# THE EFFECTS OF EXPLICIT INSTRUCTION ON THE USE OF DISCOURSE MARKERS IN ITALIAN AS L2

ANNA DE MARCO
EMANUELA PAONE

ABSTRACT

This research explores the effects of explicit instruction on the use of discourse markers (DMs) by international students of Italian as a second language (L2). 30 students of various nationalities with A2-B1 proficiency level participated in the study: 15 students represented the experimental group and 15 students the control group. Both groups were given a written pre-test and a post-test consisting both of a story telling completion task and a dialogue completion task. The instruction consisted of some detailed informations about the use and function of DMs as well as the exposure to native-models use of DMs. The students of the control group were exposed to the input flood and were encouraged to notice the DMs but they were not presented with the detailed description of DMs and were not engaged in any communicative practice other than drills and cloze tests. The Italian markers *beh* ('well'), *magari* ('maybe'), *insomma* ('in short'), *quindi* ('then', 'so') were the focus of the instruction. The results of the study point to the differences between the two groups. The experimental group showed a greater range of pragmatic functions (inter-actional, metadiscoursive and cognitive) associated with the DMs than the control group. Indeed, the learners of the control group showed no improvement in terms of frequency and variety of DMs.