

## A Linguistic Study of Comment Clauses in the American Series “Friends”

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### **Abstract:**

The present study is a linguistic study of comment clauses in the American Series ‘Friends’ .Comment clauses refer to those clauses which comment on the content of the main clause or the attitude of the speaker towards the way of speaking .The problem of this study is to answer the following questions ; what types of comment clauses can be used in the face-to –face conversations , for what functions these comment clauses could be used , and how these comment clauses are used by the participants of these conversations . This study is a qualitative one .

The study aims to investigate the types of comment clauses used in the American Series ‘Friends’ . The study also aims to investigate the pragmatic functions of these comment clauses and how they are used by the participants of the conversations in the American Series ‘Friends’ .The researcher assumes that comment clauses are highly used in the American Series ‘Friends’ and ,due to the variety of the conversations , many types of comment clauses are used in these conversations . The data of the study is conversations of the first episode of seasons ( 1,2,5,6,9,10) of the American Series ‘Friends’ .The data of the study has been analyzed by adopting Quirk et al (1985) classification and functions of comment clauses .

The analysis of the conversations shows that the type of comment clauses used in these conversations is that which is similar to the matrix of the main clause. Throughout the whole conversations , only the following forms of comment clauses are used : ‘I mean’ , ‘you know’ , and ‘I know’ . The analysis also shows that these comment clauses occurred in the initial , middle , and final positions of these conversations .The findings reveal that these comment clauses have different pragmatic functions ; to express the speaker’s certainty of his main statement , to put things right and express the main statement probably ,to attract the listener’s attention ,to make sure that the listener fully understands the content of communication , and to express the speaker’s informality and warmth towards the hearer .

**Key Words :** (Comment clauses , The American Series ‘Friends” , pragmatic functions of comment clauses , linguistic study) .

## دراسة لغوية لعبارات التعليق في المسلسل الامريكي "اصدقاء"

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### الملخص:

الدراسة الحالية هي دراسة لغوية لعبارات التعليقية في المسلسل الامريكي "اصدقاء". تشير العبارات التعليقية لتلك التي تعلق على محتوى الجملة الرئيسية او موقف المتكلم تجاه طريقة الكلام. مشكلة هذه الدراسة هي للاجابة على الاسئلة التالية : ما هي انواع العبارات التعليقية التي من الممكن ان تستخدم في المحادثات وجهاً لوجه ، ما هي الوظائف البراغماتية التي ممكن ان تستخدم من اجلها العبارات التعليقية ، و كيف من الممكن ان تستخدم هذه العبارات التعليقية من قبل المشاركين في هذه المحادثات . هذه الدراسة هي دراسة نوعية .

تهدف الدراسة الى التتحقق من انواع عبارات التعليق المستخدمة في المسلسل الامريكي "اصدقاء". تهدف الدراسة ايضا الى التتحقق من الوظائف البراغماتية لهذه العبارات التعليقية وكيف يتم استخدامها بواسطة المشاركين في المحادثات في المسلسل الامريكي "اصدقاء" .

يفترض الباحث بأن عبارات التعليق مستخدمة بشكل كبير في المسلسل الامريكي "اصدقاء" ، ونظراً لتنوع هذه المحادثات ، انواع عديدة من العبارات التعليقية يتم استخدامها في هذه المحادثات .

بيانات الدراسة هي محادثات الحلقة الاولى من الموسم (١٠،٩،٦،٥،٢،١) من المسلسل الامريكي "اصدقاء". قد تم تحليل بيانات الدراسة بأعتماد تصنيف كورك واخرين (١٩٨٥) للعبارات التعليقية .

