

**Dr Christina Lyrigkou (Open University)**

**16th February 2022 (Wed), 16:00-17:00 (GMT time)**

Held on Zoom

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**The impact of informal second language learning, motivation and formal instruction on EFL learners' spoken use of discourse markers**

The employment of discourse markers (DMs), such as *well*, *so*, *you know*, *I mean*, is considered an integral part of spoken discourse and is associated with successful spoken communication. Although factors such as content of formal instruction and time spent abroad have been found to influence learners' DM use, learner motivation and informal second language learning (ISLL), have not been sufficiently addressed. There is also a dearth of research into ways in which factors interact with DM use over time, shaping a learning trajectory.

This presentation will report on the findings of a longitudinal PhD study, which tracked the use of DMs in the spoken production of 52 adolescent learners of English in Greece at four time-points over five months. Data on learners' DM range and frequency were collected through speaking activities. Lesson recordings, questionnaires and semi-structured interviews were employed iteratively to gain insight into the factors of formal instruction, ISLL and motivation.



The results of statistical and qualitative analysis revealed the determining role of leisure-oriented ISLL and a Current L2 Self in broad and frequent DM use. Broader DM users reported internalised motivations for speaking and engaged regularly in personally meaningful, leisure-oriented activities (non-subtitled TV watching and speaking in English) outside the class. More limited DM use mirrored the limited DM input in formal instruction. This study makes important contributions to L2 pragmatics. Its results can inform future learner and teacher practices and help critically evaluate the current role of formal education on EFL learners' DM use.