

THE STUDENT'S ACCURACY IN USING DISCOURSE MARKERS FOR ACADEMIC WRITING (A CASE STUDY OF STUDENTS IN ENGLISH AND LITERATURE DEPARTMENT)

Nirwana

Alauddin Islamic State University of Makassar, Indonesia
nirwana.nirwana@uin-alauddin.ac.id

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ABSTRACT

*Composing a background of the research is a tricky problem because not everyone can express their ideas in a paper with adequate content. This research focused on the accuracy of discourse markers used by the students in their academic writing, especially in the thesis background. This research used a qualitative method, analyzed by Bruce Fraser (1999) to identify the elaborative markers. The result of data analysis in this research found the types of discourse markers used in students' thesis background: the first is contrastive markers such as *whereas, otherwise, even though, in contrast, and yet*. The second is elaborative markers such as *besides, in other words, also, for example, furthermore, and*. The last is inferential markers such as *so, because, in this case, hence, then, and in this case*. On that basis, the dominant type of discourse markers used in students' thesis background was elaborative markers applied 11 times. In addition, the researcher found 20 discourse markers were used in the student's thesis background. The result of this research showed that only 16 of the discourse markers were used properly and 4 of them were used in an inappropriate way.*

Keywords: *Discourse Markers, Academic Writing, Student's Accuracy*

INTRODUCTION

The use of discourse markers is critical since it allows the writers to connect information or ideas across their writing. According to Dulger (2007: 261), discourse markers are words and phrases that arrange, remark on, or frame what we are saying or writing in some way, and serve to highlight how the current utterances relate to the preceding discourse. They also aid readers in following the flow of a discussion and interpreting the text's link between topics. Moreover, discourse markers play a critical part in properly arranging a paragraph, they serve as a link between phrases, allowing the writer's message to be received by the reader. Furthermore, these markers are necessary for enhancing cohesion, connecting sentences so that readable writing may be produced, and improving coherence in writing, ensuring that a paragraph fits together nicely. As a result, the paragraph's topic sentences and supporting sentences become connected. Aidinlou (2012: 11)

stated that comprehending discourse markers, cohesive relationships, and overall text construction are all inextricably linked.

As a result, one of the most important aspects of language learning is students' writing ability. Students can share their knowledge and ideas with others as they write. By writing about people, themes, circumstances, and events, they frequently learn what they genuinely believe and feel about them. According to (Maschler, 2017), writing is a method by which humans communicate with one another through the use of recognized markings or symbols. As a result, it is reasonable to infer that writing is a form of nonverbal communication that necessitates linguistic ability and is utilized by people to communicate their thoughts, feelings, and ideas with others.

Relating to writing skills, students must complete a thesis as a final project for academic objectives before achieving a bachelor's degree. A thesis has several chapters, one of which is the introduction. In the opening section, the authors must describe why they are undertaking research. According to Weissberg & Buker (2010: 3), writing up research is meant for students in a university's upper-division or graduate program who wish to perform scientific studies in various academic areas and have a high-intermediate or advanced level of English as a Second Language. According to this statement, the most important motive is to solve vital difficulties, build life-choice skills, and broaden knowledge. According to Bhatia (2002: 12), the introduction is critical in creating the relationship between the studies to be reviewed.

The researcher intended to take a thesis background from English and Literature Department students. The researcher used the thesis background for a variety of reasons. First and foremost, it is critical to recognize that research background is crucial while creating research studies. The research background will determine the study topic's relevance to the objective to contribute to the field of knowledge. Students must then compose a thesis background in a logical order, which means they must correlate each statement as much as possible. Second They must create a sense of connection between the written paragraphs. Third, because of the connections between the issue and the target of the investigation, the researcher chooses a thesis background in linguistics issues.

In fact, composing a background of the research is a tricky problem because not everyone can express their ideas in a paper with adequate content. Writing is the most difficult skill to learn in a second language, according to Richards & Renandya (2002: 303). The difficulties lie not just in conceiving and arranging ideas, but also in translating them into understandable language. Several deficient writing sub-skills, such as paragraph unity, coherence, and paragraph transitions, are also adding to the challenges. It means that certain authors are unable to structure their written work in such a way that they are unable to construct an efficient or acceptable paragraph that expresses the subject clearly, simply, and logically so that the reader comprehends it.