يوضح تحليل المحادثات ان نوع عبارات التعليق المستخدمة في هذه المحادثات هي التي تشبه مصقوفة الجملة الرئيسية . خلال المحادثات بأكملها ، تم استخدام الاشكال

(I know , you know , I mean ) التالية فقط من عبارات التعليق :

يوضح التحليل ايضاً بأن عبارات التعليق ظهرت في المواضع الاولية والمتوسطة والنهائية لهذه المحادثات . تكشف النتائج بأن هذه العبارات التعليقية لديها وظائف براغماتية مختلفة : للتعبير عن يقين المتحدث من حديثه الرئيسي ، لوضع الامور في نصابها والتعبير عن الجملة الرئيسية بصورة صحيحة ، لجذب انتباه المستمع ، للتأكد من ان المستمع يفهم تماماً محتوى التواصل ، ولأعراب المتحدث عن الطابع غير الرسمي والدفء تجاه المستمع .

**الكلمات المفتاحية :** ( عبارات التعليق ، المسلسل الامريكي "اصدقاء" ، الوظائف البراغماتية لعبارات التعليق ، دراسة لغوية ) .

## Section One: Introduction

The researcher has chosen to examine the language of face-to-face conversations because there is little research of everyday speech. To be more specific, the researcher has chosen, as the main topic of her work, one of the phenomena of the spoken language – **comment clauses**. Crystal (2003,p. 84) clarifies that a comment clause is an optional structure and its main function is to add a parenthetic ‘comment’ to another clause. There is a wide range of comment clauses in English, e. g. They say ,you know, generally speaking , to behave . Many of these clauses behave as stereotyped conversation fillers with several complex functions, e.g. I see, mind you, you see.

Dehé (2010,p.307) points out that, in more recent speech act theoretical approaches, comment clauses have been analyzed as mitigators , i. e. "insertions used to correct , reinforce ,modify, or soften a speech act performed by the host utterance". On the illocutionary force of the frame utterance , these comment clauses function as a hedge . The speaker uses these clauses to tie the

marked theme to information in the preceding utterance and to set it off from what follows the main utterance .

According to Quirk et al. (1985 ,p.1112), comment clauses can be either style disjuncts which convey the speaker's points of views concerning the way others are speaking ,or content disjuncts which express the speaker's comments on the content of the main clause .

Peltola (1983,p. 103) perpetuates the clue that comment clauses are meta- communicative in the sense that "they comment on the truth value of a sentence or a group of sentences, on the organization of the text or on the attitude of the speaker."

## Section Two : Literature Review

### 2.1.Types of Comment Clauses

In this study, the syntactic classification of comment clauses presented by Quirk et al. (1985 ,p.1113- 18) is going to be followed because of its comprehensive categorization. There are six types depending on structure which are as follows:

**First**, a comment clause is similar to the “matrix clause” of a main clause. It is the most significant type that comprises a transitive verb or an adjective which elsewhere demands a nominal 'that clause' as object. A comment clause likens the main clause in that it has at least a subject and a verb which is not presented by a subordinator. Such a clause is not independent because it is syntactically defective in the sense that the verb or adjective lacks its normally obligatory complementation. As such, one can see there is a correspondence between sentences containing comment clauses as in (1) and those containing indirect statements as in (2). Such a correspondence does not mean that the two sentences are exact paraphrases, but the relationship between them illuminates the function of the comment Clause:

1. There were no other applicants, **I believe**, for that job.
2. I believe that there were no other applicants for that job.

In this type of comment clauses, the subject can be : you, I, they ,one, or it. The verb is in the simple present or it may have a modal auxiliary or be in the present perfective. These verbs involve: think , assume ,hear , understand ,believe, think, expect, suppose, say, consider, etc. (Ibid, p.1113-4).

Thus, verbs such as “think” and “believe” have a more definite meaning or merely hedge expressing a tentative meaning; but only the hedging meaning is present in comment clauses. Such a variance in meaning can be seen distinctly in examples (3) and (4):

3. I believe that there is a God.
4. There is a God, **I believe**.

Thus, “believe” in example (3) has the meaning of “ I assert the belief that there is a God”. But in (4), it has the meaning “there may be a God”. Furthermore, “that” in that -clause which is the object of the subject “I ” is normally omitted. Only the intonation (expressed by commas in writing) differentiates an initial comment clause as in (5) from an initial matrix clause as in (6):

5. **You KNÓW**, I think you're WRÒNG.
6. You know (that)I think you're WRÒNG.(Quirk et al. 1985,p. 1113).

