

Variations in the use of discourse markers by L1 and L2 English users

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ABSTRACT

This study adopts a functional approach to investigate specific discourse markers employed by L1 English and L2 English users in non-native English speaking contexts. Twenty-four academic essays were voluntarily submitted by the students for analysis. Primarily, Fraser's (2009) taxonomy was used to identify discourse markers and to know its use in writing academic essays. Findings indicate that there were notable differences between L1 and L2 users in using discourse markers, specifically in its frequency and functions. Accordingly, L1 English users' writings frequently displayed elaborative markers followed by temporal, inferential, and contransitive discourses. Meanwhile, L2 English users' writings showed the overuse of certain discourse types such as temporal and inferential markers. In the coding of data, it was also revealed the L2 users' overused of discourse markers resulted in incoherent texts. Language teachers may need to raise awareness on how discourse markers can be used variably in writing academic essays.

Keywords: academic essays; discourse markers; L1 and L2 users

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INTRODUCTION

For native speakers and non-native speakers of English, writing could be the most challenging task as it involves a lot of components to be considered (Norrish, 1983; Prommas & Sinwongsuwat, 2013). As Nunan (2003) espoused, writing is a cognitive process, which involves generating ideas and putting it together in such a way that readers could understand clearly. As compared with speaking, writing is less forgiving concerning grammatical errors, organizational patterns, among others. So it is necessary for students to organize their knowledge or beliefs onto sound arguments before they convey the message through a well-constructed text. Hence, it does not only consider technical writing skills but also content skills, for example, understanding an issue at hand. Therefore, teachers should not only

emphasize on teaching grammar but also includes the 'how' of generating 'a whole body of thoughts'. To be able to write well, connection of each paragraphs as well as how sentences support each other must be considered of utmost importance.

Prommas and Sinwongsuwat (2013) noted the need to use cohesive markers, specifically, discourse markers as it helps construct the function and meaning of a sentence (Halliday & Hasan, 1976). Although the research strand is not new, it continuously attracts the attention of researchers because of its importance, for example, in producing coherent and cohesive texts. Thus, this study examines the use of discourse markers in reflective writings of native and non-native speakers of English enrolled in non-English speaking contexts – the Philippines and Thailand.

The use of discourse markers (DMs) in writing

Accordingly, DMs in written text serve as “an expression which signals the relationship of the basic message to the foregoing discourse” (Fraser, 1996, p. 186). For examples, coordinate and subordinate conjunctions (and, or, but, since), adverbial phrases (consequently, furthermore, moreover) and prepositional phrases (on the other hand, having mentioned, after all). Fraser asserts that DMs constitute a functional class rather than a syntactic class. He concurs with Schiffrin (1987) that DMs contribute to the local coherence of discourse or even in global coherence of a text. In 2009, Fraser classified three functional classes of DMs. Firstly, contrastive discourse markers (CDMs), which cues that the information carried by the discourse segment might establish direct or indirect contrast (*i.e., I didn't bring my money, however, I have my visa card.*). Secondly, elaborative discourse markers (EDMs), which specifies that the message carried in the discourse segment provides further elaboration or explanation on the information represented by prior segment (*i.e., You must save money. Above all, you mustn't borrow money from us.*). Thirdly, inferential discourse markers (IDMs) provides discourse segment they introduce prior to a segment (*i.e., I didn't eat my dinner. Thus, I feel hungry now.*).

Ali and Mahadin (2016) employed Fraser's taxonomy to investigate the use of DMs in written discourse produced by 40 Jordanian students. They found out that less proficient EFL learners tend to use more restricted and redundant sets of DMs. And lower levels of proficiency might result in restricting the functions that are served by DMs, thus, limiting the syntactic categories from which these markers are drawn and affecting the variety of positions that they occupy. It can be deduced that students' proficiency affect the use of DMs in written discourse. Among native and non-native speakers of English, House (2013) analyzed the use of DMs and its implications in EFL teaching setting. Results indicated that among three groups of students (native speakers of English, Chinese students, and Japanese students) shared few characteristics with regard to frequency and types of discourse markers used in their essays such as DMs and, so, firstly, and to conclude.