To sum it all, students must meet certain prerequisites or components to complete the research background. It can aid readers in comprehending the study's goal and give facts and background information. Students should clearly identify the subject area of interest in their research background writing, provide context by providing a concise and fair overview of the relevant published literature on the subject, and explicitly state the hypothesis that the research will test, as well as the researcher's motivation for choosing this type of research study.

The researcher used Bruce Fraser's (1999) categorization to accomplish this investigation. His categories are applicable for this research issue, as the researcher is trying to figure out how discourse markers are used in the thesis background. According to Jalilifar, Fraser's categorization is the most comprehensive in written discourse (2009: 114). Fraser (1999: 931) put it this way: Discourse markers are lexical expressions produced mostly from conjunctions, prepositional phrases, and adverbs, which are syntactic groupings. In his research, Fraser divided discourse markers into three categories: elaborative, inferential, and contrastive.

METHODOLOGY

Research Method Design

The researcher used descriptive qualitative method since the researcher has to describe and to find out the types and accuracy of discourse marker used in thesis background of study written by the students in the field of linguistics of English and Literature Department which published on march 2020. The primary purpose of descriptive research, according to Gall & Borg (2003: 26), is to determined a phenomenon and its features. Therefore, observation and survey are widely used to collect the data.

Data Source

The researcher conducted thesis background of study which published on March 2020 written by the students in the field of linguistics of English and Literature Department. There are 25 thesis which have been published the time period. Thus, it needs sampling for doing this research which selected as a representative from the population. In this research, purposive sampling was used by the researcher to take the sample. Finally, there was 5 students' thesis backgrounds in the field of linguistics used in this research. The instrument used in this study was notetaking in order to make the data consistent and accessible.

Procedures of Collecting Data

For collecting the data, the researcher followed the procedures below:
The researcher collected the thesis background which published on March 2020 from the students of English and Literature Department Alaudin State Islamic University of Makassar. The researcher chose 5 samples of thesis background in the field of linguistics to be analyzed. The researcher used note taking to write down the discourse markers which appear in the thesis background.

Data Analysis

Following the data collection, the researcher analyzed the dominant types and the accuracy of discourse marker used in thesis background which published in 2019 written by the students of English and Literature Department Alaudin State Islamic University of Makassar based on Bruce Fraser (1999) classifications on discourse markers. Elaborative markers, inferential markers, and contrastive markers are among three types of discourse markers he categorized.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

a. Findings

The researcher first examines the sorts of discourse markers employed by the students according to Fraser theory, to determine their accuracy. In the background of the students' thesis, the researcher discovered 20 discourse markers. . To classify the discourse markers based on its types, the researcher provides a table below:

Table.Types of Discourse markers

No	Dt	Types of Discourse markers			Freque ncy
		Contrastive Marker	Elaborative Marker	Inferential Marker	
1	S1	-	Beside (1)	So (1) Because (1)	3
2	S2		In other words (1) Also (1) For Example (1) Futhermore (1)	So (1) Because (1)	6
3	S3	Whereas (1)	Otherwise (1) For example (1)	In this case (1)	(3)
4	S4	Eventhough (1)	And (1)	So (1)	(3)
5	S5	Yet (1)	For example (2)	•Therefore (1) • Then (1)	(5)

From the table above, it is noted that the discourse markers that identified in the students' thesis background are classified into three types. First, the contrastive markers used about 2 times. Second, the elaborative markers used about 11 times. Third, the inferential markers used about 8 times. The type of discourse markers the students use the most is the elaborative marker with total number 11. The Accuracy of Discourse Markers Used in Students' Thesis Background

The researcher discusses discourse markers used in the background of students' theses. Discourse markers are also examined here, utilizing Bruce Fraser's concept, which uses discourse markers to link the components of a text with cohesiveness and coherence. In other words, the researcher examined how Bruce Fraser's theory affects the correctness of employing discourse markers functionally in students' thesis backgrounds.