Commonly, all the expressions “you see , you know , I mean” are cohesive and interactive. “I mean” can signal a following clarification whereas “you know” and “you see” indicate that what follows is an interpretation of what has preceded them. Such an interactive function will be retained as it is without paying

attention to their position: initial, medial or final ( Biber et al. 1999,p.1078).

Stenström (1995,p. 291) states that finite comment clauses can take place initially, medially and finally. Also, they appear in a separate tone unit, with the exception of “I mean” and “I think”, which often have a separate tone unit .There also seems to be a clear difference between I- oriented and You- oriented comment clauses concerning tonicity- “you see” and “you know” are quite high up the scale whereas “I mean” and ‘I think” are not. This reflects a propensity on the part of the speaker to reduce attention to the self in favor of the listener.

**Second**, a comment clause is similar to an adverbial finite clause presented by **as**. **As** may act one of two syntactic functions: As a subordinator and a relative. In its relative function, **as** presents a type of sentential relative clause that may be inserted in its antecedent or precede it , in this case, the clause or sentence to which it is suffixed:

7. I live a long way from work, **as you know**.

There are other examples of “**as** ” in its relative function involving: **as** you may remember, **as** everybody knows , **as** you may have heard ,**as** I’m told , **as** you say, **as** I can see you, **as** I have said . As a subordinator, it presents a clearly adverbial clause and the sentential antecedent is substituted by it. It is nearly synonymous with **insofar as** (to the extent that):

8. He is the best candidate, as it seems.

Here are other examples in which (**as**) is a subordinator: **as** I interrupt it, **as** it happens, **as** it may interest you to know, **as** it has transpired, **as** I see it. Additionally, theses clauses are identified by being affirmative in denoting the truth of the main clause (Quirk et al. 1985 ,p.1116).

**Third**, a comment clause is identical to a nominal relative clause beginning with 'what'. Here, the what- clause must appear in initial position, as in (9), which distinguishes it from sentential relative clause that must appear finally as in (10):

9. **What is more surprising**, he didn't inform his parents.

10. He didn't inform his parents, which is more surprising.

This type includes: What's most signified of all, what's more serious, , what's more surprising , what's very strange , what annoys me (Ibid. p.1117). **Fourth**, a comment clause resembles 'to- infinitive clause' as style disjuncts. This type includes examples like the following : to put it briefly ,to be fair, to be truthful, to be honest, to be frank, to be precise, to be serious for a moment, to speak candidly :

11. **To be honest**, I don't like spaghetti. (Ibid. p.1118).

**Fifth**, a comment clause resembles a nonfinite –ing clause such as; putting it crudely , broadly speaking, roughly speaking , loosely speaking , speaking frankly , speaking personally ,figuratively speaking, speaking generally, putting it mildly :

12. **Broadly speaking**, food can be optimized according to taste, price, and nutrition. (Ibid.)

**Sixth**, a comment clause resembles a nonfinite –ed clause as style disjuncts. This type includes : put it in another way , stated quite simply ,rephrased, worded plainly (Ibid.).

## 2.2. Pragmatic Functions of Comment Clauses

Pragmatically speaking, Dehè (2010 ,p.307) states that comment clauses are regarded as forms which have nothing to do with the truth- conditionality of the host utterance and have no descriptive function, but they attach an illocutionary commitment to the

utterance. One can use finite comment clauses to express the speaker's feelings and emotional attitudes towards the content of the main clause. Generally , the subject is “I” and the verb is in the present simple taking place at the beginning of the main clause. Some are followed by a to-infinitive verb of speaking :

**13. I'm happy to say, you are the winner.**

Other examples include: I'm pleased to say ,I'm glad to say, I'm happy to tell you ,I'm delighted to say ; I wish ,I hope, I'm afraid, I fear, I regret to say, I'm sorry to say; , it grieves me to say, it pains me to tell you (Quirk et al. 1985,p. 1114).

