a contrast, viz. "but;" while the other non-literal meanings can be inferred pragmatically. For the sake of a qualitative analysis of the various uses of the DMs *bas*, an eclectic analytical methodology has been adopted as a theoretical framework. It encompasses Conversation Analysis (CA), Discourse Analysis (DA), Brown and Levinson's (1987) Politeness Theory, and Fraser's (2006a) grammatical-pragmatically approach.

The study adopts Fraser's (2006a: 191) definition of a DM. "[A] lexical expression (LE) functions as a discourse marker if, it occurs in S2-initial position, LE signals that a semantic relationship holds between S2 and S1 which is one of: a. elaboration; b. contrast; c. inference; or d. temporality." The segments S1 and S2 must encode a complete message. The four semantic relationships are meant to be taken exhaustively since other relationships might exist. Fraser (ibid.) argues that since a DM is a type of relationship then it does not contribute to the sematic meaning of the proposition in which it occurs. It follows that a DM does not contribute to the truth conditionality of the S2 segment.

Fraser (2006a) discussed DMs under a general cover term he called Pragmatic Markers. He approached DMs from a grammatical-pragmatic perspective focusing on what DMs are and what their grammatical status is. He maintains that the DM as a linguistic expression functions to signal a semantic relationship between units of discourse (i.e. between the message in the second segment, S2, and the message in the preceding segment, S1) and thereby contributes to discourse coherence.

Fraser (2006a) described DMs properties on various linguistic levels:

1. Phonologically, DMs has the unmarked feature of being stressed especially if they are monosyllabic, e.g., *so* and *but*. They are followed by a pause especially if placed in segment initial position.

2. Morphologically, DMs can be either monosyllabic (e.g., *and* and *thus*), polysyllabic (e.g., *furthermore* and *before*), or a complete phrase (e.g., *that is to say*).

3. Syntactically, the DM as a linguistic expression is drawn from the syntactic categories of coordinate conjunctions (e.g., *and, but, yet...*), subordinate conjunctions (e.g., *although, since, because ...)*, adverbials (e.g., *anyway, then, still)*, prepositions (e.g., *despite of, instead of,*), or propositional phrases (e.g., *after all, on the contrary ...)*, and has a core meaning enriched by the context.

In relation to the types of semantic relations DMs signal between adjacent discourse segments, Fraser (2009, 2006a) distinguishes four functional classes of DMs:

1. Contrastive discourse markers such as *but, in spite of, although, nevertheless, in comparison, yet...*

2. Elaborative discourse markers, such as and, above all, in addition, moreover...

3. Inferential discourse markers, such as *so, after all, consequently, thus, then, therefore...*

4. Temporal discourse markers, such as *then, after, before, meanwhile, when...*

6. Methodology

The present study aims at investigating and describing the pragmatic functions of the DM *bas* in Jordanian Spoken Arabic (JSA). Since the DM *bas* is used in spoken discourse, the data of the study is grounded on naturally-occurring oral discourse. Data has been extracted from a corpus of twenty-two dyadic conversations by native speakers of Jordanian Arabic. Each conversation lasts between ten to thirty minutes (in total of 7.5 hours). The participants were university students with an average age of 20 years. The recorded conversations occurred between same-sex and mixed-sex participants with an equal number of males and females. Participants have been informed ahead of time that they will be taped and their consents have been obtained; however, the rationale behind the study was kept hidden for the sake of avoiding any impact on the naturalness of the conversation. The recorded conversations have been transliterated. 605 occurrences of the DM bas were identified in the corpus which consisted of 83054 words.

The data was examined thoroughly in order to arrive at the various meanings and functions of the DM bas, paying a significant attention to the prosodic feature of each utterance. To the best of the researchers' knowledge, the DM *bas* has never been studied within the context of Jordanian Spoken Arabic.

7. Results and Discussion

After analyzing the data, eleven pragmatic functions were identified for the DM *bas*. Following is a treatment of each individual function with some illustrative examples from the corpus.

7.1. Denial of expectation

The first meaning of *bas* relates to Lakoff (1971) and Blakemore (1987) analysis of the English DM *but* in which the hearer expects to hear something which is then denied.