In general, the researcher discovered that students in the English and Literature Department use 20 discourse markers in their thesis background, but some of them are used in improper ways. The usage of out-of-order discourse markers, for example, will disrupt the cohesion and cohesiveness of a piece of writing. It can help the reader understand what the writer was trying to say. As a result, the researcher assesses the usage of discourse markers in students' thesis backgrounds in order to assist the reader in comprehending the concepts in the texts in this area. Discourse markers are split into three categories: contrastive markers, elaborative markers, and inferential markers. In addition, the following is a more detailed explanation of each sort of discourse marker utilized in students' thesis backgrounds.

a. Contranstive Marker

The following observations are either a denial or an equivocation of a proposition underlined in the preceding discussion, according to this sort of marker. To put it another way, this kind demonstrates that the iscourse segments S2 provide information in contrast to what came before in S1. The contrastive markers employed by the students in this analysis are: *while, even though, in contrast, and yet*. More accurately, the illustrations of the sentences are as followed:

1) Student 3

Datum 1

“The researcher was interested in analyzing word formation process of jargon formation on PC Game subfirm in Kaskus. Whereas, the previous research

Maghfirah (2017) had analyzing jargon used by Barista who work at Coffee Shop became the informants at her study.”

The usage of the marker 'whereas' in the second sentence appears to be incorrect based on the thesis background materials. In fact, this marker does not indicate the inconsistency in the statement. The student, on the other hand, wishes to back up the idea of examining word creation by doing another study on the same topic. To be more specific, the student requires elaborative markers to support the idea of the first sentence in order to make the statement intelligible. As a result, the marker 'whereas' should be replaced with 'similarly.'

2) Student 4

Datum 2

“The deaf-blind children are constrained in language acquisition. Even though the deaf-blind was constrained in language acquisition but the deaf blind have ability in acquiring and creating language by learning language (sign language), P.”

The usage of the marker 'even though' does not make the sentence intelligible, according to the readings above. The second line above does not deny the first sentence; rather, it explains the first sentence's cause. As a result, the correct marker to employ in the sentences is 'as a result of'.

4) Student 5

Datum 5

“According to Roland Barthes in Nauta (2005: 10) symbol is sign, which is used to facilitate communication between people. Yet, symbol is autonomous, it is always related to culture.”

According to the texts above, the learner should avoid using the marker 'yet.' Because the following sentences are a refinement of the prior sentence. The marker 'yet,' on the other hand, is used to indicate a textual conflict. If the learner utilizes the marker 'moreover,' the phrase will be more cohesive and coherent. All things considered, those are the many forms of contrastive markers used in the thesis background of the students.

b. Elaborative Markers

Elaborative markers are a form of marker that indicates that the next remark is a refinement of the previous discourse. Elaborative markers, to be more specific, are utilized to connect the same additional context of what has come before. In this study, the researcher discovered that elaborative markers such as and, besides, because of (this case), in other words, also, for example, indeed, furthermore, and then were utilized in the students' thesis background. The following are some additional details concerning the sentences:

1) Student 1

Datum 6

“The researcher analyze the mechanisms or processes of word formation and it can be understood the way to form the word both in English and Konjo language. Besides, word form has deep relation with meaning.”

Based on the sentences above, the student effectively connects the sentences with the marker 'besides.' The word 'besides' is used to reinforce the previous discourse by presenting a fresh point that is slightly distinct but still focuses on the same subject. This marker is being used by the student to concentrate on the idea of word form in this example.

2) Student 2

This student used four elaborative markers in her thesis background, which are:

Datum 7

“Every society has its own language. In other word language allows people to produce the expression through words, phrases, and sentences.”

Datum 8

“in other word language allows people to produce the expression through words, phrases, and sentences. Also, every language has a different rule in forming word, namely morphology.”

Datum 9

“By this explanation phrase and compound looks like a quite similar meaning, so it can make the reader confused differences both of them, if they don’t learning more. For example in word ‘greenhouse’ and word ‘green house’, if we see the examples in a glimps, we can consider that both of them is similar but different.”

Datum 10

“so by this case, she analyzed the types of compound word that found in the novel and also identified the function of compound words in the novel. Furthermore, in this research, the researcher also analyzed the types of compound words.”