Biber et al. (1999, p.864-5) explain that finite comment clauses, which usually have a first person pronoun subject and no subordinator, are used to convey some level of personal doubt or certainty, or to mark a proposition as the speaker’s opinion:

**14. This room's not been in years, I would say.**

Quirk et al. (1985, p. 1114) illustrate that finite comment clauses hedge, i.e. they imply the speaker's tentativeness over the truth value of the matrix clause. Here, the subject is “I ” and the verb is in the present simple. But the subject may be an indefinite “one” or “they” or “it” and the verb may have a modal auxiliary or be in the present perfective. Here, the comment clause takes place in end- position:

**15. The child is in the garden, I believe.**

Such a sort of tentativeness can also be signified through the use of the following examples: I guess, I believe, I expect ,I think, I hear , I feel, I assume ,I presume, I suppose , I understand, I suspect , I consider, I have read , I'm told, I have heard tell, I may assume ,I can see, I venture to say , I daresay, one hears, they allege , they tell me, it is said , they say, it is reported, it is claimed, it is rumored, it has been claimed, it appears , it seems .

The comment clause may be negative if the matrix clause is also negative. Here, the subject is “I”, and the negative expresses greater tentativeness than the positive:

**16. They aren't at home, I do not believe.**

There are few verbs that can permit the negative which are “think, believe, suppose and expect”.

Furthermore , Crystal (2003 ,p.229) adds another meaning implied in comment clauses which is attracting the hearer's/ listener's attention with the personal pronoun “you” or the implied “you” in imperative sentences as a subject in final position. Thus, claiming attention is the most hearer- oriented function:

**17. He is very selfish, you see.**

By using “you see” in example (17), the speaker makes sure that the listener/ hearer fully understands the content of communication by endeavoring some responsive feedback. Here are other examples presented by Quirk et al.(1985,p. 1115): you realize ,You know; you may know , you can see, you must admit ,you may have heard ; mark you ,mind you; it may interest you to know.

According to Muzikant (2007, p.12) finite comment clauses, once taking place in an initial position, might express the speakers' certainty. The subject here is “I” and the verb will be in the present simple such as “I see ,I know, I admit, I have no doubt” , etc :

**18. I'm sure, he knows me.**

Certainty might also be expressed by the negation of a verb that denotes 'lack of certainty' or 'rejection' in the comment clause:

**19. I don't deny, he has done a good job.**

Moreover , Quirk et al. (1985,p.1115) propose another pragmatic function of the finite comment clauses which is the hearer's agreement .Concurrently ,these clauses might express the speaker's warmth and informality towards the hearer when they appear finally. The subject is commonly “you’ or the implied “you” of the imperative:

20. I'm not interested in grammar, **you know.**

Negative questions usually call for the hearer's agreement:

21. It is ethically wrong , **wouldn't you say?**

Biber et al. (1999 ,pp.864-5) illustrate that adverbial comment clauses which begin with **as** are used to express recognition of the audience's expectations or knowledge:

22. **As you know**, there are several groups for the different application areas.

Additionally ,Stenström (1984,p. 77) clarifies that “as you know ” denotes that the speaker assumes that the hearer /listener has some kind of knowledge concerning what the speaker is referring to and as such functions as a politeness device and it does not implore for feedback. On the contrary , ‘you know” does not necessarily denote presupposition as far as previous knowledge on the part of the hearer/ listener which is done for the sake of politeness.

Leech and Svartvik (2002,p. 157) illustrate that non- finite comment clauses, in initial position, can show judgment or emotional reaction as in:

23. **To my regret**, he didn't accept our offer.

Biber et al. (1999,p. 866) point out that to- infinitive and -ing comment clauses can be used to show how the writer/speaker is

communicating. With this meaning, they occur at the beginning of the main clause:

24. **Generally speaking**, you get what you pay for in a kitchen.

25. **To tell you the truth**, I don't know.

