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PRAGMATIC FUNCTIONS OF THE DISCOURSE MARKER "AND" IN CROATIAN EFL TEACHER TALK

Abstract

Discourse markers (DMs) play a critical role in facilitating understanding for English as a foreign language (EFL) learners and helping them navigate the complex communicative environment of the classroom (Walsh 2013). They contribute to the coherence and flow of spoken discourse, aiding both comprehension and interaction. In addition to aiding in the structuring of discourse, they enable teachers to clearly indicate relationships between different phases of the lesson, facilitating students' comprehension of the instructional content. While considerable attention has been given to the use of DMs by EFL learners—and, to a lesser extent, teachers—there is limited research on the specific use of "and" as a discourse marker, particularly within EFL classroom contexts. Most studies on teacher discourse focus on a range of DMs without closely examining the role of individual markers in structuring pedagogical discourse.

The present study aims to address this gap through a qualitative analysis of "and" as a DM in teacher talk, focusing on data collected from 8 Croatian EFL teachers working with primary (aged 12–13) and secondary school students (aged 16–17). The study reveals that "and" serves as a valuable and versatile DM, fulfilling several key pragmatic functions in teacher talk. It was primarily used to mark elaboration, continuation, and sequences, and to structure discourse by signalling topic changes, introducing questions, and making continuity more salient, helping to scaffold classroom interaction and maintain coherence. The findings highlight how this simple, yet frequent DM supports teachers in managing classroom communication, facilitating interaction, and enhancing overall classroom management. By shedding light on the diverse functions of "and," this study contributes to the growing body of research on discourse markers in EFL teaching and underscores their pedagogical importance in fostering effective teacher-learner interaction.

Key words: discourse markers, "and," English as a foreign language, classroom interaction, teacher talk

1. Introduction

Discourse markers (DMs) are multifunctional linguistic elements that facilitate the establishment of cohesive ties in spoken and written discourse, directing communication and guiding interlocutors toward appropriate interpretations (Iglesias Moreno 2001). They are syntactically separate from their environment and typically prosodically distinguished from the remainder of the utterance (Heine 2021: 24). While DMs do not contribute to the semantic or propositional content of an utterance, they are crucial for linking utterances to one another and to the broader context (Müller 2005) as well as organizing conversational discourse in real time (Haselow 2017). Due to their role in structuring discourse and maintaining interactive links in speech (Celce-Murcial and Olshtain 2000), DMs are fundamental to the pragmatic competence of speakers (Gilquin 2016).

For foreign language (FL) learners, DMs are particularly relevant as they contribute to natural-sounding speech and help address communication challenges. Their appropriate use is "an important step toward L1-like competence on the sociopragmatic, communicative level" (Haselow 2021: 74). In fact, the use of DMs in FL learners has been found to develop with increasing fluency levels (Huang et al. 2023: 70). The FL classroom is typically a language-intensive environment where the FL is both the means of communication and the objective of the teaching process itself. The use of DMs by teachers can help direct learners' attention to transitions and important points in the lesson, as well as establish better interpersonal relationships in the classroom (Walsh 2013). Consequently, examining how FL teachers use DMs can offer valuable insights into their role in classroom interaction.

Although DMs have been a prolific topic for researchers over several decades, most studies on non-native speakers' use of DMs focus on a limited set, such as "so," "well," "like," and "you know" (e.g., Algouzi 2021; Buysse 2012; Gilquin 2016; Huang et al. 2023; Öztürk and Durmuşoğlu 2021; Pan 2025). In contrast, "and" is rarely examined in non-native speaker contexts, despite existing research on its use in natural speech among native speakers (e.g., Bolden 2010; Heritage and Sorjonen 1994; Turk 2004). Moreover, its role as a DM in non-native teacher talk has received only superficial attention. Studies specifically investigating DM use by non-native EFL teachers remain relatively scarce (e.g., Chapetón Castro 2009; Ding and Wang 2015; Okan and Özer 2018; Susilowati and Wafa 2023; Vickov and Jakupčević 2017). This study seeks to address these gaps by examining how non-native (Croatian) EFL teachers use "and" as a DM in classroom discourse. The aim is to explore the various pragmatic functions of "and" as a DM, contributing to a deeper understanding of DMs in teacher talk and their potential impact on EFL instruction.