In another study among non-native speakers of English, Asik and Cephe (2013) investigated the written and spoken production of DMs. It was found out that DMs are not totally excluded in the non-native data but are used less frequently. Findings revealed that Turkish students prefer to use more textual and structural DMs in their spoken and written outputs such as I mean, you know, like, etc. The authors concluded that the variety and the range of DMs are limited and confined to particular items, and thus there is an overreliance on certain DMs which may lead to pragmatic fossilization.

Among Yemeni EFL learners, Modhish (2012) explored the use of DMs in composition writings. Accordingly, elaborative markers are frequently used

followed by the inferential, contrastive, causative and topic related discourse markers. Inferential statistics have shown weak positive correlation between the frequency of DMs' use and the writing quality of the students. There is, however, a positive correlation between the topics related markers and the writing quality of the learners. Similarly, in descriptive compositions of 90 Iranian students, Jalilifar (2008) reported that students employed elaborative markers as the most frequently used DMs, followed by inferential, contrastive, causative, and topic related markers. Interestingly, there is a positive relationship between the quality of the compositions and the number of well-functioned discourse markers. Results also revealed statistically significant differences between the use of discourse markers and composition quality in the groups. Accordingly, graduate students used more discourse markers that led to more cohesive texts.

Congruent to previous research, this paper focuses on cohesion and coherence in written texts, specifically, cohesive markers such as DMs as multitude of evidence indicates the use of various discourse markers in reflective writing ultimately leads connectivity of thoughts. Further, this present study investigates in order to know the types of discourse markers used by L1 English and L2 English users in non-native English speaking contexts which includes the frequency of discourse markers usage; the differences on the use of discourse markers; and, the problems in using discourse markers of both users.

Therefore, to investigate the students' use of DMs in the assigned task, the present study analyzes the variations in the use of DMs by L1 and L2 English users using a functional approach. Thus, two objectives are sought (1) to know the types and frequencies of DMs used by L1 English and L2 English users in non-native English speaking contexts; and (2) to know the differences on the use of discourse markers by L1 English and L2 English users in non-native English speaking contexts.

METHOD

Context of the study

Twenty-four reflective essays were voluntarily submitted by the students. Of the twenty-four, the first half of students are native English speakers enrolled in BA TESOL program in Thailand and the other half are non-native English speakers enrolled in BA English program in the Philippines. Both participants were enrolled in Language Acquisition course (3 credits). It should be noted that all students are enrolled in non-native English speaking contexts. Their reflective essays were submitted at the end of Term 1, School Year 2016-2017.

Reflective essay

The students were asked to write handwritten reflective essays of around 200 to 300 words at the end of their course in language acquisition. Based on the rubrics for

grading their outputs, cohesiveness of ideas was given importance, of which 70 percent was allotted.

Framework of analysis

The students’ use of DMs is evaluated based on six criteria. Firstly, the frequency of the use of DMs was calculated manually. Secondly, the functions of DMs were coded accordingly. Each DM was assigned to one of the five functional categories such as elaborative, temporal, inferential, contrastive, and spoken discourse. Thirdly, the variety of the use of DMs was classified. Fourthly, the syntactic categories from which DMs are drawn were categorized. Herein, each DM was identified following Fraser’s taxonomy onto coordinate conjunctions, subordinate conjunctions, prepositions, prepositional phrases, and adverbial. However, two syntactic categories excluded in Fraser’s framework, for example, clauses and interjection, are considered as sources of DMs in the present study constitute the spoken category of DMs which serve a phatic role “to

facilitate closeness between participants” (Fung, 2003, p.77). Fifthly, the students’ awareness of the stylistic peculiarities of DMs were assessed. Lastly, the positions of DMs in the sentences and in discourse segments were identified. DMs might occur in sentence initial, medial or final position.

Fraser’s (2009) taxonomy was used as it is the most comprehensive framework used in written discourse analysis (Jalilifar, 2008, p. 115). Fraser identified three functional classes of DMs including contrastive discourse makers, elaborative discourse markers, and inferential discourse markers (see Table 1). However, in this study, we included temporal discourse markers because DMs do not exclusively show semantic relationship between segments; rather, these markers can also display discourse relations. And, spoken discourse to genuinely identify in marking shared knowledge between the participants and making of the participants towards the propositional content of discourse segment.

