



Discourse Markers Used by Presenters in Their Thesis Seminars: A Case at English Education of Graduate Program of Universitas Negeri Padang

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Abstract

This research was aimed at finding out discourse markers used by presenters in thesis seminar presentations and oral responses in discussion sessions, difficulties faced in using discourse markers, and the causes of difficulties. The research design was descriptive qualitative with discourse analysis method with 20 graduate students that presented their thesis proposal and the research result. There were six types of discourse marker investigated in this research, namely *topic change markers*, *contrastive markers*, *causative markers*, *elaborative markers*, *inferential markers* and *interactional markers*. The research findings showed the six types of discourse markers were used in presentations and oral responses in discussions. Yet, they were mostly found in the presentations. Based on the findings, *Elaborative marker* is a type of discourse marker used mostly by 20 presenters in both activities. Also, it was discovered that the presenters' difficulties in using discourse markers are difficulty to control him or herself not to keep on using the same words, phrases or sentences from each type of discourse marker in delivering utterances, underuse, overuse, and misuse of discourse markers. Those difficulties were caused by some factors such as lack of practice, the influence of mother tongue or first language and culture, and students' awareness about the use of discourse markers. In conclusion, English graduate students still face difficulties to employ discourse markers in delivering statements.

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INTRODUCTION

Communication is an activity which builds interaction between one person and other people. It happens in both spoken and written form. Most of the interaction happens directly in real situation. The people usually do interaction each other while they are doing direct conversation. When they do the conversation, they deliver statements that contain messages about one or more topics. The messages delivered will be called as a discourse if receivers have given responses. Thus, a discourse can be defined as texts which are produced by speakers or writers.

In the conversation, the speaker delivers spoken texts and the listeners give responses. The listeners will be able to give responses if they can interpret what the speaker utters. Thus, the discourse delivered has to be grasped, so that the communication will run well.

To create better communication and lead the listeners in listening to what the speaker utters, there is an important element which plays a role in creating a good interaction called discourse marker abbreviated by DMs. It is a marker of discourse uttered. Trillo (2002:774) explains that “the markers are elements that have no apparent meaning or grammatical ascription, are elusive to classification, but play a fundamental role in the pragmatic structure of interaction”. It can be concluded that an interaction occurs in communication will be good by regarding the use of discourse marker.

As a matter of fact, the interactions happen in various situations especially when the people communicate orally. For instance, it occurs in daily conversations and in formal situations. One of formal situations in which the interactions occur is in formal institutions, like in university. The interactions happen between all people in the institution including students’ interactions.

Besides building better interactions, through using discourse markers, the students can develop their language skills. Bussman (1984) states that the use of discourse markers helps speakers develop language skills, feel more comfortable about their conversational skills, and allow speakers to collect their thoughts before officially speaking (cited in Sadeghi and Yarandi, 2014, p. 105). Therefore, it is helpful for the students to deliver messages they have in their mind in speaking.

In more details, discourse marker can be defined as a word, a phrase, or a sentence which is used to show speakers’ attitude related to the texts uttered that influences the coherence of the texts as the discourses which are produced. Likewise, Lenk (1998:247) states that discourse markers mark discourse coherence. Especially in spoken discourse, the messages delivered by the speaker will be coherent by using discourse marker appropriately.

As explained before, the discourse markers lead the listeners to graph what the speaker delivers. It means that they also help the listeners to interpret the speaker’s utterances. In order to aid hearers in how they should interpret particular contributions within the overall conversation, a speaker might use discourse markers to signal for the benefit of the hearers how various parts of the discourse are intended to be understood as related (Lenk, 1998, p.256). It means the discourse markers will affect the listeners’ understanding to interpret the messages uttered by the speaker. As a result, the interaction occurs between the speaker and the listeners will be more valuable and better.

There are many words, phrases, and sentences which are categorized into types of discourse marker that have to be considered during speaking, such as *okay, right, because, you know, well, I see, etc.* Fraser (1999:946) categorized two major types of discourse markers. The first type is discourse markers which relate messages, such as: contrastive markers (*though, but, etc.*); elaborative markers (*above all, also, and, etc.*); inferential markers (*accordingly, so, etc.*). The second type is discourse markers which relate topics (*returning to my original point, by the way, etc.*). It is similar with Quirk, et. al’s explanations (1985:635-639).

Meanwhile, Stenström (in Jönsson, 2013, p.3) compiles words or phrases that are stated as interactional signals and discourse markers. The discourse markers are used, such as, *actually, ah, all right, anyway, God, goodness, gosh, I mean, I see, I think, mhm, no, now, oh, OK, please, quite, really, right, sort of, sure, Q tag, that's right, yes/yeah, you know, you see, well*. These words are mostly used in spoken language. It can be stated that they are used as discourse markers to interact between a speaker and listeners in communication.