2. Theoretical background

2.1. "And" as a discourse marker

DMs fulfil various interactive functions essential for interpersonal communication, such as managing repairs, directing attention, and providing feedback (Iglesias Moreno 2001). Key characteristics of DMs include their multifunctionality, grammatical diversity, and syntactic optionality (Crible 2017). In other words,

because DMs primarily serve non-propositional functions and do not contribute to the semantic content of an utterance, their absence does not result in a grammatically or semantically incomplete statement (Müller 2005).

The essential role of DMs in facilitating natural communication has made them a prominent topic of linguistic research in recent decades. However, the diversity of analytical frameworks has resulted in ongoing debate regarding their terminology and classification. Consequently, different linguistic elements are variably categorized as DMs, and some scholars (e.g., Brinton 1996; Swan 2016) exclude "and" from their conceptualization of DMs. However, certain uses of "and" cannot be fully explained by its semantic meaning alone, as they also reflect pragmatic functions rooted in the shared knowledge and expectations of speakers and listeners (Van Dijk 1979, as cited in Heritage and Sorjonen 1994).

As one of the most frequently used words in English, "and" is traditionally classified as a coordinating conjunction (Carter et al. 2016). However, discourse studies of natural language have treated "and" as a DM that functions to connect idea units and continue a speaker's action (Tao 2003). In such cases, "and" can serve a discourse-organizing role that extends beyond its purely grammatical function. As Fraser (1999: 939) illustrates, in the sentence "Jack played tennis, **and** Mary read a book," the use of "and" does more than connect clauses; it signals a relationship between them. The precise meaning of "and" in conversation, therefore, depends on context rather than solely on its inherent semantic content (Turk 2004).

When functioning as a DM, "and" contributes to interaction in several distinct ways. First, as already mentioned, it can mark clause- and discourse-level coordination in conversation (Turk 2004), operating within and across turns to link idea units and support coherence. Second, it signals the continuation of speaker action, helping maintain the speaker's turn (Barth-Weingarten 2012; Schiffrin 1987). Third, it plays a role in restoring coherence when discourse is disrupted, smoothing transitions and managing interactional disjunctures (Turk 2004: 219). This function is often realised through the sentence-initial use of "and", which can bracket or continue discourse units or signal a shift (Bell 2007).

Determining the precise semantic connection between linked elements can sometimes be challenging, particularly when "and" is used interactively to bridge a speaker's turn with that of a prior interlocutor. Van Dijk (1979, as cited in Heritage and Sorjonen 1994) notes that "and," as a DM, has a general and neutral character compared to other markers, transmitting a broad range of logical relationships between segments. Barth-Weingarten (2012) aptly describes "and" as a "chameleon" capable of adapting to diverse discourse functions. This variability is reflected in linguistic descriptions; for instance, the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary (OALD) notes that "and" can imply temporal succession ("She said goodbye and left the house"), introduce comments or questions, or indicate consequences ("Be late again and you're fired"). Similarly, Greenbaum and Quirk (1990) identify multiple meanings beyond coordination, including chronological order, result, condition, contrast, and explanation. Thus, despite its apparent simplicity, "and" plays a crucial role in structuring discourse and guiding interpretation in interaction.

2.2. Discourse markers in teacher talk

Successful interaction management in the classroom depends heavily on students' attention and understanding. This specifically refers to their ability to follow lessons effectively and engage in activities appropriately (Walsh 2006). Students' successful participation relies on their ability to interpret the pedagogical and communicative demands of the dynamic and evolving classroom environment (De Fina 1997). In other words, effective teaching requires student cooperation and understanding, which underscores the importance of DMs in the classroom. DMs are a key feature of interaction and language use in the classroom (Chapetón Castro 2009). Moreover, in a language classroom where the participants are non-native speakers of the target language, the students will need additional explanation and guidance. This context suggests that DMs might be used more frequently to aid communication (Amador Moreno et al. 2006). By employing DMs, teachers can facilitate learners' understanding and help them navigate classroom discourse (Walsh 2013).