The student employs the markers *in other words*, *also*, *for example*, and *additionally* based on the readings above. More specifically, the student used all of these discourse markers in such a way that the readers were able to read the texts fluently and easily. In other words, the markers *also*, *for example*, and *furthermore* serve the same purpose: to support the first sentence and to elaborate on the topic of the second statement. In this situation, the learner selects and uses these markers to create another layer of language and compound terms to his or her vocabulary.

3) Student 3

This student used two elaborative markers in his thesis background, which are:

Datum 11

“also your different colors, black, sawo, and white. Otherwise, you are all from the same origin.”

From the texts above, it can be inferred that it is irrelevant to use the marker ‘otherwise’ to connect those sentences. Since the student means that whatever your skin colors, we are all from the same origin. So, it should be replaced with the marker ‘because of this’ as a conclusion from the first statement.

Datum 12

“this jargon is already used in PC games subforum but the problem is they do not understand about how the word can make a formation like that and for general society that jargon may sound unfamiliar or not common in general society. For example, the word VR, which derived from the word virtual and reality refers to the use of computer technology to create a simulated environment.”

Based on the sentences above, it can be seen that the student uses the marker ‘for example’ appropriately to link the discourse segments between the sentences. This marker links the text segments and helps to maintain textual cohesion, and meaning. In this case, the student gives another explanation in the second statement about the example of jargon, so that the reader can perceive the meaning of the texts in the first statement.

4). Student 4

Datum 13

“it can be modified the language in each situation where it is used as express inner thoughts and emotions, make sense of complex and abstracts thought, to learn to communicate with others, to fulfill our willing and needs, as well as to establish rules and maintain cultures. And sometimes, people also use language to convey an idea or their message through song lyric, poetry, and many literary works.”

From the texts above, it can be inferred that the student properly uses the marker ‘and’ to show a connection between the second and first sentences. This marker is signaling that the second sentence is actually about to give the same ideas with the first sentence. In this case, the student uses the marker ‘and’ to elaborate another functions of language.

5) Student 5

This student used two elaborative markers in her thesis background, which are:

Datum 18

“Two eras may have the same symbols but the symbols may have different meanings or namings. For example, an image of a fish means an astrological symbol (zodiac),”

Datum 19

“the writer can conclude that symbol has different meaning in different culture. For example: in Makassar’s culture, to show their family is dead, they wave white flag, but in Bali’s culture they wave yellow flag if their family is dead.”

Based on the sentences above, student handled the marker ‘for example’ correctly. The markers are well distributed into sentences as to supporting the idea in the first

sentence with give some refinement of some sort idea in the second sentence. In this case, the student uses the marker ‘for example’ to extent the idea of different symbols in every culture. So, those are the types of elaborative markers that used in the students’ thesis background. Totally there are fourteen contrastive markers that have been used by the students. Thus, there are some repetition happened, such as the markers *besides*, *furthermore*, and *for example*.

c. Inferential Markers

This type of markers that signaling the utterance’s force is derived from preceding discourse. Inferential markers tell about an utterance of the result or consequence of what has preceded. In this analysis, the inferential markers used by the students are: *so*, *because*, *in this case*, *therefore*, *hence*, and *then*. In addition, the illustration of sentences from the students’ thesis background as follows:

1) Student 1

This student used two inferential markers in her thesis background, which are:

Datum 20

“the two languages both have a structure which if the speaker is wrong in the word formation process it happen miss understanding. So both English and regional languages must be studied well and understood.

”Datum 21

“Kajang is an area that is rich in culture, to that many foreign tourists come here, that the people there more comfortable using the konjonese language when they communicate so that they of the use their language while talking outsiders. Because of this case, the researcher thinks that konjo language needs to be studied to make it easier for outsiders who want to learn about culture in Kajang because if they want to know a culture, they must first understand the language.”

Based on the texts above, it can be inferred that the student used the marker ‘so’ and ‘because’ appropriately in her thesis background. They are used to portray a resultative from the preceding discourse. Consequently, the marker ‘so’ used by the student to show a result that English and regional languages must

be learned to avoid misunderstanding in communication. The student also succeed to use the marker ‘because of this case’ to show a consequences in learn Konjonese.