From the explanation, it is essential to research the use of discourse marker in speaking. It is in line with the main aim of learning English that is to make students able to speak English fluently. They have to be able to produce some discourses better while they are talking to other people. As a matter of fact, the discourse is produced by the students through some interactions. For graduate students, there is an interaction usually done, that is when they follow a thesis seminar. In this activity, there is an interaction between a speaker as presenter, contributors and other students who attend the seminar. The presenter will explain his or her thesis proposal or the result of his or her research. It means that he or she will deliver some messages related to his or her thesis orally. Therefore, the use of discourse markers by the presenter can be seen from their utterances.

As a matter of fact, based on the preliminary data obtained from informal observations and interviews in several thesis seminars in the field, there are some presenters' difficulties discovered in using discourse markers. First, some presenters still rarely use discourse markers to connect the utterances delivered. Second, the presenters still keep using the same words, phrases, or sentences belong to each type of discourse marker. Third, some students still use discourse markers inappropriately. It can be stated that there are still some difficulties faced by the students as presenters in delivering their statements.

By regarding the importance of discourse markers especially in spoken discourse, this article describe type of discourse markers mostly used by presenter in thesis presentations and oral responses in discussion sessions, the presenters' difficulties in using discourse markers in giving the presentations and oral responses and the causes of the presenters' difficulties in employing them.

METHOD

The type of this research is descriptive qualitative research with discourse analysis method. The type of this research determines and reports the way things are. Hence, this research explained discourse markers used by the presenters in giving their thesis presentations and oral responses in the discussions at graduate English Education Program at UNP. The subject of this research was 20 students as presenters who did his or her thesis proposal seminar or the result seminar of his or her thesis enrolled in academic years of 2014/2015. The data of this research were qualitative data which consisted of three, such as types of discourse marker mostly used by the presenters in giving presentations and oral responses in discussions, the presenters' difficulties in employing the discourse markers and causes of the difficulties. The instruments used were transcriptions and an interview guide. Transcriptions are transcripts of tape recordings which are gained from thesis seminars recorded. They were used to find out discourse markers used by presenters in their thesis seminars and

answer the three research questions. Furthermore, an interview guide is a guideline that consists of questions which were asked to the presenters to gather the data especially the causes of presenters' difficulties in using discourse markers and it supported the data obtained from the transcriptions.

Technique of collecting the data in this research was done into several steps. First, several steps to make tape recordings are (1) the researcher came to a thesis seminar to record the student's performance as a presenter, (2) the presenter was recorded when giving his or her thesis proposal or research result presentation and oral responses in a discussion, (3) After recording the seminars, the tape recordings were transcribed and analyzed. Second, several steps done to interview the presenters are as follows: (1) the presenters were chosen randomly. Hence, there were 7 presenters interviewed since they have been representative already, (2) the presenters were interviewed one by one by asking several questions in the interview guide to give more information and description of the three research questions, (3) the results of interviews were analyzed.

Furthermore, several steps in analyzing the data collected are as follows: (1) the recordings taken from the seminars and the interviews were transcribed, (2) in each transcription, every presenter's name was given a code to keep the privacy of the presenter as the subject of the research, (3) the discourse markers used by the presenters were identified by coloring words, phrases, or sentences from each type of discourse marker found in the transcriptions, (4) the discourse markers found in the transcriptions were classified into the table which consists of six types of discourse markers, (5) the students' difficulties as presenters in using discourse marker were analyzed by classifying them into a table, (6) the causes of the difficulties that were discovered from the transcriptions and the interview results were analyzed, (7) then, the conclusions based on data which have been analyzed were drawn.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The research findings are explained in this part categorized into three main points. Each of those main points is discussed in detail as follows:

1. Types of Discourse Marker Mostly Used by the Presenters in Thesis Presentations and Oral Responses in Discussion Sessions.

The data were collected in this part deal with words, phrases, or sentences used as discourse markers by presenters in thesis presentations and oral responses in discussion sessions. There are six types of discourse markers investigated in this research. They are topic change markers, contrastive markers, causative markers, elaborative markers, inferential markers and interactional markers. The words, phrases, or sentences that were used mostly were determined based on the number of the presenters used them overall. Therefore, the following table shows words, phrases, or sentences were mostly used in each type of discourse marker.