DMs play crucial roles in signalling shifts in interaction or the organization of learning. Research on their impact on academic lectures has shown that DMs are valuable in helping listeners manage the dense communicative context of lectures (Flowerdew and Tauroza 1995). They have been found to support comprehension and structuring of lectures (Jung 2006; Swales and Malczewski 2001). Similarly, in the classroom, DMs help teachers guide students through discourse, focus attention, announce changes in activities, and signal the beginnings and ends of sequences. Essentially, they help maintain collective attention and ensure the class operates cohesively (Walsh 2013).

According to Amador Moreno et al. (2006: 92), the main roles of DMs in the language classroom are:

- 1) Introducing a new theme, activity or question;
- 2) Motivating or encouraging learners;
- 3) Focusing the learners' attention;
- 4) Rephrasing or elaborating on what was said
- 5) Paraphrasing or correcting one own's utterance.

These roles reflect the core responsibilities of teachers in the FL classroom: introducing content, managing attention, encouraging participation, and ensuring clarity. DMs thus serve as linguistic tools that help teachers fulfil these roles, fostering an engaged and cohesive learning environment. By using DMs effectively, teachers can guide students through complex tasks, helping them follow the flow of instruction and enhancing their understanding of the material. Some studies have pointed at teachers using a limited range of DMs in the language classroom (Amador Moreno et al. 2006; Hellermann and Vergun 2007). Others suggest that teachers can benefit from using a variety of textual and interpersonal functions of DMs to make the flow of interaction in the classroom more coherent (Chapetón Castro 2009; Susilowati and Wafa 2023). In the Croatian context, a study by Vickov and Jakupčević (2017) highlighted the use of various DMs in structuring classroom discourse, with DMs "ok," "so," "and" and "mhm/aha" emerging as the most frequently used. These markers played a key role in constructing coherent discourse and facilitating interactional relationships with students. Specifically, "and" was often used to mark

continuity. However, while this study shed light on the general use of DMs in EFL teacher talk, it offered limited insight into the functions of "and," leaving room for further in-depth investigation.

Given the crucial role of DMs in classroom interaction, examining individual markers such as "and" becomes essential. Despite its frequent occurrence and potential to structure teacher-student exchanges, the specific functions of "and" in classroom discourse have not been fully explored. By focusing on this marker, the present study aims to deepen our understanding of how "and" supports interaction, coherence, and the organization of learning activities, with implications for improving EFL teaching practices.

3. Data and methodology

The study was based on a corpus of authentic classroom discourse collected from eight Croatian EFL teachers, all holding relevant EFL teaching diplomas from Croatian universities. Four teachers (coded as T1-T4) taught students in the final years of primary school (ages 12-13, A2 level), while the other four (coded as T5-T8) taught students in the final years of secondary school (ages 16-17, B2 level). The teachers were selected through convenience sampling and voluntarily participated in the study. The data collection was approved by the school administration, and parents and students provided informed consent for the audio recording of lessons, with the assurance that the focus was solely on the teachers' speech. All transcripts were fully anonymized to protect participants' privacy. The corpus consisted of recordings of ten EFL lessons per teacher, totalling 3,204 minutes of recorded material. The inclusion of both primary and secondary school teachers was intended to provide contextually diverse examples of teacher talk. The decision to include ten lessons per teacher was based on the need to balance manageability for manual analysis with sufficient material to capture the variety of potential uses of "and" as a DM. The teachers selected the lessons to record, aiming for a diverse range of classroom interactions. Transcriptions were produced using oTranscribe software and followed standard orthographic conventions. They were reviewed and corrected two weeks after the initial transcription to ensure accuracy.

The transcripts were manually analysed to identify instances of "and" as a DM, following criteria from previous research (Fuller 2003; Liao 2009). Specifically, "and" was considered a DM if it signalled a relationship between preceding and subsequent discourse, the semantic relationship between linked elements remained unchanged if it was removed, and the utterance remained syntactically intact without it. To ensure reliability, both authors independently analysed separate parts of the corpus before comparing results. Any ambiguous cases were then resolved through discussion, ensuring consensus.