## Section Three: Research Methodology

### 3.1 . Preliminary Remarks

For this study, the researcher has chosen the conversations of the first episode of the (first ,second, fifth , sixth, ninth , tenth ) seasons of the American Series ‘Friends’ as the data to be analyzed .To analyze the data of the study , the researcher has adopted Quirk et al (1985) theory .

### 3.2. Data Analysis

#### 3.2.1.Season One -First Episode

**3.2.1.1 -Monica:** Oh my God!

**Paul:** I know, I know, I'm such an idiot. I guess I should have caught on when she started going to the dentist four and five times a week. I mean, how clean can teeth get?

**3.2.1.2 .Joey:** You should both know, that he's a dead man. Oh, Chandler? (Starts after Chandler.)

**Monica:** So how you doing today? Did you sleep okay? Talk to Barry? I can't stop smiling.

**Rachel:** I can see that. You look like you slept with a hanger in your mouth.

**Monica:** I know, he's just so, so... Do you remember you and Tony DeMarco?

**Rachel:** Oh, yeah.

In the first short conversation, the male character Paul talks with his friend Monica about his girlfriend's disloyalty. In the second conversation, Monica comments on Rachel's statement concerning Chandler's miserable state when he cuts his relationship with his girlfriend. Both of Paul and Monica use the comment clause "I know" in their conversations.

(I know) is a finite clause consists of the subject pronoun 'I' and the present simple verb 'know'. This comment clause occurred in an initial position. Finite comment clause ,once occurring initially , expresses the speaker's certainty about the subject of the conversation, that he is sure about the truth of his statement or opinion , and the listener is somewhat familiar with the subject matter and the speaker wants to make impression on the listener that they both share a common ground .

**3.2.1. 3- Monica:** (to Ross) Are, are you okay? **I mean**, do you want me to stay?

**Ross:** (choked voice) That'd be good...

**Monica:** (horrified) Really?

**Ross:** (normal voice) No, go on! It's Paul the Wine Guy!

In the above conversation , Monica asks Ross about whether being OK or not after the departure of his beloved .In this conversation , Monica uses the finite comment clause ' I mean' .It consists of the personal pronoun 'I' as the subject and the present simple verb "mean".The use of 'I mean' requires two arguments which means that it necessarily both refers back to a previous proposition and points forward to an upcoming argument .The speaker in her

second clause gives support to her main statement brought out in the previous clause .By using the comment clause ‘I mean’ , the speaker puts things right and expresses her statement probably .

**3.2.1. 4- Chandler:** Look, Ross, you gotta understand, between us we haven't had a relationship that has lasted longer than a Mento. **You**, however have had the love of a woman for four years. Four years of closeness and sharing at the end of which she ripped your heart out, and that is why we don't do it! I don't think that was my point!

**Ross:** You know what the scariest part is? What if there's only one woman for everybody, y'know? I mean what if you get one woman- and that's it? Unfortunately in my case, there was only one woman- for her...

In the above conversation, Ross and chandler are talking about Ross’s beloved. Ross uses the finite comment clause ‘you know’ which consists of the subject pronoun ‘you’ and the present simple verb ‘know’. Another meaning expressed by comment clauses which is attracting the listener’s attention with the personal pronoun ( you) .By using ‘you know’ in the above conversation ,the speaker makes sure that the listener fully understands the content of communication by seeking some responsive feedback .In this conversation , ‘You know’ is used to draw the listener in the conversation. It makes the listener feel part of the conversation. By using it , the speaker also intensifies the relationship with the listener .However, the speaker does not usually wait for the listener to take an active part in the conversation .

### 3.2.2.Season Two –First Episode

**3.2.2. 1-Chandler:** So what the hell happened to you in China? I mean, when last we left you, you were totally in love with, you know.

**Ross:** I know, I know I was, but there was always this little voice inside that kept saying it's never gonna happen, move on. You know whose voice that was?