Table 1. Words, Phrases, or Sentences Mostly Used by the Presenters in Each Type of Discourse Marker

| No | Type of Discourse Marker | Words, phrases, or sentences mostly used |
|----|--------------------------|---|
| 1. | Topic Change Markers | <i>as let's see/come/ go to/...., we come to/...., in (this study)/...., now, I'd like to, as I</i> |

| | | |
|----|-----------------------|--|
| | | <i>said/explained/... before, based on, for (the identification of the research)/....</i> |
| 2. | Contrastive Markers | <i>but, while</i> |
| 3. | Causative Markers | <i>because, since</i> |
| 4. | Elaborative Markers | <i>and, first, second, third, fourth, last, also, then, next, after that, for example and or</i> |
| 5. | Inferential Markers | <i>So, I conclude that, and in this case</i> |
| 6. | Interactional Markers | <i>ok, I think, actually, and I mean</i> |

From table 1, it can be seen clearly words, phrases, and sentences mostly employed by the presenters from each type of discourse marker investigated in this research. The first type is topic change marker. From the words, phrases, and sentences mentioned in table 1, it can be stated that there are many variation of words, phrases even sentences that the presenters used when they moved from one topic to other topic. All topic change markers were put in the table were in line with Fraser (1999:950), who explains several words, phrases or sentences included as topic changes markers, such as *by the way, back to my original point, to change to topic, to return to my point, etc.* It means that the findings are supported by Fraser.

Some utterances taken from the data can be seen below:

- (1) *let's see* the first chapter, introduction
- (2) Then, *we come to* chapter 2, review of the related theory

From the utterances, it can be seen that the presenters used *let's see* and *we come to* to lead the listeners to move to the different topic.

Moreover, the findings show that mostly presenters used topic change markers to move from previous topic to next one in order to lead the listeners to come to the different topic. Based on the findings, it was discovered that those topic change markers were mostly used in giving thesis presentations rather than in giving oral responses in the discussion sessions.

The second type is contrastive marker. As shown by table 1, there were two words mostly employed as contrastive markers by the presenters in this research, such as *but* and *while*. The finding was strengthened by Fraser (1999:947) who states words or phrases belong to contrastive markers are (*al*)*though, but, contrary to this/that, conversely, however, etc.* Therefore, the result shows mostly presenters used both words to tell a contrast as has been seen in table 1.

The following samples of data as follows:

- (1) The time is provided relatively aa.. short, **but** the teacher.. the lecturer tried hard to cover the four skills.
- (2) The first aa. for number one to number four it is related to the teaching activities in the first stages of GBA done by English teacher. **While**, for number five related to the teacher's problem in implementing GBA in teaching writing procedure text based on aa.. GBA.

The utterances show clearly that *but* and *while* were employed as contrastive markers. However, from those two words, *but* was the word mostly used by the

presenters in this research when they showed two things contrast. This finding was in line with Fung and Carter's research in 2007 (cited in Wei, 2009, p.193). They found that *and*, *so*, and *but* were the top three DMs for both their Hong kong participants and native speakers. Moreover, it was supported by Wei's research (2009: 192-193) in which two groups of Chinese learners were researched. It shows that in particular, *and*, *but*, *also*, *so* were the most often used for both the intermediate and advanced groups. She explains a possible reason in which *but* was often used because it marks basic ideational relations in spoken discourse.

Clearly, Sitthirak (p.881) states that *but* is the frequently-used discourse marker in showing a contrast for spoken language. As has been explained in his research, it happened because *but* in Thai version for spoken language is exactly the same as in English version. Hence, it can be revealed that *but* tended to be used to explain the contrast things by the presenters since it regards as a basic word used and might have same meaning in Indonesian version.

Moreover, Djigunović and Vickov (2010:273) who explain that another possible reason for a high frequency of *and*, *but*, *because*, and *I think* is the markers are very simple in its orthographic and phonological structure, and are semantically unambiguous that makes them easy to both acquire and use. In other words, *but* is mostly employed since it is a simple word included in contrastive markers which make the presenters do not hesitate to use it. Therefore, it might establish most of the presenters in this research tended to use it.

The third type is causative markers. Table 1 shows that *because* and *since* were two words mostly employed by the presenters to tell a reason or cause when they were giving the presentation and oral responses in the discussions. In accordance with Fraser (1999:949), the words are used to provide a reason are *after all*, *because*, *for this/that reason*, and *since*. Furthermore, Wei (2009:58) proposes those words and phrases, *after all*, *because*, *for this/that reason* and *since*, in her research as causative markers. It can be revealed that the findings are in line with Fraser and Wei.