The functions of "and" were analysed based on examples from the corpus. While relevant literature (e.g., Fraser 2006; Fung and Carter 2007; Greenbaum and Quirk 1990; Heritage 2013; Heritage and Sorjonen 1994; Schifffrin 1987; Turk 2004) provided a foundation for the analysis, the interpretation of the functions of "and" was corpus-driven, emerging from patterns observed in the data. The study is informed by Conversation Analysis (CA), particularly in its focus on the sequential organization

of teacher-student discourse and the role of DMs in managing interaction (Schegloff, 2007). While not strictly adhering to all CA principles, it applies CA's methodological approach by examining "and" in naturally occurring, context-dependent discourse, identifying recurring functional patterns that highlight its role in scaffolding and managing classroom interaction. As a qualitative study, it emphasizes contextual analysis over quantification. Representative examples of "and" were selected for their qualitative depth, providing a nuanced exploration of its role in teacher talk. These examples were transcribed using Jefferson Light, a simplified version of the CA transcription system (Hepburn and Bolden 2017), which captures key speech features (pauses, prolonged sounds, and overlaps) while omitting finer details. This approach highlights the discourse features most relevant to the study of DMs.

4. Results and discussion

The results of the analysis of "and" in our corpus of EFL teachers' classroom discourse are presented through selected examples, which will be analysed in detail to illustrate the different functions of the marker. These are not easily separated into distinct categories; rather, they often intertwine across contexts. While the pragmatic functions of "and" will be described in terms of elaboration, continuation, and sequencing, it is important to note that these categories frequently overlap, and individual examples often demonstrate multiple functions at once. Consequently, the selected segments may illustrate different, sometimes interconnected, uses of "and," reflecting the complexity and fluidity of its role in classroom discourse. This approach allows for a more dynamic interpretation of how "and" contributes to the interaction.

Fraser (1999, 2006) identifies "and" as a primary marker in his elaboration group, alongside other markers such as "also," "for example," "in addition," and "that is." According to Fraser, this group signals a relationship between two messages, where the second message either parallels or extends the first. While the straightforward function of "and" as a means of extending the teacher's own message was frequently observed in our corpus, "and" was also used to extend or build upon students' contributions. In this context, the use of "and" went beyond a simple extension of a previous message, creating a more dynamic interaction that (at times) prompted further input from students or elaborated on their ideas, highlighting a more interactive and collaborative use of the marker. Example 1 illustrates this dynamic. In line 8, the teacher (T1) uses "and" to introduce a question seeking to elicit an elaboration of the student's answer, a common technique for getting the students to provide more extended answers. In lines 6 and 7, the students provide brief responses to the teacher's previous question, which the teacher elaborates upon in line 8. This elaboration appears intended to offer students more extended input. The use of "and" with the prolonged first vowel further signals the continuation of the conversation. In line 11, the teacher uses the combination of "yes" and "and," expressing agreement with the student's response and immediately following it with an elaboration of that response. Although the teacher's questions in the segments are display questions related to a text discussed in the previous class, the interaction takes on a more conversational tone. The teacher uses informal markers like "yeah"

and checks for student agreement using the DM "right?" while also interrupting and allowing students to speak without being specifically nominated. Her use of DMs in this segment contributes to a more dynamic and interactive classroom discourse. In this way, "and" plays a significant interactional role, as it marks active acceptance by signalling the teacher's understanding, interest in the student's contributions, and their right to participate. It also facilitates the direction of the conversation, allowing the teacher to expand on the students' answers or articulate missing elements (Bolden 2010).

Example 1

- 1 T1: Who remembers what happened to: Luke (1.5) in the last-
- 2 S1: He fails=
- 3 T1: =Yeah he fails, he fails the test, the French test right?
- 4 S1: Yes.
- 5 T1: Uh:m do you remember the percentage?
- 6 S2: Uh:m [fifteen].
- 7 S3: [Fifteen].
- 8 T1: Yes, he had a fifteen per cent. **A:nd** why did he get
- 9 fifteen per cent?
- 10 S4: Because he didn't revise.
- 11 T1: **Yes, a:nd** he thought it was easy, right?