2) Student 2

This student used two inferential markers in her thesis background, which are:

Datum 22

“Eventually, the researcher concluded that compound noun which dominant. Because, compound noun is the most common types of compound.”

Based on the texts above, the second statement written by the student to support the message in the first sentence. In contrary, the marker ‘because’ is not coherent with the meaning of the sentences because it functions to show the consequences from the preceded sentence. It would be more appropriate if the student use the marker ‘in other word’ to connect the sentences above.

Datum 23

“The researcher is interested in analyzed compound word in the novel because it is unique and need to learn carefully if we want to analyzed the compound word in written text. So by this case, she analyzed the types of compound word that found in the novel an also identified the function of compound words in the novel.”

On the texts above, the students properly used the marker ‘so’ to portray the result in the second statement. The student implied the conclusion for analyzing compound words’ types and functions in the second sentences. While, in the first sentence she defines the reason why she is interested to analyze the topic.

3) Student 3

Datum 24

“Plag (9:2008) notes word formation is study about how new complex word are built on the basis of other word or morphemes. In this case, studying the jargon formation is important because sometimes, the use of word in jargon will be confusing or ambiguous which cause the meaning of the word cannot be understood easily.”

Based on the statements above, the student used the marker 'in this case' effectively as an utterance to show a conclusion from the preceding statement. Here, the student concludes in the second statement that it is important to learn about jargon formation.

4) Student 4

Datum 25

"the researcher took this Small Great Things novel as the object of study to analyze the figurative language used by Jodi Picoult after reading the novel at glance. So, the researcher will analyze literature in the linguistic aspect, spesifically figurative language."

Based on the texts above, the student does not use the marker 'so' properly. The marker 'so' is used to show the cause from the first statement. While on the second sentence above, the student extent the idea of the topic that discuss in the first sentence. In this case, the student talks about the analysis purposes in the two segments.

5) Student 5

This student used two discourse markers in his thesis background, which are:

Datum 28

"This novel entitled the alchemist, by Paulo Coelho, a novelist who lives in Sao Paolo, Brazil. Therefore the novel requires interpretation, because it rapidly contains symbols, but often readers do not know it and do not understand what the writer actually write through his work."

In the sentences above, it is inappropriate to apply the marker 'therefore' because it does not make the sentence coherent. The marker 'therefore' functions to use when the following is showing the cause or result from the preceeded sentence. While, in the first sentence above is telling about the detail of the novel, and the next statement is adding another point about the novel's.

B. Discussion

In this section, the researcher examines the data analysis findings connected to the use of discourse markers in students' thesis backgrounds. The prevalent types

and the accuracy of discourse markers utilized in the students' thesis background are discussed in this section, as well as two research topics. .

In this research, the researcher uses Bruce Fraser's theory about discourse markers to find the dominant types and the accuracy of discourse markers used by the students of English and Literature Department. After collecting the data, the data are classified into table analysis. Based on the analysis, basically there was less variation in the discourse markers used by each student's thesis background. Some of the students consistently used some variants of discourse markers. The researcher also found some similarities of discourse markers used among the students in their thesis background, first is marker *whereas* used in datum 1 and datum 4. Second is marker *beside* used in datum 6, datum 14, and datum 15. Third is marker *for example* used in datum 9, datum 18, and datum 19. Forth is marker *furthermore* used in datum 10, 16, and 17. Next is marker *so* used in datum 20, datum 23, datum 25, and datum 26.

Furthermore, the researcher categorized the data that found in this research based on the types of discourse markers that proposed by Bruce Fraser (1999). For instance, contrastive markers used about 5 times which found in datum 1 (*whereas*), datum 2 (*even though*), datum 3 (*in contrast*), datum 4 (*whereas*), and datum 5 (*yet*). Elaborative markers used about 14 times which found in datum 6 (*besides*), datum 7 (*in other words*), datum 8 (*also*), datum 9 (*for example*), datum 10 (*furthermore*), datum 11 (*otherwise*), datum 12 (*for example*), datum 13 (*and*), datum 14 (*beside*), datum 15 (*beside*), datum 16 (*furthermore*), datum 17 (*furthermore*), datum 18 (*for example*), datum 19 (*for example*). Inferential markers used about 11 times which found in datum 20 (*so*), datum 21 (*because*), datum 22 (*because*), datum 23 (*so*), datum 24 (*in this case*), datum 25 (*so*), datum 26 (*so*), datum 27 (*hence*), datum 28 (*therefore*), datum 29 (*then*) and datum 30 (*in this case*). On that basis, elaborative markers are the dominant types of discourse markers applied by the students in their thesis background.