(1.a)   ما بيقطع فرض بس هو كذّاب

mā   bi-ygṭaʕ   farḍ   bas huwwa kaḏḏāb

NEG IMPFabondon3SGM prayer yet he (is)   liar

"He has never abandoned obligatory prayer yet he is a liar"

(1.b)   إتطلع عليها، حلوة بس هي سمرة

ʔittallaʕ   ʕalay-hā / ḥilwa bas hiyya samra

IMPlook2SG at-her / pretty yet she   black

"Look at her, she is pretty yet she is black"

In example (1.a) above, *bas* functions as a linking particle between the two conjuncts. The first conjunct *mā bi-ygṭaʕ farḍ* "He has never abandoned obligatory prayer" implies something which is contradicted or denied by the second conjunct *kaḏḏāb* "a liar." The implication relation between the two conjuncts is based on the assumption that the faithful are normally honest. A religious person who always performs his/her daily prayers on time is expected not to lie.

Example (1.b) represents a vicious slur one would expect to hear every now and then from racist individuals. To them beauty is attributed to women with white complexion, and thus being beautiful and black would contradict their assumption.

In a similar vein, the DM *bas* in the below examples encodes a contrastive/oppositional relationship between two contrasting situations. Fraser (1999) claims that, by and large, contrastive markers signal a relationship of contrast or denial between S1 and S2.

(1.c.)   في الشمال الجو ثلج بس في الجنوب مطر.

fi ʔš-šamāl ʔil-jaw   talj bas fi ʔil-janūb   maṭar

in the-north the-weather snow but in the-south rain

"In the north it is snowing, but down south it is raining"

(1.d.)   انا بحكي انجليزي باللهجة البريطانية بس أخوي بحكي باللهجة الامريكية.

ʔanā b-aḥkī   ʔinglīzī   bi-ʔil-lahjeh   ʔil-birīṭaniyya

I   IMPFspeak1SG English   with-the-accent the-British

bas   ʔaxū-ī   b-iḥkī   bi-ʔil-lahjeh   ʔil-amrīkiyya

whereas   brother-my IMPFspeak3SGM with-the-accent the-American

"I speak English with the British accent, whereas my brother speaks it with the American"

In the above example (1.c.), the first clause has a different, rather contrasting, meaning from the clause after *bas*. Obviously there is an incompatibility between the *snowing* and the *raining* weather conditions. The same argument applies to (1.d.).

7.2. Repair/correction Marker

This function of the DM *bas* does not signal contradiction as is the case in the previous function. *Bas* is employed here as a device for correction. When considering the below scenario in which speaker A makes a comment after seeing speaker B talking to a handsome man; the use of *bas* serves to correct or repair the assumption made by speaker A.

(2.a.)   A: الظاهر بتحبّيه؟ شكله حلو كثير

ʔid-dāhir   bi-tḥibbī-h?   šakl-u   ḥilū   ktīr

the-obvious IMPFlove3SGF-him? appearance-his handsome very

"It looks like you are in love with him? He's very handsome"

B: ما بنحب بعض بس احنا أصدقاء.

mā   bi-nḥib   baʕaḍ /   bas   ʔiḥnā   ʔaṣdiqāʔ

NEG IMPFlove1PL together / just   we (are) friends

"We are not in love, just friends"

7.3. Marker of insufficiency

The DM bas may also encode insufficient information in the speech of interlocutors. By way of illustration:

(3.a)   A: إنتي كسرتي المزهرية؟

ʔintī kasartī   ʔil-mazhariyya

you $_{PF}$break$_{3SGF}$ the-vase

"Did you break the vase?"

B: آاه، بس....

āh   bas...

"Yeah, well..."

(3.b.)   A: بتحكي انجليزي زي البلبل.

bi-tḥkī   ʔinglīzī zay ʔil-bulbul

$_{IMPF}$speak$_{3SGF}$ English like the-nightingale

"She speaks English like a pro"

B: بس، هي ربيت بالأردن. كيف ممكن هيك؟

bas /   hiyyī rībyat   b-ʔil-urdun   kayf   mumkin hayk

well / she $_{PF}$raise$_{3SGF}$ in-the-Jordan how possible that?

"Well, she was raised in Jordan. How is that possible?"

Speaker B in the first example seems to stop short in her reply to the question about who is responsible for breaking the vase. Her mother (i.e. A) expects her child (i.e. B) to provide some extenuating circumstances in order to lessen the punishment that would incur as a result. The follow-up question that one normally expects from speaker A is bas šou? "Well what? If B would have said yes, this would be sufficient and direct.