**Chandler:** God?

**Ross:** It was you, pal.

**Chandler:** Well, maybe it was God, doing me.

In the above conversation , Chandler and Ross are talking about Ross's life and his relationships with women. In this conversation , there are two finite comment clauses .The first comment clause is 'I mean' and it is used by Chandler .It consists of the personal pronoun 'I' as the subject and the present simple verb 'mean'. Chandler uses this comment to signal a following clarification about his main statement . ' I mean' requires two arguments which means that it necessarily both refer back to a previous proposition and point forward to an upcoming argument .Chandler , the speaker , in his second clause explains and gives support to an argument brought out in the previous clause .With the help of 'I mean' , Chandler starts his statement again and puts things right .

The second comment clause is 'I know' and it is used by Ross .It consists of the personal pronoun 'I' as the subject and the present simple verb ' know'. When finite clause occurs in an initial position, it expresses the speaker's certainty about the subject of the conversation that what he is communicating is true .It also means that the listener is somewhat familiar with the subject matter and the speaker wants to make impression on the listener that they both share a common ground. This type of comment

clause indicates to the listener that he should pay attention either to some completely new piece of information or its new aspect , and in this conversation , Ross gives new aspect about his life and uses the comment clause in order to make Chandler pays attention to this new aspect .

**3.2.2. 2** -[Scene: Central Perk, Phoebe is recapping last season, and as she talks we see a montage of scenes from Ross and Rachel.]

**Phoebe:** Ok, so this is pretty much what's happened so far. Ross was in love with Rachel since, **you know**, forever, but every time he tried to tell her, something kind of got in the way, like cats, and Italian guys. Finally Chandler was like "forget about her" but when Ross was in China on his dig, Chandler let it slip that Ross was in love with Rachel. She was like, "Oh my god." So she went to the airport to meet him when he came back, but what she didn't know was, that Ross was getting off the plane with another woman. Uh-Oh! So, that's pretty much everything you need to know. But, enough about us. So, how've you been?

In the above conversation , Phoebe addresses the audience concerning the relationship between Ross and Rachel and how Ross's bad luck prevents him from being with his beloved and live a happy life with her .In this conversation , Phoebe uses the finite comment clause 'you know' which consists of the subject pronoun 'you' and the present simple verb ' know" .In this conversation , the function of this comment clause is hearer's agreement about the subject of the conversation ,and this comment clause expresses the speaker's informality and warmth towards the hearer when it occurs finally ,and the hearer of this conversation is the audience ,and by using this comment clause ,Phoebe wants to make the audience agree about her statement and make her relationship with them more close .

### 3.3.3. Season Five –First Episode

**3.3.3 .1-Chandler:** Oh wow, I hope you don't take this the wrong way but, I know we had plans to meet up tonight and, ugh, I'm just kinda worried about what it might do to our friendship.

**Monica: I know.** How could we have let this happen?

**Chandler:** Seven times!

In the above conversation , Chandler and Monica are talking about their friendship and how it passes a several stages of change and how this change affects their friendship .In this conversation , Monica uses the finite comment clause ‘I know’ which consists of the subject pronoun ‘I’ and the simple present verb ‘know’ . When the speaker uses the comment clause ‘I know’ initially, he or she wants to express his or her certainty about the subject or the information communicated with the listener .The listener is somewhat familiar with the subject matter and the speaker wants to make impression on the listener that they both share a common ground .

**3.3.3.2- Rachel:** Mon, honey, I gotta ask you something.

**Monica:** (impatiently) Now?

**Rachel:** Ross said my name up there, **I mean**, come on, I just can't pretend that didn't happen can I?

In the above conversation , Rachel tells Monica that her lover Ross mentions her name in his unconsciousness and this gives a sign that he still loves her . In this conversation , Rachel uses the finite comment clause ‘I mean’ which consists of the personal pronoun ‘I’ functions as a subject , and the present simple verb ‘mean’ .This comment clause occurs in a middle position in Rachel’s statement .’I mean’ requires two arguments which means that it is necessarily both refer back to a previous proposition and

point forward to an upcoming argument .The speaker in the second clause takes back , explains and gives support to her argument brought out in the previous clause .People usually use ‘I mean’ when they want to make things clearer , or give more details about their main statement and put things right .The comment clause here serves as a connective element ,to connect the two clauses of Rachel .