Example 2 follows a similar pattern, though in a slightly different way. In line 6, the teacher (T6) uses an agreement marker ("yes") followed by the discourse marker "and." This combination not only signals agreement with S1 but also introduces an elaboration of the student's answer, followed by an additional question. A similar pattern appears in line 12, though here the teacher interrupts the student (indicated by the unfinished utterance in line 11). Rather than allowing S1 to continue, the teacher agrees and then offers her own elaboration. This suggests a missed opportunity for the students to extend their language use and develop their thoughts further. Even in line 10, the teacher overlaps with the student, cutting off their flow. Such instances may indicate a tendency among teachers to ask questions without fully allowing students time to respond, perhaps due to a desire to maintain the pace of the lesson. In other words, while "and" can be used by teachers to add or prompt elaborations, this does not always result in more productive interaction.

Example 2

- 1 T6: Uh-huh yes. Because this is- because what she (.) used to
- 2 show to people was just?
- 3 S1: An act.
- 4 T6: Uh-huh.
- 5 S1: Not her real emotions.
- 6 T6: **Yes, and** when she experienced love, because she really
- 7 did feel that love, what happened to her?
- 8 S1: She acted badly because she wanted to keep those
- 9 [emotions (xx)]

- 10 T6: [True emotions, right?]
 11 S1: True emotions for=
 12 T6: =**Yes and- and** Dorian changed his mind because she didn't?
 13 (3) um she wasn't the embodiment of that form of the art
 14 itself, right?

Example 3 illustrates how a teacher (T2) uses "and" in an extended turn to build a story with a partially sequential and interconnected structure. In this segment, "and" functions both to elaborate on previous utterances and to link the segments together, fitting within the referential and structural categories (Fung and Carter 2007). While the narrative is not strictly linear, the frequent use of "and" serves as discourse "glue," ensuring the story remains coherent and signalling the continuation of the teacher's turn. The use of "and" helps maintain the flow of the narrative, even when the teacher revisits and adds to previous points, which might help to keep the audience engaged. It is particularly interesting how the teacher uses this simple DM rather than a more specific one, which might have better supported students' understanding of the story. This choice highlights how "and" can function not only as a connector of ideas but also as a tool for managing the complexity of storytelling in teacher talk.

Example 3

- 1 T2: (...)he considered uhm quitting tennis because he had had a shoulder
 2 injuries (.) **and** his shoulder was very bad and he uh:m consider
 3 considered quitting, **and** he was one hundred and twenty-fifth
 4 player in the world, so not even close to top ten, **and** that year
 5 they gave him a wild card, **a:nd** um gave him the permission
 6 to take part *sudjelovati* to take part in the tournament.
 7 but no one thought that he would win because he was one
 8 hundred and twenty-fifth player **a:nd** he got a wild card
 9 **a:nd** he lost three other Wimbledon Wimbledon finals. So he
 10 was in the finals three times **and** he lost each time, **and**
 11 he was now one hundred and twenty-fifth player, so no one
 12 thought that he would even cli- come close to the finals.
 13 **a:nd** uhm but it was called when he won (...)

Example 4 illustrates how "and" can be used to mark an utterance as a part of a sequence within an activity in the classroom context. In line 3, the teacher (T8) checks whether students are familiar with the vocabulary. She first uses "and" with a prolonged vowel to introduce a vocabulary item and then adds another, likely because the first item was already deemed familiar. Beyond marking continuation, the teacher is using "and" here to solicit student engagement or response, i.e., as a prompting device. A similar pattern occurs in line 11, where after a brief filled pause ("mhm"), the teacher uses "and" to introduce another point in the sequence, i.e., another vocabulary item, before translating it immediately. The second use of "and" in line 11, this time again with a prolonged vowel, signals a shift, introducing a new phase of the lesson as the teacher moves on to the next point. The different

functions of the prolonged "and" in this example highlight its flexibility, depending on the interactional context. The uses of "and" in this example are in line with Schiffrin's (1987) description of this DM primarily as a continuation marker, which the speaker uses to mark their utterance as a continuation of the previous one, connecting a series of points that contribute to the general message. The teacher's use of "and" in these examples supports this view, as it links the vocabulary items and transitions smoothly between different parts of the lesson, at the same time managing participation and progression.