In (3.b), speaker B finds the statement by speaker A insufficient and lacking some elaboration. Based on previous knowledge of Jordanian poor education system, speaker B presupposes that Jordanian public school system does not qualify the person being referred to in the conversation to be fluent in English. Therefore, speaker B seems bewildered and thus needs some additional information from A, such as "Did she study in prestigious private schools?," "Are her parents native speakers of English?" and the like.

7.4. Return to the main topic

In the dialogue below, The DM *bas* signals a return to the main topic being discussed which has no relation with the current topic. It can be readily noticed here that *bas* in this case is always found in utterance-initial position.

(4.a.)   A: كانت سهرة حلوة على كل المقاييس

kānat   sahra   ḥilwī   ʕalā kul ʔil-maqāīs

PFbe3SGF soirée beautiful on   all the-measures

"It was such a beautiful soirée par excellence.

B: بس شو بالنسبة لتصليح عجل سيارتي.

bas šū   bi-ʔin-nsbī   la-taṣlīḥ ʕajal sayyārat-ī

but what with-regard to-fixing tyre car-my

"But what about fixing my car tyre"

The main concern of speaker B was the fixing of her car tyre. She wanted to interrupt whatever conversation was in progress at the time and simply returned to the main topic of focus, i.e. fixing the tyre of her car, which seemingly had been under consideration prior to talking about the soirée.

7.5. Topic shift

For the sake of continuing communication between interlocutors, often the DM *bas* serves as a topic initiator, in that it introduce new information to the ongoing conversation. The speaker has the burden of choosing the right time to introduce the new, yet related, topic and, by the same token, the listener is responsible for processing the new information on the basis of shared background knowledge. As a topic shift, the DM *bas* signals separation between discourse units. Almost always it is not located in utterance initial position:

(5.a)   كندا فتحت ابواب الهجرة، بس بحكوا العمر لازم تحت الاربعين

kanadā   fataḥa   ʔabwāb ʔil-hijra,

Canada PFopen3SGF doors   the-immigration

bas b-iḥkū   ʔil-ʕomr lāzim taḥit ʔil-arbaʕīn

but IMPFsay3PLM the-age must under the-forty

"Canada has opened its doors for immigration, but they say that one must be under the age of 40"

The DM *bas* in (5.a) is used to introduce the new topic "the age requirement" which, in turn, is related to the topic under consideration "immigration to Canada."

7.6. Filler marker

Words that are often considered conversational fillers or gap fillers (such as *like, um, ah uh, so*, etc.) are employed during conversations for a variety of reasons: To take or hold the floor, to indicate pause or hesitation, among other functions. By using certain filler while conversing, a speaker seems to be engaged in a sort of cognitive processing tasks like retrieving information, inferring, or reasoning, in order to eventually formulate the idea in the appropriate wordings. Fillers do not carry a communicative message by speakers (Aijmer 2002). In the corpus of the study, Jordanian native speakers tend to employ the DM *bas* as a filler marker:

(6.a) A: مالك مش على بعضك؟

Mālak   muš ʕalā baʕḍa-k

what-with-you NEG on self-your

"What's going on with you?"

B: والله ما في شيء بسسسس الاولاد جابولي الصداع

w-allahi mā   fī   šīʔ / basss   ʔil-awlād   jabūlī

by-God NEG there thing / you know the-children PFbring3PLM

ʔṣ-ṣudāʕ

the-headache

"Nothing important, you know, kids give me a headache"

Speaker B seems to be unwilling to reveal what is bothering him probably because he does not like to discuss family matters with friends, colleagues or relatives. Therefore he resorts to the use of the DM bas in order to buy some time to think about an appropriate general reply which satisfies the interlocutor's curiosity and at the same time does not incur any FTA. The elongation of the sound /s/ in *basss* is a clear indication of an ongoing mental activity.