Table 1 Category of discourse markers and their functions.

Category Discourse markers	Functions	Examples
Contrastive discourse markers (CDMs)	concepts of denial and contrast, with modifications directly or indirectly with the prior segments	Although, but, despite, despite of, even though, however, instead of, nonetheless, on the, other hand, rather, still, though, and while
Elaborative discourse markers (EDMs)	It indicates that the information contained in the discourse segments	Also, and, as well as, besides, for example, furthermore, In addition, In addition to, In other words, moreover, and or
Inferential discourse markers (IDMs)	It implies significant results in. satisfying conversational coherence	As a conclusion, because, because of, consequently, in conclusion, in this case, since, so, so that, then, therefor, and thus.
Temporal discourse markers (TDMs)	It indicates the sequence of the text.	Eventually, finally, first, first of all, firstly, in the end, now, second, secondly, then, third, thirdly , and when
Spoken discourse markers (TDMs)	Embed students’ attitude in their writing.	Actually, from my aspects, from my point of view , think, in my opinion, in my point of view, indeed, it is my view, just, let’s start, like, Of course, Oh, and well

FINDINGS and DISCUSSION

This section presents findings and discussion. Table 2 shows the comparative frequency of DMs by L1 and L2 English users.

Table 2 illustrates that both users used elaborative markers extensively. This could be explained by the fact where reflective essays typically require elaboration. Accordingly, students apply what they have learnt from the course (Assasfeh, Alshboul, & Al-Shaboul, 2013; Jalilifar, 2008; Martinez, 2004). Further, it should be pointed out that L2 English users used elaborative markers more frequently compared to L1 English users. The over-reliance of ‘and’ is common to L2 English users (Ali & Mahadin, 2016). Similar findings have pointed out the high frequency of ‘and’ among L1 English users. Although similar results of ‘and’ were found, the functions are different. The L2 English users use ‘and’ repeatedly while L1 English users

appropriately placed it in their essay (see examples below).

I have learned the underlying theory of language acquisition, its principle, and how it was utilized is SLA (L1 English user).

I have learned many topics in Language acquisition course and I learned the important principle and I learned also the major principle of Language acquisition and I have learned many things (L2 English user).

Of the other set of elaborative markers, results reveal that L2 English users employed ‘or’ (10.70 %) followed by ‘also’ (6.19 %), ‘as well as’ (1.40 %), ‘furthermore’ (0.56 %), ‘moreover’ (0.28 %). Surprisingly, there were no instances of the DMs (besides, for example, in addition, and in addition to) in their reflective essays. It can be concluded that L2 English users omitted to give examples or support their

Table 2. Frequency of DMs

Types of Marker	L1 users (%)	L2 Users (%)
Elaborative		
Also	4.64	6.19
And	67.93	80.84
As well as	1.68	1.40
Besides	1.26	0.00
For example	10.12	0.00
Furthermore	3.79	.56
In addition	0.42	0.00
In addition to	1.68	0.00
In other words	0.84	0.00
Moreover	1.25	0.28
Or	6.32	10.70
Spoken		
Actually	2.81	.88
From my aspects	2.81	0.00
From my point of view	1.40	0.00
I think	9.85	0.00
In my opinion	5.63	3.53
In my point of view	7.04	0.00
Indeed	7.04	0.88
It is my view	1.40	0.00
Just	1.40	11.50
Let's start	7.04	0.00
Like	45.07	7.96
Of course	1.40	0.00
Oh	2.81	0.00
Well	5.63	12.38
Temporal		
Eventually	3.57	0.00
Finally	3.57	13.33
First	10.71	13.33
First of all	5.35	0.00
Firstly	19.64	0.00
In the end	7.14	0.00
Now	10.71	31.11
Second	7.14	4.40
Secondly	3.57	0.00
Then	10.71	17.77
Third	7.14	0.00
Thirdly	7.14	0.00
When	1.78	20.00
Inferential		
As a conclusion	7.54	1.12
Because	9.93	34.83
Because of	5.66	6.74
Consequently	3.77	0.00
In conclusion	5.66	1.12
In this case	5.66	0.00
Since	1.88	10.11
So	18.86	28.08
So that	20.75	5.61
Then	9.43	8.98
Therefor	1.88	0.00
Thus	7.54	3.37
Contrastive		
Although	3.77	1.40
But	33.96	59.00
Despite	1.89	0.00
Despite of	1.89	0.00
Even though	1.89	0.00
However	11.32	9.85
Instead of	1.89	2.81
Nonetheless	1.89	0.00
On the other hand	3.77	2.81
Rather	5.66	1.40
Still	0.00	12.67
Though	11.89	4.22
While	15.09	5.63

