

Indonesian EFL Learners' Argumentative Writing: A Learner Corpus Study of Connector Usage

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The use of connectors (a.k.a. linking adverbials, see Biber et.al. 1999: 875) has been found to be challenging for EFL learners in previous researches (see e.g. Chen, 2006; Bolton et al. 2002; Granger & Tyson, 1996). This has also been observed for Indonesian EFL learners (Swan & Smith, 2001; Ishak, 2002; Moehkardi, 2002; Marzuki & Zainal, 2004; Kurniyati, Prihadi & Rahayu, 2012; Antara, 2015).

This work-in-progress report outlines the aims and the methodology of my PhD project and presents a pilot study of the use of connectors by Indonesian EFL learners in argumentative texts written at different proficiency levels (A.2.0 and B.1.2 of the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (CEFR; Council of Europe, 2001)) and native speakers of English. The data come from the *International Corpus Network of Asian Learners of English* (ICNALE; Ishikawa, 2013).

The research questions addressed in this study are:

1. What types of connectors are used in argumentative essay writing by EFL learners from Indonesia?
2. Do Indonesian EFL learners at different proficiency levels differ in the use of connectors in their argumentative essays?
3. How does Indonesian EFL learners' use of connectors compare to that of native English speakers in argumentative essay writing?

The method used in this study is Contrastive Interlanguage Analysis (CIA; Granger, 2015) which involves two types of comparison: a comparison between the use of connectors in argumentative essays produced by Indonesian EFL learners at the A.2.0 and the B.1.2 levels of the CEFR; and the connector usage in argumentative essays produced by Indonesian EFL learners and English native speakers. For the analysis, the connectors will be classified into various semantic types according to their discourse function(s), such as Enumeration/Addition, Summation, Apposition, Result/Inference, Contrast/Concession, and Transition (Biber et. al., 1999). When analyzing the data, quantitative and qualitative approaches will be combined.

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