Example 4

- 1 T8: Seemingly?
- 2 S1: Naizgled.
- 3 T8: Naizgled thank you. (2) **A:nd** book repairer, **a:nd** evil
- 4 villain, villain is?
- 5 S2: Zločinac.
- 6 T8: Uh-huh, a bad person. zločinac, loša osoba. Villain. a
- 7 bad person. A thug?
- 8 S4: [Beskoristan.]
- 9 S5: [Gangster.]
- 10 T8: Beskro- gangster, very bad person. A bully, gangster.
- 11 mhm, **and** we said that capricorn is jarac. **A:nd** let's move
- 12 on um Mark? (1)

Example 5 illustrates a further pragmatic function, that is, how "and" can be used to introduce a series of related questions, much like in Example 4, where it introduced vocabulary items. Here, the teacher (T7) discusses a story and asks a series of comprehension questions in lines 2, 4, and 7. At times, such as in lines 4 and 6, the teacher uses a marker of confirmation ("mhm") to acknowledge that the students' answers are correct. Similarly, in Example 6, the teacher builds on students' brief responses, using "and" (lines 1 and 9) to frame follow-up questions that contextualize their answers and sustain interaction. These uses of "and" in Examples 5 and 6 reflect its broader discourse function of introducing questions that guide conversation toward a specific goal. According to Heritage and Sorjonen (1994), utterance-initial "and" can introduce routine questions or those that advance interaction in a particular direction. Similarly, Heritage (2013) notes that it signals the continuation of questioning or helps maintain focus on an ongoing activity, both of which are evident in the teachers' use of "and" in these classroom exchanges.

Example 5

- 1 T7: Feeling bad about yourself. (2) Feeling bad about
- 2 yourself. **A:nd** who is self-pitying in our story?
- 3 S1: The mole.
- 4 T7: The mole. Mhm **a:nd** sarcastic is?
- 5 S2: Irony.
- 6 T7: Uh-huh ironic. When you use irony. Mhm. Using irony a lot.
- 7 **And** who is sarcastic?

Example 6

- 1 T3: They will lose their homes. **And what about** the town, what
- 2 will the town lose. I mean the people in town.
- 3 S1: Green area.
- 4 T3: Yes, yes.
- 5 S2: Where children play.
- 6 S3: Oxygen.
- 7 T3: And oxygen(.) oxygen, we know that (.) that the woods
- 8 breath in the carbon dioxide and breathe out oxygen, don't
- 9 you know it? right. So **and** uhm what are they going to do
- 10 to stop it XX?

Example 7 illustrates the continuing function of "and" in teacher talk, particularly in the context of giving instructions. In lines 3 and 4, the teacher (T4) checks whether the students are following along by asking a question, "Can you see these words help about?" After a brief pause, the teacher transitions to the next step by using "okay" followed by "and." This combination signals the continuation of the instruction sequence. In line 5, the teacher completes the step with the comprehension check "okay?" This check momentarily interrupts the flow, but the teacher quickly resumes the explanation with the conjunction "and," linking it back to the previous instruction. Turk (2004) considers "and" to be a marker of lack of continuity, as it can often be found in places where there has been some interruption, such as a change of topic, a temporal sequence, or a return to the "program" of the conversation. In this case, the use of "and" after the interruption of the comprehension check demonstrates how it can help the teacher resume the flow of instruction, restoring continuity and smoothly guiding students through the sequence.

Example 7

- 1 T4: Now in uhm let's go to the next page, you have here key
- 2 phrases, making suggestions, uh:m okay, you need to
- 3 complete them with the words in the box. Can you see these
- 4 words help about?(2)**Okay, a:nd** when you complete the phrase uhm
- 5 you need to tell me which phrase make suggestion, **okay? And** which
- 6 is comment on suggestion. Did you understand me?

Similarly, Example 8 shows how "and" is used to introduce the next activity and steps in the sequence, marking the smooth progression of the lesson. In line 4, the teacher (T5) introduces (or announces) the next activity with "and," signalling a shift to a new phase in the lesson. This use of "and" contributes to the flow of the interaction, helping the teacher smoothly transition between activities. In line 5, "and" is used again to introduce the next step in the sequence, but it is followed by "uh:m," suggesting a brief moment of hesitation as the teacher gathers her thoughts. This pause, however, does not disrupt the continuity of the sequence; instead, the teacher uses "and" to maintain the forward momentum of the lesson, signalling that the next point is about to be introduced. Finally, in line 6, "and" is used once more to introduce the subsequent step in the sequence, reinforcing the organized

progression of activities and keeping the students engaged by linking one step to the next. This use of "and" helps the teacher manage the pacing of the lesson, ensuring that students remain oriented to the unfolding sequence of tasks. Building on this, Example 9 highlights the role of "and" in structuring instructions within an activity, reinforcing the logical flow of actions. In lines 2 and 3, the teacher (T7) repeats a pair of instructions, linking them with "and," which maintains the flow and cohesion of the instruction. The use of "and then" in line 3 signals a natural progression to the next step, reinforcing the sequence of actions. Finally, in line 5, the teacher employs "and now," paired with the imperative "listen," to effectively "launch" the next phase of the activity. This combination not only marks a shift in focus but also serves to re-engage the students, clearly directing their attention toward the new task at hand.

Example 8

- 1 T5: For us it's very negative yes, we are losing some uh:m
- 2 families, young people, children even, okay. Right, so
- 3 there are some good points and bad points (.) about the
- 4 European Union membership, **and** we'll read about that in our
- 5 book today, **and** uh:m the text is on page number sixty-one.
- 6 So could you please pay attention now, **and** turn your books
- 7 to sixty-one.

Example 9

- 1 T7: Maze or labyrinth I'm not sure. Now, number two, I have
- 2 a riddle for you. Look at the cartoon **and** read the riddle.
- 3 So look at the cartoon **and** read the riddle. **And then** we
- 4 will discuss possible solutions to it, are you ready? So
- 5 this is a cartoon, (5) focus on the cartoon, **and now** listen.
- 6 Ready?

Building on the findings presented in the results, the analysis of "and" in classroom discourse underscores its versatility and significance in managing classroom interaction. Throughout the examples, it has been shown that "and" serves not only as DM that contributes to the flow of speech but also as a tool for elaborating, expanding, and maintaining the coherence of teacher-student interactions. In particular, "and" helps teachers structure their instructions, introduce new topics, and guide students through ongoing activities. By facilitating continuity and connection, "and" allows teachers to smoothly transition between points, maintain engagement, and create a dynamic, interactive learning environment. This analysis thus underscores the crucial role of "and" as a functional marker in the teacher's linguistic repertoire, shaping the classroom discourse and ensuring that communication remains fluid and coherent.

5. Conclusion

As a DM, "and" proves to be a useful tool for teachers in the observed corpus, serving a variety of pragmatic functions within the EFL lesson. Its uses allow teachers to fulfil some of the primary roles of teacher talk in the classroom and guide students

in meeting the core expectations of their participation.

The main roles of "and" as a discourse marker in teacher talk encompass a range of functions, including elaboration, continuation, and sequencing. While "and" is often used to elaborate on students' answers (e.g., Example 1), prompt further responses, or extend the teacher's own discourse, particularly in narrative contexts (e.g., Example 3), it also plays a role in maintaining the continuity of discourse. This occurs, for example, after checking for understanding or following a disruption, where it helps sustain the flow of interaction (e.g., Example 7). Additionally, "and" can serve a sequencing function, linking related elements such as questions, tasks, steps in instructions, or vocabulary items, contributing to the overall organization and structure of the lesson (e.g., Examples 4 and 5). These pragmatic functions often overlap in practice, highlighting the versatile and dynamic role of "and" in teacher talk. In summary, "and" plays a crucial role in connecting ideas, maintaining discourse flow, and signalling the progression of activities. By fulfilling these functions, it helps students follow the structure of the lesson and stay focused on key elements of learning (Walsh 2013). The planned nature of teacher talk is reinforced through their use of "and," reflecting the institutional goals of the classroom where language facilitates instructional objectives (Heritage and Sorjonen 1994).

This study has several limitations that should be acknowledged. First, although the qualitative approach provides rich insights, it limits the generalizability of the findings to broader teaching contexts. Another limitation lies in the variability of teaching styles and levels of experience among the observed teachers, which were not analysed in depth. These factors may have influenced the functions of "and" in their discourse. Future research could address these limitations by expanding the scope of analysis and incorporating a quantitative dimension, such as examining the frequency and distribution of "and" across different functions, contexts, teacher types, or student groups. Additionally, cross-linguistic studies could further enhance understanding by comparing the use of "and" or its equivalents in classrooms where different languages are taught.