ideas in some extents. L1 English users, on the other hand, employed all sets of elaborative markers in their reflective essays respectively.

In sum, the L2 English users relatively used a more restricted set of elaborative markers in their reflective essays and relied heavily on 'and' to compensate for their unfamiliarity with three other elaborative markers which demonstrate full of 'and' but lack of substance. Similar to Martinez (2004), a varied set of elaborative markers were effectively used in the progress of ideas by more proficient writers, whereas less proficient writers tended to repeat a restricted set of elaborative markers which resulted in a lower quality of writing.

For temporal DMs, results show its improper use, supposedly utilize to form an organizational pattern of logical division of ideas. Some of which were placed inappropriately in the reflective essays. For instance, for L2 English users, it was used to enumerate ideas while L1 English users used it to define the segments.

Further, it is noted that each group of users employed a variety set of temporal markers. Ali and Mahadin (2016) concluded in their study that 'first' and 'first all' were used by Jordanian English learners to introduce initial point and 'Eventually' and 'In the end' to introduce the concluding signal. In this study, L2 English users, for example, frequently used temporal markers 'then' and 'now' to introduce initial starts whereas the L1 English users relied on 'Firstly' to signal the initial segment of the sentence. Further, for DMs to signal finality, L2 English users employed 'finally' to introduce concluding signals whereas 'In the end' was used by L1 English users (see excerpts below).

Firstly, the principle of Chomsky is very important in language acquisition. It demonstrates the mental faculty of the child... In the end, I learned the implication of Chomsky's' principle to SLA (L1 English user).

Then, I learned the five hypotheses of Krashen in language acquisition...Finally, my queries about how child learned language was cleared (L2 English user).

Subsequently, L2 English users did not use some sets of temporal markers such as 'eventually', 'first of all', 'firstly', 'in the end', and 'thirdly'. Surprisingly, L2 English users overused 'when' and were placed incorrectly in some segments. There is a possibility that L2 English users do not have enough knowledge on how to use 'when' as temporal markers in a sentence. Meanwhile, L1 English users employed all set of temporal markers showing awareness on how to use it to some extent.

Additionally, for inferential markers, L2 English users employed it frequently as compared to L1 English users, for example, in the use of 'so' and 'because' to signal the relationship of interference between discourse segments. This result is confirmed by Ali and Mahadin (2016, p. 29) and Mihaljević Djigunović and Vikov (2011, p. 270). On the one hand, L1 English users used 'so that' and 'so'. Moreover, L2 English users

underused some inferential markers such as ‘therefore’, ‘in this case’, and consequently, obtaining zero percentage. On the contrary, L1 English users utilized all inferential markers in their reflective essays, respectively (see examples below).

I think Chomsky was into pure metal faculty and didn't include any underlying factors, so, he really believes that child has an innate knowledge (L1 English user).

So, the problem in Chomsky's principle is lack of 'child environmental filters' which should be inserted as part of the whole child mental development (L2 English user).

In the examples above, the use of inferential discourse markers (IDMs) as a cohesive device implies significant results in satisfying conversational coherence. IDMs signal that the current utterance conveys a message that is, in a sense, consequential to some aspect of the foregoing. However, in L2 English users' example, it can be noticed that IDM ‘so’ was used to reason out and seems concluding the whole segments. While L1 English users' used IDM ‘so’ to justify the segments.

Further, data have shown that contrastive markers were the most frequently employed category of DMs among L1 English users. Meanwhile, it should be pointed out that L2 English users utilized DM ‘but’ most frequently, 59 percent, as compared to L1 English users' 33.96 percent. The extreme reliance on the use of ‘but’ among EFL learners is confirmed in previous studies (see Ali & Mahadin, 2016; Asassfeh, Alshboul, & Al-Shaboul, 2013; Martinez, 2004). Below are sample excerpts:

I like the principle of UG of Chomsky, I am interested on how he introduced the concept, but I am still confused on how he derives this principle without seeing the other perspective of learning..... But it's more reliable if the UG is well really explained by different metal scientists (L1 English user).

The principle of UG by Chomsky was very nice..... but it doesn't suit to the reality of leaning that students also learn from their environment (L2 English user).

It can be observed that L2 English users did not utilize some contrastive markers such as ‘despite’, ‘despite of’, ‘even though’, and ‘nonetheless’ while L1 English users isolated DM ‘still’ in their reflective essays.

Lastly, spoken DMs, which are not technically part of writing, were coded because it depicts the closeness between the topic and students' ideas, as well as their attitude on how they express their thoughts into their reflective essays. In this study, L2 English users dominantly used spoken markers as compared to L1 English users. To elaborate, L2 English users did not employ some sets of spoken discourse such as ‘From my aspects’, ‘From my point of view’, ‘I think’, ‘In my point of view’, ‘It is my view’, ‘Let's start’, ‘Of course’,

and ‘Oh’. However, L1 English users employed all sets of spoken markers in their reflective essays. These findings are contrary to the study of Ali and Mahadin (2016), and Unaldi (2013) who reported that DMs such as ‘I think’, ‘In my opinion’, and ‘In my point of view’ are notable in EFL learners' outputs. There is a possibility that L2 English users are not aware of some sets of spoken markers. Further, L1 English users dominantly employed DM ‘like’ in their reflective essays, this DM ‘like’ was employed to give examples. L1 English users, on the other hand, employed ‘well’ most frequently in their writing. According to Owen (1981), ‘well’ signals and mitigates some sorts of confrontation. However, Jucker (1997) espoused that in modern English, ‘well’ has four distinct uses – a frame marker, a face-threat mitigator, a qualifier, and a pause filler. Nonetheless, in this study, L2 English users used the spoken markers ‘well’ to show interest towards their learnings (see examples below).

I think my understanding about this subject is enough..... it is more interesting, like if we have more case studies to support Chomsky's principle (L1 English user).

Well, it is very interesting to study more or deepen the understanding about Chomsky's principleWell it is part of learning (L2 English user).

To surmise the use of spoken markers, L1 and L2 English users have had different ways of using it. It can be shown from the examples above that L2 English users employed the spoken discourse ‘well’ in the sentence repeatedly. L1 English users, on the other hand, utilize spoken markers by linking one spoken discourse to others. Moreover, it should be emphasized that the majority of the spoken markers that were employed served as the function of knowing the attitude of the participants.

Table 3. Frequency of the syntactic categories of DMs

	L1 English users (%)	L2 English users (%)
Coordinate conjunctions	28.98	30.54
Subordinate conjunctions	12.95	11.97
Adverbials	12.31	10.82
Interjections	12.13	10.56
Clauses	11.23	11.79
Prepositions	11.14	12.58
Prepositional phrases	11.14	11.79

Table 3 shows the frequency of syntactic categories of the DMs that are utilized in the students' reflective essays. Finding reveals the syntactic categories of coordinate conjunctions were the most usable source of DMs among L1 and L2 English users. Notably there is an extreme reliance of ‘and’ (an elaborative marker) and ‘but’ (a contrastive marker). This could be accounted to the DMs role, which is to equalize the segments and can be placed into a long sentence. Mihaljević Djigunović and Vikov (2011) mentioned that these markers “are very simple in their

orthographic and phonological structure, and are semantically unambiguous, which makes them easy to both acquire and use.” Meanwhile, subordinate conjunctions were employed by the L1 English users slightly higher than L2 English users. In fact, L2 English users relied heavily on ‘because’ and ‘since’ to represent this syntactic categories of DMs. On the other hand, L2 English users utilized a more varied set of the DMs that are drawn from subordinate conjunctions ‘such as’, ‘so’, ‘so that’, ‘though’, and ‘since’.

DMs that categorize under adverbial were employed more frequently by L1 English. Temporal markers such as Firstly, thirdly, and eventually are drawn from this category and they had a higher percentage of use in the L1 users’ reflective essays. L2 English users, on the other hand, employed DMs firstly, finally, and when in their essays. It shows that adverbial was used to introduce and ends the written segments.

Table 4. Frequency of the sentence position of DMs

	L1 English users (%)	L2 English users (%)
Initial	50.26	40.83
Medial	49.74	59.17

Table 4 presents data wherein L1 English users most frequently positioned DMs in the initial part of sentences to give signal to the segment. On the one hand, L2 English users positioned DMs at the initial face less frequently. Schourup (2016) mentioned that the tendency of DMs to appear initially is attributed to the fact that DMs serve the function of guiding readers towards eliciting the intended connections between discourse segments early before the possibility of misinterpreting these connections.

Table 5. Association between the sentence positions and categories

Syntactic Categories	L1 English users		L2 English users	
	Sentence-initially Percent	Sentence-medially percent	Sentence-initially Percent	Sentence-medially percent
Coordinate conjunctions	11.01	28.08	13.56	26.84
Subordinate conjunctions	11.75	15.78	14.05	17.89
Adverbials	26.31	16.24	19.18	18.2
Interjections	9.86	0	14.53	0
Clauses	18.91	11.68	12.98	11.33
Prepositions	10.19	12.59	11.91	12.31
Prepositional phrases	11.92	15.6	13.75	13.42
Functional Categories Discourse markers				
Elaborative	56.61	63.25	54.74	48.32
Temporal	3.38	19.06	8.18	24.40
Inferential	14.08	2.7	8.62	2.39
Contrastive	11.83	5.11	10.56	10.52
Spoken	14.08	9.76	17.88	14.35

Findings in Table 5 reveal that coordinate conjunctions were almost located at the middle of the sentence or segments. This can be explained that coordinate conjunctions were used to connect the two segments or two DMS. Adverbials, on the other hand, was placed in initial of the English users most frequently. According to Sarda and Charolles (2005), adverbial categories were always place in the initial position since it leads the segment to frame the topic, and has a number of sentences after their host sentence in order to build the structure of each segment more comprehensively. Further, clauses were positioned in the initial point of the sentences most frequently of both English users. This can be elaborated that phrases or clauses are commonly used as introductions to a sentence. For instance, DMs like ‘however,’ ‘indeed,’ ‘therefore’, ‘on the one hand,’ and ‘for example’ which are commonly used to introduce some segments to maintain the cohesiveness of the text. Thus, prepositions

were positioned at the middle of the sentence or segment. This can be explained that it signifies the time, space or logical relationship between the other parts of the sentence. In other words, it links all the other words together, so the reader can understand how the sentence fits to each segment.

In the same table above, L1 English users employed the EDMs in the middle of the sentence most frequently while L2 English users employed EDMs in the initial part of the segment. This means that L1 English users introduced first the main topic, then after which EMD was placed to give signal for the supporting or sub topic. L2 English users on the other hand, intent to use EDMs in the initial stage in elaborating their topics in each segment.

To sum up, four problems are listed below:

1. The students overused certain typed of DMs, for example, elaborative, temporal, and spoken, while ignoring the other types. The overused of

- particular discourse markers is counterproductive as it resulted in tediousness and redundancy in their written work.
2. The students did not achieve a balance between the uses of the various types of discourse markers since they overused some types and ignore others.
 3. The instances of inappropriate use of the different types of discourse markers. This means that, in some cases, the students used certain discourse markers where it is not required. In other cases, some parts of the text needed DMs, but the students did not use any.
 4. It is possible that the students are not familiar with all types of discourse markers to the same degree, so they only utilize those that they are familiar with because they find them easy to implement. Therefore, they use other types DMs over abundance.

The analysis and results of the DMs employed in their reflective essays might point to the fact that the use of these markers is affected by English users' proficiency levels. Hence, lower proficiency English users tend to use more restricted and redundant sets of DMs and lower levels of proficiency might result in restricting the functions that are served by DMs, limiting the syntactic categories from which of these markers are drawn and affecting the variety of the position that they occupy. This paper reveals that writing as a skill, must be tackled in a totally different way, considering that discourse markers have a different function within the text. And these markers may lead both the reader and a writer into a more understandable written text.

Pedagogical Implications

To help students enhance their use of discourse markers to achieve better cohesion in writing reflective essay, then writer suggests several pedagogical implications.

1. Firstly, the cited problems aforementioned above, particularly of certain discourse markers, namely, elaborative and temporal, while ignoring or misusing the others, encourage the student them to expose themselves in writing using some other types and must receive a great deal of exposure to English texts written by native speakers which they can critically and analytically comprehend.
2. Second, the inappropriate use of discourse markers by English users can be related to teaching methods because teachers tend to rely on the deductive teaching of writing mechanics and practice at the sentence level. For the reason, that students do not write reflective essay very often. Moreover, teachers rarely intervene in the writing processes to assist their students, with few of them providing detailed feedback on the written work done.
3. Third, there is a need for teachers of writing and discourse to avoid much focusing on the word and sentence levels, because this will definitely result in non-cohesive texts. Instead, they have to go beyond structure-level analysis and try to focus on whole texts which can shift the learners' attention to discourse features that are fundamental in achieving unity of the text.
4. Fourth, exposing students to a wide range of discourse markers and the way they are implemented by native speakers can help the students avoid overemphasizing certain types and ignoring other types because over-reliance on one or two strategies results in redundancy and misunderstanding.

Finally, teachers can motivate their students to enlarge their repertoire of vocabulary which will help them use some words or techniques such as antonyms, synonyms, and superordinate rather than overemphasizing repetition as it was revealed of this study. Analyzing as a whole, therefore, it is necessary for English language teachers to ensure they are enough aware of this issues and will be trained how to deal with it. This has further implications for how English teachers are taught how to teach writing which needs to be addressed in the department who is responsible in this issue.

CONCLUSION

In this paper, Fraser's (1999) taxonomy was used to analyze English users' use of discourse markers. The data of the study was coded and were presented quantitatively. There is a difference between L1 and L2 English users' use of DMs in terms of frequency, variety, and positioning. Also, both users overused certain types of DMs like elaborative markers. There remain challenges on the use of cohesive devices. Future studies may explore the misuse of DMs in writing as it could result to disorganized texts and it becomes incomprehensible to the readers. Teachers may discourage the use of certain DMs as it becomes redundant. Thus teachers may encourage students to use variety of discourse as much as possible to write cohesive texts.

Moreover, as the findings revealed students tend to manipulate only a limited range of discourse markers available, their output appear to be difficult to understand because even the few discourse markers they employ were inaccurately used. The finding reveals that the misuse of discourse markers is prominent in the writing of both English users. This phenomenon not only makes disorganized texts but also renders the content incomprehensible to the readers. The overuse of certain discourse markers by the students definably causes redundancy in their writing output and readers might have a difficulty to decipher what supposed to know. The student might be encouraged by their teachers of writing and discourse to use as many discourse markers as possible, it doesn't mean to really

extent all discourse markers in the text, rather use the discourse markers comprehensively and understandingly to create cohesiveness of the whole texts. This process, in turn, will certainly result in less redundancy and incomprehension. Furthermore, the students, unlike the L1 English users, mainly focus on the word and sentence level and ignore some of the relations of meaning that exist and presides within the text. This linking is achieved through relations in meaning that exist within and across sentences. The outcome of this tendency is the absence of connectedness which makes the flow of thoughts meaningful and clear for readers. Discourse marker gives a sequence of sentences a coherent texture as it shows how semantic relationships are set up by lexical and syntactic features.

From the above findings, it is extremely important to devise alternative ways and strategies for teaching discourse markers to equip learners with the knowledge required to be competent in writing cohesive whole texts.

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