7.7. Directive

On the interpersonal level, the DM Bas may be used to give orders or commands. It encodes a conceptual meaning such as, *stop it* and *enough.*

(8.a)   بس يعني بس.

        bas   yaʕnī   bas

        enough $_{IMPF}$mean$_{3SGM}$ enough

        "Enough is enough"

(8.b)   بس، اسكت.

        bas /   ʔuskut

        enough / $_{IMP}$shut-up$_{2SG}$

        "Enough, shut up"

In the example (8.a), the sequencing of the DM *bas* is quite noticeable. Fraser (2006a) considers the first DM in the sequence to be the primary one, and the second one is for emphasis. The relationship between interlocutors governs the use of the DM *bas* in such cases. Such use of *bas* is only expected from people with higher or similar status and power, parents and children or husbands and wives respectively. It can be noticed that *bas*, in both (8.a and 8.b) can stand as a distinct utterance and as a tone unit by its own right. Typically, prosody plays a pivotal role in interpreting the appropriate meaning(s) of DMs. DMs can be stressed or separated from their surrounding context by pauses and/or intonational breaks (Watts 1988).

7.8. Expressive marker

Within a conversation, the DM *bas* may also be used to express feelings of surprise or disbelief vis à vis the propositional content of a previous utterance. Such an emotive meaning of the DM *bas* is usually conveyed via a rising intonation with a high pitch, and occupies a complete conversational turn. The "intonation of exclamation," as Bolinger (1989: 248) calls it, is expected to show the voice in some manner "out of control." The following example illustrates this point:

(9.a.) A: كم بيعطوكي راتب بشغلك الجديد؟

kam   b-yaʕṭū-kī   rātib bi-šuɣli-k   ʔil-jadīd

how-much ₁ₘₚꜰgive₃ₚₗₘ-you_F salary at-work-your the-new

"How much do you make a month in your new job?"

B: ٣٥٠ دينار

350   dinār

"350 dinars"

A: بس!

Bas

"That's it"

B: بس ...آه

āāh   bas

Yup / that's it

 "Yup… that's it"

In the example above, speaker A is asking B about her monthly salary. Speaker A was surprised to learn that a prestigious company where B was recently hired would pay its employees such low wages. The DM *bas* here signals a mismatch between what is explicitly stated by speaker A and the background knowledge of speaker B. Interestingly, the DM *bas* in this example retains its adversative value. In uttering *bas*, one may interpret it as, *what are you talking about?! You must be joking?! I can't believe it! I am completely shocked!* However, these emotive utterances are not stated explicitly instead are implied in the intonation.

     In reply to speaker A's astonishment and disbelief, speaker B confirms his answer by employing another *bas* and oft-times followed by further explanations or justifications of the subject matter.

7.9. Act of threat

This function of the DM *bas* serves to introduce a threat. In using *bas*, the illocutionary force of an utterance shows the speaker's intent to harm someone else as an act of retaliation:

(9.a.)   بس اشوفه مرة ثانية بأفرجيه!

bas   ašūf-ū   marra ṯanīa   b-ʔafarj-īh

when IMPFsee1SG-him time another IMPFshow1SG-him

"If I see him again, you will see what happens!"

(9.b.)   بس يطلع لي، والله لأموّته!

bas yiṭlaʕ   lī,   wa-allah   la-ʔamawwt-ū

if   IMPFshow-up3SGM to-me (oath particle)-God (asseverative)-IMPFkill1SG-him

"If he just shows up, I swear I will kill him!"

In both of the examples above, the speaker shows a commitment to do a future harmful act, for example, beating. It can be readily noticed that the DM *bas*, when it functions as an act of threat, introduces the subordinate conditional clause "the protasis" in the conditional sentence. According to Al-Khawaldeh (2018), conditional sentences encode the speech act of threat in Arabic.

7.10. Redress of face-threatening act (FTA)

The DM *bas* may act as a face-threat mitigator at the interpersonal level. It mitigates some sort of confrontation (i.e., FTA) every time the speaker disagrees (rather than agrees) with an opinion, refuses (rather than grants) a request, or rejects (rather than accepts) an offer (Brown and Levinson 1987). The DM *bas* here is used as a politeness strategy aimed at saving the addressee public self-image. Consider the following example:

(10.a)   A: ممكن آخذ سيارتك؟

mumkin ʔāxuḏ   sayyārta-k

can   IMPFtake1SG car-your

"Do you mind me taking your car?"

B: ممـ.. بس، عندي مشوار ضروري.

bas / ʕind-ī   mišwār ḍarūrī

but / with-me errand important

"Mmm... well, I have to go somewhere important"

The presence/absence of *bas* in such instances plays a significant role in changing their propositional content (or illocutionary force), since requests are usually regarded as an FTA (Brown and Levinson 1987). By rejecting the request made by speaker A "borrowing the car," speaker B is inevitably

committing an FTA against speaker A. For the sake of minimizing such FTA and thus saving speaker A's face, the DM bas becomes handy. It can be readily noticed that, in such utterances, the DM *bas* is always found in clause initial position and followed by a phonological pause.

7.11. Modifier

Among its various pragmatic meanings, DM *bas* may also act as a modifier in the following examples:

(11.a.)   A: كم معك مصاري؟

kam   maʕ-ak   maṣārī

how-much with-you money

"How much money have you got?"

B: بس خمس دنانير.

bas xams danānīr

only five dinars

"Only five dinars"

(11.b.)   A: عندك منه كُم قصير؟

ʕind-ak   minn-u kum   gaṣīr

with-you from-it sleeve short

"Do you have short-sleeved one (the shirt)?"

B: لا. بس كُم طويل.

lā   bas   kum   ṭawīl

NEG only sleeve long

"Nope. Only the long sleeve"

In (11.a.), speaker B tries to specify exactly the amount of money he currently has, while in (11.b.), the salesperson at the clothing store specifies the type of shirts she has in stock excluding other types.

7.12. Completion of cognitive process

The usage of *bas* as an indicator of completed cognitive process is yet another pragmatic function of this amazing DM nonetheless it was less frequent in the corpus of the study. Only four instances of this function have been found. The excerpt below illustrates this function clearly noting the co-occurrence of the cognition-related verb *lagīt-ha* "I figured it out." The two other verbs found in the corpus are *ʔitzakkart* "I remembered" and *fihimt* "I understood."

(12.a.)   A: ‫شو هو أخضر من برّا واحمر واسود من جوّا؟‬

šū   huwwa ʔaxḍar min barrā   w-ʔaḥmar w-ʔaswad min   jūwwa

what it   green from outside and-red and-black from inside

"What is green on the outside but red and black inside?"

B: ‫بس لقيتها، البطيخة‬

bas lagīt-ha   ʔil-baṭṭīxa

oh IMPFfigure1SG-it the-water-melon

"Oh I got it, the watermelon"

The co-occurrence of the DM *bas* with the verb figure out/got in the above example indicates that the speaker has been engaged in a cognitive process and has just completed it.

8. Conclusion and Recommendations

The study has provided a detailed analysis of the pragmatic functions of the DM *bas* when used in different contexts. It can be concluded that the linguistic context plays an important role in determining the functions (Schiffrin 1987, Blakemore 2002, Fraser 2006a, b). Moreover, it might be difficult for a non-native speaker of Arabic to comprehend such functions.

For almost the past four decades (since 1970s), there has been a growing interest in the definition, nature and pragmatic functions of DMs. This study demonstrated some of the various pragmatic meanings and functions encoded in the DM bas within the context of Jordanian Spoken Arabic. In light of mainly Fraser's (2006a) grammatical-pragmatic theoretic framework, the study has identified a set of functions DM *bas* serves within interaction: Denying of expectation, making a repair, indicating insufficiency of information, returning to main topic, signaling topic shift, showing a threat, mitigating an FTA, indicating a completion of a cognitive process, and acting as a filler marker, directive marker, expressive marker, and modifier.

The DM *bas* has a variety of meanings. However, this does not make such a lexical expression ambiguous since its linguistic environment helps clarify any ambiguity. Furthermore, the DM *bas*, as is the case for almost all DMs, can be done without since it does not add to the truth value of the utterance. That is, the sentence remains true or false regardless of the relationship encoded by *bas.*

DMs can pose a problem during the translation process. However, careful analysis of the micro- and macro-linguistic contexts will allow the translator to find the equivalent term in the target language. Naturally, the context of using the expression can solve the comprehension problem

whether in translation or during oral interaction. Moreover, it must be added that the prosodic features make the interpretation of the functions of the DM *bas* easier.

More detailed studies to analyze DMs cross-linguistically and cross-culturally covering their pragmatic functions and prosodic features are recommended. A complementary study by collecting data from other Arabic dialects is also recommended.

List of abbreviations

F	Feminine
IMPF	Imperfect
M	Masculine
PF	Perfect
PL	Plural
SG	Singular
IMP	Imperative

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