The findings of this study contribute to the theoretical understanding of "and" as a DM by illustrating its pragmatic multifunctionality in managing both the micro-structure and macro-structure of spoken interaction. Its use in teacher talk demonstrates how "and" serves not only as a connector but also as a tool for signalling transitions, maintaining coherence, and organizing discourse into meaningful units. This highlights the adaptability of "and" across contexts and reinforces its role as a fundamental element of spoken communication and interactional pragmatics.

In addition to these theoretical insights, the study has practical implications for EFL teaching and teacher education. Raising awareness among teacher trainees about the role of DMs, such as "and," can help them become more intentional in their use of language to support student comprehension and participation. Furthermore, this study underscores the importance of analysing teacher talk to improve lesson delivery and better understand classroom interactional dynamics. By focusing on the micro-level use of DMs, teachers can create more cohesive and effective lessons that scaffold student learning. This study also highlights the broader significance of seemingly minor elements of language, such as "and," in shaping classroom dynamics

and achieving instructional goals. Teachers can benefit from reflecting on their language use and its potential impact on students' comprehension and engagement. As classroom discourse serves both as a pedagogical tool and a linguistic model for learners, becoming more conscious of how language is used can enhance the overall quality of teaching and learning. The study calls for further exploration of teacher talk as a vital aspect of effective classroom interaction, particularly in the institutional context of EFL teaching. Future research can continue to uncover the nuanced ways in which DMs like "and" support learning and contribute to successful classroom communication.

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PRAGMATIČKE FUNKCIJE DISKURSNE OZNAKE *AND* U GOVORU HRVATSKIH NASTAVNIKA ENGLESKOG KAO STRANOG JEZIKA

Sažetak

Diskursne oznake imaju ključnu ulogu u olakšavanju razumijevanja učenicima engleskog kao stranog jezika i pomažu im u snalaženju u složenom komunikacijskom učioničkom okruženju (Walsh 2013). One pridonose koherentnosti i tečnosti govornog diskursa pospješujući razumijevanje i interakciju. Osim što pomažu u strukturiranju diskursa, omogućuju nastavnicima jasno signalizirati odnose među različitim dijelovima nastavnog sata istodobno olakšavajući učenicima razumijevanje nastavnog sadržaja. Iako se mnogo pozornosti u istraživanjima posvetilo upotrebi diskursnih oznaka kod učenika i, u manjoj mjeri, nastavnika engleskog kao stranog jezika, nedostaje istraživanja o specifičnoj upotrebi riječi *and* kao diskursne oznake, osobito u kontekstu nastave engleskog jezika. Većina istraživanja diskursa nastavničkoga govora usredotočena je na širi raspon diskursnih oznaka, bez detaljnije analize uloge pojedinih oznaka u strukturiranju pedagoškog diskursa.

Ovo istraživanje nastoji popuniti tu prazninu kvalitativnom analizom diskursne oznake *and* u govoru hrvatskih nastavnika engleskog jezika. Riječ je o osam nastavnika koji rade s učenicima osnovnoškolskog (12–13 godina) i srednjoškolskog (16–17 godina) uzrasta. Rezultati pokazuju da je *and* vrijedna i multifunkcionalna diskursna oznaka koja ispunjava nekoliko ključnih pragmatičkih funkcija u govoru nastavnika. Prvenstveno služi za označavanje elaboracije, kontinuiteta i redosljeda, kao i za strukturiranje diskursa signaliziranjem promjene teme, uvođenjem pitanja te isticanjem kontinuiteta. Navedenim funkcijama diskursna oznaka *and* pomaže u oblikovanju razredne interakcije i održavanju koherentnosti. Rezultati također pokazuju kako ta jednostavna i učestala diskursna oznaka pomaže nastavnicima u upravljanju razrednom komunikacijom i poticanju interakcije. Rasvjetljavanjem raznovrsnih funkcija diskursne oznake *and*, ovo istraživanje pridonosi rastućem korpusu istraživanja diskursnih oznaka u nastavi engleskog kao stranog jezika te naglašava njihov pedagoški značaj u poticanju učinkovite interakcije između nastavnika i učenika.

Ključne riječi: diskursne oznake, *and*, engleski kao strani jezik, razredna interakcija, govor nastavnika