This finding is agreement with the results in the other two previous studies from Didi Sudrajat (2013) and Wuwuh Andayani (2014). The study from Didi Sudrajat (2013) which focuses to discover what types of discourse markers could

be discovered in essay writing by English Department fifth semester students. This study found that the discourse markers of elaborative were mostly used in the students' essay writing. Wuwuh Andayani (2014) which attempts to analyze the kinds of discourse markers employed by Indonesian and Thai University students in their argumentative writing. The result of this study also revealed that the presence of elaborative markers were the most common discourse markers Indonesian students use it in their argumentative writing. This indicated that Indonesian students were more likely to provide supporting evidence for their viewpoints. On the contrary, contrastive markers were the most frequent used among other kinds of discourse markers in Thai students argumentative texts. This reflects the argumentative genre's innate characteristics, which needs the writer to offer an argumentation with some supportive and opposite arguments on the topic under discussion.

Notwithstanding than displaying about the dominant types of discourse markers used by the students, the results also emphasized about the accuracy of using discourse markers. Based on the result, the appropriately discourse markers used in this research are 21. It shows in contrastive markers, the students use the markers properly only once that found datum 3 (*in contrast*). Next, elaborative markers were used properly 11 times by the students, it can be found in datum 6 (*besides*), datum 7 (*in other word*), datum 8 (*also*), datum 9 (*for example*), datum 10 (*furthermore*), datum 12 (*for example*) datum 13 (*and*), datum 14 (*beside*) datum 16 (*furthermore*), datum 17 (*furthermore*), datum 18 (*for example*), and datum 19 (*for example*). Then, inferential markers were used properly 8 times by the student, it can be found in datum 20 (*so*), datum 21 (*because*), datum 23 (*so*), datum 24 (*in this case*), datum 26 (*so*). However, the total inappropriately discourse markers used in the students' thesis background are 9 times. To be specific, contrastive markers has 4 errors which found in datum 1 (*whereas*), datum 2 (*even though*), datum 4 (*whereas*) and datum 5 (*yet*). Elaborative markers have 2 errors which found in datum 11 (*otherwise*) and datum 15 (*besides*). Inferential markers has 3 errors which found in datum 22 (*because*), datum 25 (*so*), and datum 28

(*therefore*). In fact, contrastive markers were the least used and the most dominant error by the students' in their thesis background

From the analysis reveal that students used contrastive markers to signal inferential and elaborative markers relation between segments. This result is along the same lines with the previous study from Najla Ibrahim Ramadan (2018) that contrastive markers was the most inappropriate markers that the students use in their writing. The markers that used in this study are *however*, *on the other hand*, *although*, and *whereas*. Based on these two studies, it is noteworthy that the contrastive markers were the most challenging ones among the other types of discourse markers to use by the students. The errors commonly happen because of the misunderstanding of the way how to use discourse markers in order to make a cohesive a coherent sentence

CONCLUSION

The researcher concluded that the dominant type of discourse markers analyzed in students' thesis background in the field of linguistics is elaborative markers. The discourse markers in the type of elaborative markers used in the students' thesis background consists of words *besides*, *in other words*, *for example*, *furthermore*, *otherwise*, and *and*. The type of elaborative markers functions as signaling the utterance following constitutes a refinement of some sort on the precede discourse. In addition, the data analysis for the accuracy of the use of discourse markers in students' thesis background shows that there are 9 errors of discourse markers used by the students. To be specific, contrastive markers has 4 errors with the words *whereas*, *even though*, and *yet*. Elaborative markers has 2 errors with the words *otherwise* and *besides*. Inferential markers has 3 errors with the words *because*, *therefore*, and *so*. The errors commonly happen because of the misunderstanding of the way how to use discourse markers in order to make a cohesive a coherent sentence.

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