



# *The Hebrew University of Jerusalem*

## *Syllabus*

### *Discourse markers in spoken Hebrew - 25405*

*Last update 08-04-2025*

*HU Credits: 2*

*Degree/Cycle: 1st degree (Bachelor)*

*Responsible Department: Hebrew Language*

*Academic year: 0*

*Semester: 2nd Semester*

*Teaching Languages: Hebrew*

*Campus: Mt. Scopus*

*Course/Module Coordinator: Dr. Leon Shor*

*Coordinator Email: [shor.leon@gmail.com](mailto:shor.leon@gmail.com)*

*Coordinator Office Hours: By appointment*

*Teaching Staff:*

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Dr. Leon Shor

Course/Module description:

"No"— which does not express disagreement ("No, you're 100% right!"), "Come"— which does not request physical proximity ("Come on, that's not true!"), and "You don't understand"— which does not accuse the listener of a lack of understanding ("You don't understand how exciting this is!")— are expressions that have garnered significant attention among researchers of spoken discourse in recent decades. A close analysis of their role in conversation reveals that these expressions enable speakers to minimally signal their own mental processes, establish textual connections between different units of discourse, and express interpersonal attitudes within the conversational context. Since the discourse function of these expressions often diverges from their original meaning, a compelling question arises: what enables certain expressions to evolve in this way? Additionally, as a global and multilingual society, Israeli society is influenced by external factors in various fields, including language usage. This influence is evident in the borrowing of discourse markers from other languages, such as *nu*, *okey*, and *ya'ani*. In this context, questions arise: Does the borrowed expression reflect its original use in the source language? Or has it developed independently within Hebrew discourse after being borrowed? Alongside verbal discourse markers, the course will also explore relevant multimodal aspects, such as intonation, hand gestures, head movements, and facial expressions

Course/Module aims:

Learning outcomes - On successful completion of this module, students should be able to:

1. To understand the relevant issues in the study of discourse markers.
2. To be familiar with different approaches to the study of discourse markers.
3. To identify and analyze discourse markers in various discourse genres.

Attendance requirements(%):

Teaching arrangement and method of instruction: הרצאה

Course/Module Content:

1. Discourse and discourse markers
2. Definitions and classifications of discourse markers

3. The emergence of discourse markers
4. Multimodal aspects of discourse markers
5. Discourse markers at the crossroads – between writing and speech, between languages, between bodily reflexes and communicative signs
6. Discussion of selected discourse markers originating from diverse categories (adjectives and adverbs, clauses with perception verbs, deictic expressions, negation words, politeness terms, borrowed elements, non-verbal vocal elements, bodily gestures)

### Required Reading:

- ברדנשטיין, ר', שור, ל' וענבר, א' (תש"ף). הצירוף "זהו" בעברית המדוברת. בלשנות עברית, 74, 27-56.
- לבנת, ז' (תשס"ט). סמני השיח בעברית של ימינו – מבט סינכרוני ודיאכרוני. בתוך א' כהן (עורך), 250 שנות עברית חדשה (עמ' 211-227). הוצאת האקדמיה ללשון העברית.
- לבנת, ז' (תשע"ב). "עכשיו" כסמן שיח: סגמנטציה והבלטת ערך. חלקת לשון, 44-43, 366-346.
- משלר, י' (תשע"ח). מפסוקית ראשית לסמן שיח פרוטוטיפי: התבנית (אני) לא יודע/ת ממבט טיפולוגי פרגמטי. לשוננו, פ (א-ב), 166-137.
- ענבר, א' (2023). על הרמת האצבע המורה בשיח העברי. דברי החוג הישראלי לבלשנות, 23, 47-61.
- קורול, א' ושור, ל' (בדפוס). רב-תפקודיות של הערכה חיובית: "יפה" בשיח עברי דבור. לשוננו, שור, ל' (תשע"ט). "לא, אתה צודק במאה אחוז" – שימושים פרוצדוראליים של מילת השלילה "לא", בלשנות עברית, 73, 155-133.
- שור ל' וענבר, א' (2023). מילות השלילה "לא" ו"אין" כמיליות קריאה מעצימות בעברית החדשה. לשוננו 85, 229-210.
- Auer, P. and Maschler, Y. 2016. The family of NU and NÅ across the languages of Europe and beyond: Structure, function, and history. In: A. Peter and Y. Maschler (eds.), NU / NÅ: A Family of Discourse Markers across the Languages of Europe and Beyond. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, pp. 1-47.
- Bazzanella, C. (2006). Discourse markers in Italian: Towards a 'compositional' meaning. In: Kerstin Fischer (ed.), Approaches to Discourse Particles. Elsevier: North Holland, pp.449-464.
- Ben-Moshe, YM. (2023). Hebrew stance-taking gasps: From bodily response to social communicative resource. *Language & Communication* 90, 14-32.
- Ben-Moshe, YM. & Maschler, M. (2024). Hebrew clicks: From the periphery of language to the heart of grammar. *Journal of Pragmatics* 229, 19-39.
- Bolden, G. B. (2015). Discourse markers. In K. Tracy (Ed.), *The International Encyclopedia of Language and Social Interaction*. John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
- Fedriani, C. (2019). A pragmatic reversal: Italian per favore 'please' and its variants between politeness and impoliteness. *Journal of Pragmatics* 142: 233-244.
- Fraser, B. (2009). An account of discourse markers. *International Review of Pragmatics* 1, 1- 28.
- Fleischman, S. and Yaguello, M. (2004). Discourse markers in comparative perspective: a contribution to cross-language pragmatics. In: C. L. Moder and A. Martinovic-Zic (eds.), *Discourse across Languages and Cultures*. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: Benjamins, pp. 129-47.

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Heritage, J. (2018). Turn-initial particles in English: The cases of oh and well. In: J. Heritage and M.-L. Sorjonen (eds.), *Between Turn and Sequence: Turn-initial Particles across Languages*. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: Benjamins, pp. 155–190.

Inbar, A. & Shor, L. (2019). Covert negation in Israeli Hebrew: Evidence from co-speech gestures? *Journal of Pragmatics* 143: 85–95.

Inbar, A. (2023). The Raised Index Finger gesture in Hebrew multimodal interaction. *Gesture* 21(2/3): 264–295.

Kamunen, A. (2018). Open Hand Prone as a resource in multimodal claims to interruption. *Gesture* 17(2): 291–321.

Additional Reading Material:

Grading Scheme:

Presentation / Poster Presentation / Lecture/ Seminar / Pro-seminar / Research proposal 70 %

Submission assignments during the semester: Exercises / Essays / Audits / Reports / Forum / Simulation / others 30 %

Additional information: