

The Functions of the Discourse Marker "Inshallah" in the Iraqi Oral discourse: A Discourse- Pragmatic Analysis

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Abstract:

The study aims to investigate the pragmatic functions and prosodic features of discourse marker (Insha'Allah) in Iraqi oral discourse on the textual and interpersonal levels. It also examines whether there is a relationship between the speaker's gender and the use of the discourse marker (Insha'Allah). Brinton's (1996) dual model of functional analysis was employed as a framework. As a result, it was found that in addition to (Brinton, 1996) suggested macro-level functions, the discourse marker (Insha'Allah) also carried out additional micro-level functions in discourse at both levels. Prosodically, it was noticed that (pitch, frequency, and duration) led to a change in the pragmatic function of the discourse marker (Insha'Allah). On the other hand, it was revealed that the speaker's gender also played a vital role in the number of usage discourse marker (Insha'Allah).

Keywords: *Pragmatics, discourse marker, prosodic features, gender, insha'Allah.*

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1. Introduction

Each language is characterized by its common expressions utilized in daily communication, and every language is impacted by the cultural environment of its speakers with Islamic civilization significantly shaping the Arabic language. This is why there are so many Islamic terms are being used in everyday conversation. Recently, Arab linguists have been focusing on studying linguistics in the Arab oral discourse . The Arabic language contains a diverse range of expressions that refer to Allah, whether directly or indirectly, and the name of Allah is so prevalent in both spoken and written Arabic that we can observe the omnipresence of Allah in the language. Therefore, it would be difficult for an Arabic speaker to imagine a conversation without mentioning the name of Allah (Morrow, 2006). "InshAllah" is one of the most common Arabic-Islamic expressions that reflects Islamic influence in everyday language. This adherence stems from the divine command for Muslims to trust in Allah in all their religious and worldly affairs, as stated in the holy Qur'anic text below:

(The Noble Qur'an Encyclopedia, 2024) الكهف (23,24) " وَلَا تَقُولَنَّ لِشَيْءٍ إِنِّي فَاعِلٌ ذَلِكُمْ غَدًا، إِلَّا أَنْ يَشَاءَ اللَّهُ "

"And never say about anything, "I will surely do this tomorrow "without adding, "if Allah wills ".Al-Kahaf (23,24)

"

InshAllah" holds significant importance in Iraqi spoken language, as it assists speakers in organising their conversations and making their ideas more easily as (Schiffrin, 1987, p. 31) defined markers as "sequentially understood by the listener "InshAllah" is a DM, and dependent elements that bracket units of talk.

In light of that, the current study examines the pragmatic functions of the DM "InshAllah" "Pragmatic is concerned with the study of meaning as communicated by a speaker (or writer) and interpreted by a listener (or reader)" (Yule, 1996, p. 3) Pragmatics is the exploration of language use in communication, specifically focusing on the connection between sentences and the context and situation in which they are employed (Richards , Platt, & Platt, 1992)The study also focused on studying the prosodic features of the DM, "InshAllah" through frequency, pitch, and duration which is the sound characteristics (Richards , Platt, & Platt, 1992).On the other hand, the number of uses of the DM "InshAllah" is studied according to the gender of the user, and the differences between males and females through the prosodic features in the use of the DM. Importance of the study for linguists, translators, and literature professionals interested in analysingIraqi discourse. It enhances understanding of the DM "InshAllah" and identifies Iraqi societal culture for non-native speakers. However, it also appeals to people who are interested in studying phonetics because of how significant prosodic

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features are in oral communication and the usage of the DM "InshAllah".

2. Questions of the study

1. What are the pragmatic functions of the discourse marker "InshAllah" in the Iraqi oral discourse?
2. What effects do prosodic features have on the interpretation of the pragmatic functions of the discourse marker "InshAllah" ?
3. Do males use the discourse marker "InshAllah" more than females do?

3. Objectives of the Study

1. Shedding light on prosodic features and gender differences and their impact on the discourse marker "InshAllah" from the pragmatic function.
2. Showing the different aspects of the pragmatic functions of the discourse marker "InshAllah" within the Iraqi oral discourse.

4. Methodology

Information was collected by selecting 50 students from the Department of English Language at the University of Basra, dividing them equally (25 males, 25 females), observing and recording their daily conversations, and documenting their use of the discourse marker "InshAllah" in those conversations and this data was collected over a period of three months (Brinton, 1996) framework has been used to analyse the functions of DM "InshAllah" at the textual and interpersonal levels of discourse. Praat application (Boersma & Weenink, 2024) was utilised for analysing the prosodic features.

5. Results and discussion

5.1 Express optimism

5.1.1 Functions of the DM "InshAllah" at the interpersonal level

Example (1) male

علي: شلونك بالامتحان؟
زين العابدين: جاوبت الي اكدر عليه وان شاء الله خير.

[Transliteration]

Ali: *shilunk bialaimtihani?*

Zayn Al-Abidin: *jawabt eli agdaar ealayh wan insha'Allah khayr.*

[Translation]

Ali: did you do well in the exam?

Zayn Al-Abidin: I did my best, and inshAllah (I hope) it will be good.

In this situation, after the students of the third stage of the English Department took the difficult poetry exam. The interviewer asked a colleague about his answer in the exam, and the colleague answered that although the exam was difficult, he was optimistic that he would pass. He used the DM "InshAllah" to express optimism and hope that he would pass the exam. It is also used for the prosodic features of the DM "InshAllah" the initial pitch is higher than the final pitch level (119.6Hz) the final pitch level (98.6Hz), so the type of the tone is falling tone, and the duration of the DM "InshAllah" in this context (0.313ms).

Example (2) female

زهراء: المادة كلش صعبة، بس إن شاء الله تكون الاسئلة سهلة ونجيب درجات زينه إن شاء الله.

[Transliteration]

Zahra: *almadat kilash saebatun, bas ' insha'Allah takun alasiilaa sahla wa najib darajat zayanah' insha'Allah.*

[Translation]

Zahra: The subject is very difficult, but inshAllah (I hope), the questions will be easy and we will pass with high grades, inshAllah (we hope).

The discourse marker, "InshAllah" was used twice in one sentence and was repeated to emphasize its use for one function in this context, which is to emphasize optimism despite the difficulty of the academic subject. The low pitch level in initial position of the first DM (231.9Hz) and the high pitch level in the final position (262.4Hz), but the highest position in the letter "A" of "Allah" in the DM (304.8Hz), so, the tone is rising tone until "A" then falling tone. The duration of the first DM (0.360ms). The second DM has initial high pitch level (232.1Hz), the final low pitch level (184.4Hz) with a falling tone, and the length of the second DM (0.591ms).

As a result of the previous two examples according to gender: We note that the first example is male and the second example is female, and they used the same DM to perform the same pragmatic function, which is optimism, but the obvious difference is in the way it is added in terms of location in the context, as well as the clear difference in the prosodic features. We see that for the female, the first and second DMs are both higher than the male in terms of the initial and final pitch levels. The second DM for the female is similar to the male in terms of tone, but the first for the female is different. The length of the DM is also

different, being shorter for males and longer for females.

5.2 Confirmation

5.2.1 Functions of the DM “InshAllah” at the textual level (closing)

Example (3) male

الطلاب: خضر شوكت الامتحان؟
عبد الخضر: الامتحان اليوم ان شاء الله.

[Transliteration]

altulaab: khadir shawkat aliamtihan?

eabd alkhadar: alaimtihan alyawm an insha'Allah.

[Translation]

Students: Khadir, when is the exam time?

Abdul Khadir: The exam is today, inshAllah(for sure).

The students assembled to inquire the student who is aware of the precise time of the exam to inform them about the exact time. He responded with a conclusive answer, concluding the discussion about the exam by affirming it with the DM inshAllah. Prosodically, the high initial pitch level (167.9Hz) and the low final pitch level (112.9Hz), and the duration of the DM is (0.485ms) with a falling type of tone.

5.2.2 Functions of the DM “InshAllah” at the interpersonal level

Example (4) female

سارة: طليبي وياج كهوة.
سالار: ان شاء الله من عيوني.

[Transliteration]

Sarah: talbili wayach qhwa.

Salar: insha'Allah min euyuni.

[Translation]

Sarah: Order me a coffee.

Salar: InshAllah(for sure) of course.

The two friends were here; one of them was going to order a drink. The other friend asked her to bring coffee with her. So, the first one, who was going to get drinks, confirmed that she would bring coffee and used the DM "inshAllah" for confirmation. The prosodic features of this DM are the low initial pitch level (223.9Hz) and the final high pitch level (256.2Hz), and the duration of the DM is 0.675ms. The type of tone is a rising tone.

As a result of the previous two examples according to gender :

The high initial pitch level, according to males in the confirmation function of the DM, is lower than that of females. The low final pitch level for males is also lower than that of females. In both cases, the pitch level differences are very obvious,

especially for females. The type of tone for males differs from that of females, with males falling and rising. The duration is longer for females compared to males.

5.3 Lying

5.3.1 Functions of the DM “InshAllah” at the interpersonal level

Example (5) male

علي: تروح وياي للعشار؟
عباس: والله مادري بس ان شاء الله نكول اروح.

[Transliteration]

Ali: taruh wayay lileAshar?

Abbas: wallah madri bas insha'Allah nugwl aruh.

[Translation]

Ali: Will you go with me to Al-Ashar?

Abbas: I'm not sure, but inshAllah(I will not) I will go.

In this situation, the respondent does not want to go to Al-Ashar, so he uses the discourse marker to lie in order to avoid answering truthfully. Prosodically, the high initial pitch level (135.7Hz) and the low final pitch level (131.9Hz). The type of the tone is falling tone. The length of the DM is (0.476ms).

Example (6) female

زينب: اريدج ترحين وياي ندفع القسط.
زهراء: ان شاء الله عود ورة المحاضرة.

[Transliteration]

Zainab: aridch tarhin wayay nadfaa alqist.

Zahraa: insha'Allah oud wara almuhadara.

[Translation]

Zainab: I want you to go with me to pay the Installment.

Zahraa: inshaAllah(I will not) may be after the lecture.

Here, one of the girls asks her friend to go with her, and the other one does not want to go. So, she used the DM "inshallah" to lie and avoid going with her. Prosodically, the low initial pitch level (198.7Hz) and the high final pitch level (206.8Hz), and the duration of the DM is (0.506ms), the type of the tone is rising tone.

As a result of the previous two examples according to gender:

Females start with a higher pitch level compared to males and they also end with a higher pitch level. Additionally, females have longer durations and use a rising tone, while males use a falling tone.

5.4 Agreement

5.4.1 Functions of the DM "InshAllah" at the interpersonal level

Example (7) male

هاشم: اليوم نفتح برا ان شاء الله.

[Transliteration]

Hashim: *alyawm rah naftir baraa inshaAllah.*

[Translation]

Hashim: Today we will break our fast outside, inshaAllah (deal).

The student used the DM "InshaAllah" to indicate agreement with his colleagues to break the fast outside. Prosodically, the high initial pitch (105.7 Hz), the low final pitch level (87.23 Hz), duration (0.680 ms), type of tone: falling tone.

5.4.2 Functions of the DM "InshAllah" at the textual level

Example (8) female

مريم: جيبوا فلوس باجر نطلب اكل.

مشاعل: تمام ان شاء الله.

[Transliteration]

Maryam: *jibuu fulus bajir natlub akl.*

Masha'el: *tamaam inshaAllah.*

[Translation]

Maryam: Bring money, tomorrow we will order food. Masha'el: Sure, inshaAllah (deal).

While the two students were talking about eating lunch, one of them used the DM "inshaAllah" to express agreement. Prosodically, the high initial pitch level (246.1 Hz), the low final pitch level (199.6 Hz), duration (0.506 ms), type of tone: falling tone.

As a result of the previous two examples according to gender: females begin and end with a higher pitch level than males. Moreover, females experience longer durations, both of males and females use falling tone.

5.5 Postponement

5.5.1 Functions of the DM "InshAllah" at the interpersonal level

Example (9) male

سيف: ها حبيبي شوكت تعزمننا؟

ياسين: ان شاء الله من يكمل البيت.

[Transliteration]

Saif: *ha habibi shawkat ta zamna?*

Yassin: *inshaAllah men ykmil albayt.*

[Translation]

Saif: dude when are you inviting us to lunch?

Yassin: inshaAllah (i will but) When the house work is completed.

One of the students had previously promised his classmates that when construction was completed on their new house, he would hold a feast for his classmates. The first reminded the

second about the date of the feast, and he replied that when construction on the house was completed, he would invite them. He postponed it until completion, using the DM inshAllah. Prosodically the high initial pitch level (198.7Hz) and the low final pitch level (115.4Hz), the length of the DM is (0.294ms), the type of the tone is falling tone.

Example (10) female

رباب: يمته تكملين البحث؟

دنيا: ان شاء الله الاثنيين الجاي.

[Transliteration]

Rabab: *yamatah tkamilin albaht?*

Dunya: *inshaAllah alaithnayn aljay.*

[Translation]

Rabab: When do you finish your research?

Dunya: InshaAllah (i will but) next Monday.

The female student asked her colleague about her research and when she would finish writing it. The second student answered, using the DM "inshallah," that she will finish, but not now, meaning that she postponed completing the research, using the DM. Prosodically, the low initial pitch level (243.7Hz) and the high final pitch level (263.4Hz), along with the duration of the DM (0.405ms), indicate that the tone is rising.

As a result of the previous two examples according to gender: The initial pitch of males is lower than that of females, even when it is higher for males and lower for females. The final pitch level is also higher for females. The duration is shorter for males, and the tone of females is rising, while males have a falling tone.

5.6 Uncertainty

5.6.1 Functions of the DM "InshAllah" at the interpersonal level

Example (11) male

عبدالله: شوكت الامتحانات؟

احمد: يگولون ان شاء الله بعد العيد.

[Transliteration]

Abdul-Allah: *shawkat alaimtihanat?*

Ahmed: *yajulun insha'Allah baed aleida.*

[Translation]

Abdul-Allah: When are the final exams?

Ahmed: They say inshAllah(not sure) it will be after Al-Eid.

The students are discussing when the final exams will start. The second responds to the questioner with his uncertainty about the time, using the DM "inshAllah" to perform this function. He is unsure that he heard that it will be after Eid al-Fitr. Prosodically, the high initial pitch level (159.5Hz) and the low final pitch

level (135Hz), the duration of the DM (0.484ms), and the tone is falling tone.

Example (12) female

دنیا: وصیتي دلال تشوف درجاتي؟

دعاء: وصيتها وان شاء الله ما تنسه الي وصيتها عليه.

[Transliteration]

Dunya: wasiatay dalal tshuf dirjatiji?

Doaa: wasiatuha wan insha'Allah ma tansah eli wasiatuha ealayh.

[Translation]

Dunya: Did you remind Dalal to check your grades?

Doaa: I reminded her, and inshAllah(not sure if) she will not forget what I reminded her of.

The second student used the DM to indicate uncertainty about whether her colleague would remember or not. The DM thus performs its pragmatic function of uncertainty. Prosodically, the high initial pitch level (244.9Hz) and the low final pitch level (233.7Hz), but the highest pitch level was (252.8Hz) in the "A" letter of the DM "inshAllah", the duration of the DM is (0.538ms), and the tone was rising until "A" then falling.

As a result of the previous two examples according to gender: The initial pitch level of males is lower than that of females, and the final pitch level is also lower. Females have the highest pitch level focusing on "A", the length of the DM is longer for females. The tone is wavier for females compared to the falling tone of males.

5.7 Express a wish

5.7.1 Functions of the DM "InshAllah" at the interpersonal level

Example (13) male

خضر: ان شاء الله ابيع السيارة واخلص منها تعبتني.

[Transliteration]

Khuder: insha'Allah abyee alsayaarah wakhlus minha taeibtini.

[Translation]

Khuder: InshaAllah (I wish) I will sell my car and get rid of it. It has exhausted me.

Here, one of the students was exhausted by the frequent breakdowns of his car, so he used the letter sign to wish that he would sell his car and get rid of it. Here the DM "inshaAllah" fulfilled its pragmatic function of wishing. Prosodically, the low initial pitch level (129.2Hz) and the high final pitch level (152.3Hz), but the highest pitch level was in the letter "A" (178.7Hz), the duration of the DM is (0.463ms), the tone is rising until "A" then falling.

Example (14) female

رجاء: ان شاء الله تمطر باجر.

[Transliteration]

Ragaa: insha'Allah tumtir bachr.

[Translation]

Ragaa: InshaAllah (i wish) it will rain tomorrow.

The DM "InshaAllah" for wishing was clearly used in this context by the student who wanted tomorrow, at her time, to be rainy. Prosodically, the high initial pitch level (263.2Hz) and the low final pitch level (240.4Hz), and the duration of the DM is (0.327ms), and the tone is falling tone.

As a result of the previous two examples according to gender: The female initial pitch was higher than the male also the final pitch level, but the highest pitch level is for the male in the letter "A" but also lower than all female pitch levels, and the duration for male is longer than for female, and the tone of the male is wavy rising then falling but for the female it is a falling tone.

5.8 Avoidance

5.8.1 Functions of the DM "InshAllah" at the interpersonal level

Example (15) male

حسن: باجر جبيلي كتابك.

سجاد: ان شاء الله، ان شاء الله.

[Transliteration]

Hassan: bachr jibli kitabika.

Sajjad: insha'Allah, insha'Allah.

[Translation]

Hassan: Bring me your book tomorrow.

Sajjad: inshAllah(okay) inshAllah (okay).

In this situation, one of the students insisted on bringing the book while the other just wanted to get rid of it, using the DM "inshallah" to avoid it. Prosodically, the first DM high initial pitch level (164.2Hz) and the low final pitch level (148.7Hz), the duration is (0.326ms). The second DM high initial pitch (150.9Hz) and the low final pitch level (120.4Hz), and the duration is (0.285ms). The tone in both cases is falling tone.

Example (16) female

نرجس: ترحين ويانا للسفرة؟

زينب: يجوز ان شاء الله.

[Transliteration]

Narjis: tarhin wayanan lil safrat?

Zainab: yajuz insha'Allah.

[Translation]

Nargis: Are you going with us for a trip?

Zainab: maybe inshAllah(okay).

One of the students insisted to her colleague if she wanted to go with them for a trip, but the other did not want to go. So she used the DM "inshAllah" to avoid giving a direct answer of not going. Prosodically, the high initial pitch level (195.4Hz) and the low final pitch level (190.1Hz), the length of the DM is (0.452ms), the tone is falling.

As a result of the previous two examples according to gender: In both pitch levels of the male's DMs are lower than female, and the duration is longer for female also, and all tones are the same.

5.9 To Ask Question

5.9.1 Functions of the DM "InshAllah" at the interpersonal level

Example (17) male

كرار: إن شاء الله نطلع باجر؟

[Transliteration]

Karar: inshaAllah natlaa bajir?

[Translation]

Karar: inshaAllah (will we?), tomorrow we will hangout?

In this case, the student asks his classmates if they will go out tomorrow, using the DM "inshaAllah". Prosodically, the low initial pitch level (133.7 Hz), the high final pitch level (115.9 Hz), highest pitch level was in letter "A" (127.6 Hz), duration (0.377 ms), the tone is rising until "A" letter then falling.

Example (18) female

مشاعل: شلونج بالامتحان ان شاء الله مجاوية؟

[Transliteration]

Mashael: shlunj bialiamtihan inshaAllah mujawiba?

[Translation]

Mashael: How were you in the exam? inshaAllah (will you?) you did well?

In this case the student ask her colleague if she did well in the exam by using the DM "inshaAllah". Prosodically, the low initial pitch level (216.3 Hz), the final high pitch level (221.2 Hz), highest pitch level was in letter "A" (233.9 Hz), duration (0.535 ms), the tone is rising until "A" letter then falling.

As a result of the previous two examples according to gender:The initial and final pitch level for female is higher than male, also the letter "A" for female is higher, the duration is longer for female, and the same tone rising until "A" letter then falling in both cases.

5.10 Irony

5.10.1 Functions of the DM "InshAllah" at the interpersonal level

Example (19) male

حيدر: علاوي شوكت يصير براسك خير.

علي: ان شاء الله يصير براسي خير.

[Transliteration]

Haider: Allawi shawkat yasir brask khayr.

Ali: inshaAllah yasir birasi khayr.

[Translation]

Haider: Allawi when will you become something?

Ali: inshaAllah (I hope in funny way) I will be something.

In this situation the student ask his friend when would he become something by using th DM "inshaAllah". Prosodically, the initial low pitch level (118.4 Hz), the final high pitch level (121.1 Hz) and the highest pitch level on the letter "A" (174.2Hz) and the lowest pitch level on the letter "L" (110.6Hz), duration (0.621 ms), the tone rising until "A" then falling until "L" letter then rising again.

Example (20) female

عذراء: شوكت ناوية تدرسين؟

فاطمة: من يصحى ضميري الدراسي ان شاء الله

[Transliteration]

Athraa: shawkat nawia tadrasin?

Fatima: min yushaa damiri aldirasi inshaAllah.

[Translation]

Athraa: When will you study? Fatima: When my academic conscience awakens inshaAllah (I hope in funny way).

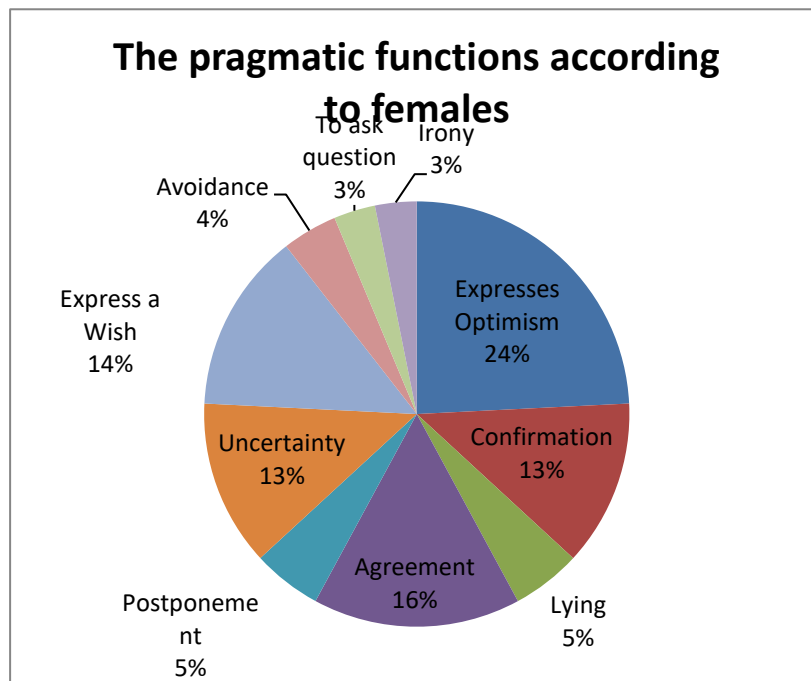
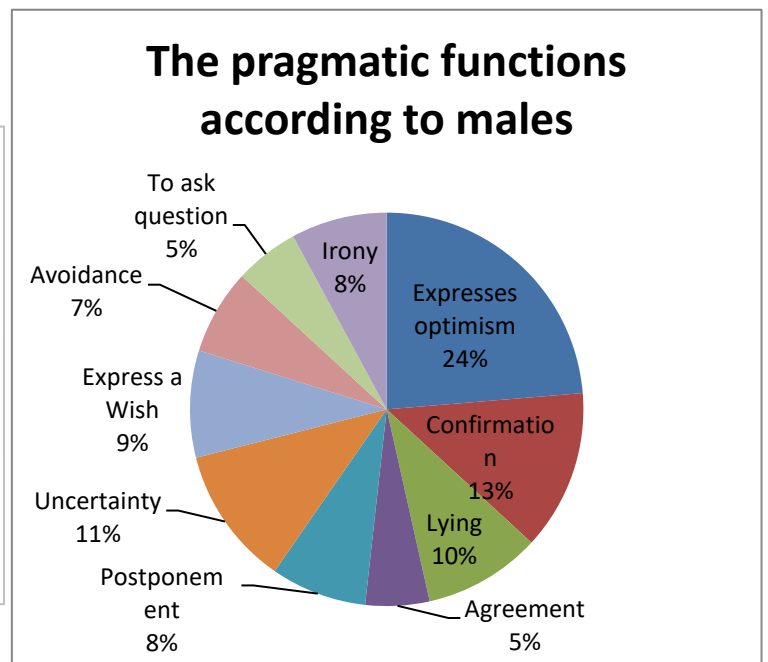
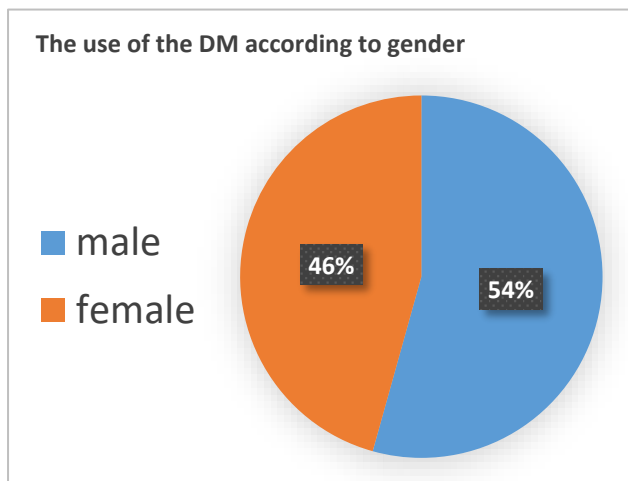
In this situation the student asks her colleagues when will she start studying using the DM "inshaAllah". Prosodically, the high initial pitch level (263.4 Hz), the low final pitch level (213.4 Hz), duration (0.510 ms), the type of the tone is rising.

As a result of the previous two examples according to gender: females begin and end with a higher pitch level than males, but males highest pitch level on the letter "A" and lowest on letter "L" are both lower than females pitch levels on the two sides. Moreover, females experience longer durations, female tone is falling tone, but male rising until "A" and falling until "L" then rising again.

6. Conclusion

This research examines the use of the DM "inshaAllah" in Iraqi oral discourse and its multiple pragmatic functions. It is found that in addition to (Brinton , 1996) suggested macro-level functions, the discourse marker (Insha'Allah) also carried out additional micro-

level functions in discourse at both levels. At the same time, the research reveals the clear differences between genders in their use of this marker and its functions as the loudness of pitch in females' speech regarding the use of this marker, in most cases, is shown more than males'. So, the research shows the differences and disparities in the use of the DM and its pragmatic function under the effect of gender and prosodic characteristics.



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