**3.3.3. 3- Monica: Gate Agent:** (On the P.A.) This is the last call for Flight 1066 to Athens. The last call.

**Ross:** Pretty soon I guess.

**Rachel:** Yeah. I’m sorry.

**Ross:** I just, I don’t understand, **I mean**, how-how can she do this? **Y’know**, what, am I, am I like a complete idiot for thinking that she’d actually show up?

**Rachel:** No, you’re not an idiot, Ross. You’re a guy very much in love .

In the above conversation , Rachel , Monica , and Ross are waiting in the airport for Ross’s beloved to return back to Ross but she never shows up and this makes Ross disappointed .In this conversation , Ross uses two finite comment clauses .The first one is ‘ I mean’ which consists of the personal pronoun ‘I’ and the present simple verb ‘ mean’ .Ross uses the comment clause ‘I mean’ to signal a following clarification. ‘I mean’ requires two arguments which means that it necessarily both refer back to a previous proposition and point forward to an upcoming argument .Here , Ross in the second clause gives support and explanation to his argument in the previous clause .

The second finite comment clause used by Ross is ‘you know’ and it consists of the subject pronoun ‘you’ and the present simple verb ‘ know’ .The speaker uses ‘you know” as a signal that what

follows is an explanation of what has preceded it. The speaker uses it to attract the hearer's attention to his argument .It draws the hearer in the conversation .It makes him/her feel part of the conversation . ‘You know’ does not necessarily presuppose previous knowledge on the part of the listener but may pretend to do so for the sake of politeness .

### 3.3.4. Season Six – First Episode

**3.3.4. 1-Joey:** Oh my God! That’s huge! (Hugs him.) Wait a minute, why come I wasn’t invited? And who was going to be your best man? Don’t say, "Ross." Do **not** say, "Ross."

**Chandler:** Look, I just don’t think Monica and I are ready to get married yet! Y’ know? **I mean**, I love her and everything but seeing Ross and Rachel coming out of that chapel was like a, like a wake-up call that Monica and I are moving so fast. Y’ know? And, how do I tell her without crushing her?

In the above conversation, Joey and Chandler talk about Chandler’s wedding and Chandler tells Joey that he is not ready to marry Monica because they take this decision in a fast way .In this conversation , Chandler uses the finite comment clause ‘I mean’ which consists of the personal pronoun ‘I’ as the subject and the present simple verb ‘ mean’ . ‘I mean’ is used to expand the main idea and explain the intentions of the speaker (Chandler).

### 3.3.5. Season Nine –First Episode

Comment clauses are not found in this episode .

### 3.3.6. Season Ten –First Episode

**3.3.6.1- Phoebe:** Damn it woman, pull yourself together! Have some pride, for the *love* of God.

(Precious starts crying)

**Phoebe:** Okay, not a fan of the tough love.

**Precious:** I just can't believe that Mike didn't give me any warning.

**Phoebe:** But he didn't really know, **you know**. He wasn't planning on coming to Barbados and proposing to me...

In the above conversation , Phoebe and Precious are talking about Precious's beloved and Phoebe is trying to encourage her friend to get ride of her bad state .In this conversation , Phoebe uses the finite comment clause 'you know' which consists of the subject pronoun 'you' and the present simple verb "know" .When occurs finally, 'I know" expresses the speaker's informality and warmth towards the hearer .The use of 'I know' by the speaker assumes that the listener is somewhat familiar with the subject matter, and by using it , the speaker wants to make impression on the listener that they both share a common ground, and it gives a hint to the listener that she should pay attention to a new aspect of the subject of the conversation .

**3.3.6.2 -Precious:** Oh, why would he do this? I mean, what's wrong with me?

**Phoebe:** Nothing, there's nothing wrong with you.

In the above short conversation , Precious and Phoebe are talking about Precious's beloved and how he broke their relationship without saying a single word to clarify the reason behind such behavior .In this conversation , Precious uses the finite comment clause 'I mean' which consists of the personal pronoun ' I' as the subject and the present simple verb 'mean" . 'I mean' ,as a comment clause , requires two arguments which means that it necessarily both refers back to a previous proposition and points forward to an upcoming argument .Here , the speaker in the second clause gives support to her main argument brought out in

the previous clause . ‘I mean’ is used as a signal to indicate that a clarification is going to follow .

### 3.3. -Findings and Discussions

Types of comment clauses include the following : a comment clause that is similar to the matrix clause of a main clause , ‘As’ comment clause ( which is similar to an adverbial comment clause) , ‘What’ comment clause ( which is similar to a nominal relative clause starting with ‘what” ) , a comment clause corresponds to “to – infinitive clause” , a comment clause similar to a nonfinite –ing clause , a comment clause is similar to a nonfinite –ed clause .According to the analysis of the conversations , only one type of comment clauses is used by the participants of the conversations of the American Series ‘Friends’ . This type is that which is similar to the matrix clause of a main clause . This type consists of a subject and a transitive verb. Such a clause is not independent because it is syntactically defective in the sense that the verb lacks its normally obligatory complementation.

In these conversations , the verb occurs in its simple present form .The most used forms of this type of comment clause in these conversations are the following : ‘I know”, ‘you know” and ‘I mean’ . These forms of comment clauses occur in different positions in the conversations; initially, finally, and in the middle positions. Comment clauses in the analyzed conversations of the American series ‘Friends’ have different pragmatic functions and interpretations. Comment clauses, once occurring initially, expresses the speaker’s certainty about the subject of the conversation ,that he or she is sure about the truth of his /her statement or opinion and the listener is somewhat familiar with the subject matters so, the speaker wants to make impression on the listener that they both share a common ground.

Another use of comment clause is to put things right and expresses the speaker's statement probably by giving support to the speaker's main statement .This meaning is expressed by the use of the comment clause ' I mean' .Furthermore , comment clauses can be used to attract the listener's attention . By using the comment clauses , the speaker makes sure that the listener fully understands the content of communication by seeking some responsive feedback . It makes the listener feel part of the conversation .Another use of the comment clauses is to express the speaker's warmth and informality towards the hearer .

#### **Section Four : Conclusion**

The findings of this study reveal that the type of comment clauses used in these conversations is that which is similar to the matrix of the main clause (the finite comment clause) so, the researcher's hypothesis ' that the comment clauses are highly used in the American Series 'Friends' and ,due to the variety of the conversations , many types of comment clauses are used in these conversations " has been rejected .Throughout the whole conversations , only the following forms of comment clauses are used : 'I mean', 'you know' , and 'I know'. Comment clauses are person-to- person oriented; and they are optional in that their omission does not render the sentence ungrammatical, although it may cause pragmatic or meaning difficulties.

By position, English comment clauses are syntactically possible at all positions in that they can be placed at the beginning, in the middle or at the end of the main clause. They appear in a linear sequence, but syntactically non-functional, i.e. they are not integrated into the structure of the sentence in which they occur.

This study shows that these comment clauses have different uses and functions ; to express the speaker's certainty of his main statement , to put things right and express the main statement probably ,to attract the listener's attention ,to make sure that the

listener fully understands the content of communication , and to express the speaker's informality and warmth towards the hearer .

According to Yamamoto (2010,p.387) , “The different pragmatic functions denoted by comment clauses reflect the extent to which the speaker tries to keep his face and the hearer's face balanced. In other words, the consensus of opinion between the speaker and the interlocutor is evoked without offending hearers or addressees. This is in order to protect him/herself from a possible counter-argument beforehand, and to mitigate the imposition of the speaker's thought or points of view upon the hearer or addressee. All these ideas are related to politeness, positive or negative” .

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