The following utterances are taken from the data which show the use of *because* and *since*. It can be seen as follows:

- (1) So, it means that the reading motivation data of both classes were normally distributive *because* L_{observed} were smaller than L_{table} .
- (2) *Since* it is experimental research, I found the theory that we can only compare with the conventional technique.

Those utterances have described that the presenters used *because* or *since* when they gave a reason or cause.

From both words, *because* was mostly used in both presentations and discussions rather than *since* in this research. As stated by Djigunović and Vickov (2010:273), a possible reason for a high frequency of *because* is the marker is very simple in its orthographic and phonological structure, and is semantically unambiguous that makes it easy to both acquire and use. Hence, mostly presenters preferred to use it since it is very simple.

The fourth type is elaborative markers. After analyzing the transcriptions, it was found twelve elaborative markers tended to be used by the presenters. As mentioned in table 1, those markers were *and*, *first*, *second*, *third*, *fourth*, *last*, *also*,

then, next, after that, for example and *or*. As explained by Fraser (1999:948) words or phrases are included in elaborative markers are *above all, also, and, besides, by the same token, correspondingly, equally, further(more), in addition, etc.* Based on the research findings, those words or phrases were used mostly in the presentations and oral responses in the discussions. It means that the findings are in line with Fraser's theory about words or phrases included in elaborative markers.

The following utterances below are the data of the use of some words or phrases mentioned above.

- (1) **And** for pragmatic reason, ee.. hm.. EFL writer tend to translate the idea in their mind and the translation is presented in ee..., totally in e.. L1 way.
- (2) Aa.. **first**, students speaking skill can be categorized on low level....
- (3) **next** the researcher will classify the data....

The utterances show clearly that *and, first, and next* were employed to elaborate or give more detail information from the previous explanations.

Among those words or phrases, *and* was commonly used by the presenters in both presentations and discussions. As found by Fung and Carter in their research (2007), *and, so, and but* were the top three DMs for both their Hong Kong participants and native speakers (stated in Wei in 2009, p.193). It is also supported by the result of Wei's research (2009:192-193), she found that in particular, *and, but, also, so* were the most often used for both the intermediate and advanced groups of Chinese learners. It means that the finding is in line with both researches.

As mentioned before, *and* was used mostly by the presenters as an elaborative marker. Indeed, it may happen because of some reasons. Wei (2009:192-193) states that it occurs due to a reason in which *and* marks as a basic ideational relation in spoken discourse. It means that *and* tended to be used by the presenters because it is a basic word to add some explanations for a particular topic discussed.

Clearly, Ying (2007:69) notes that *and* is the most simple and indispensable word by which sentences can be made cohesive without relying on difficult DMs. It is in line with Djigunović and Vickov (2010:273) who explain that another possible reason for a high frequency of *and* is the marker is very simple in its orthographic and phonological structure, and is semantically unambiguous that makes it easy to both acquire and use. In other words, *and* tends to be used since it is a simple word that can relate one statement to other statement explained by presenter which leads the listeners to know that the presenter is giving additional explanations. Therefore, they support the finding in which *and* was mostly employed by the presenters. As explained before, since *and* is simple and has already functioned as an elaborative marker so that they tended to use it.

Furthermore, it can happen due to various meaning and function of *and*. As revealed by Syarif (2009:107-143) *and* has a lot of meaning and function, such as, to add information or explanation, to show sequence, cause-effect, requisite-result, conclusion or inference, reason-purpose, etc. It can be stated that since it has different meanings and functions, it tends to be employed to relate utterances. It supports the research result in which mostly presenters used *and* in delivering their statements to

add some more explanations or information when they were giving presentations and oral responses in discussions.

The fifth type is inferential markers. From the findings, it was discovered that *so*, *I conclude that*, and *in this case* were used mostly by the presenters as inferential markers in their presentations and oral responses in the discussions as has been described in table 1. As stated by Fraser (1999:948) words, phrases, and sentences are included in inferential markers are *as a (logical) consequence/conclusion, as a result, consequently, hence, in this/that case, it can be concluded that, so, etc.* It means that the finding is in line with Fraser's theory.

To see the use of those markers, the following utterances taken from the data are given as follows:

- (1) This is proved by the score of speaking test that are still very low. **So**, the researcher think that there must be problem in..in this case....
- (2) Ok, **I conclude that** here there are improvements from preliminary test, cycle 1 and cycle 2.
- (3) First is the student a.. difficult to share their ideas during discussion with their lecturers or their friends. **In this case**, the students a.. have insufficient vocabulary to talk or to interact with others.

Based on the finding, those three markers used mostly to give a conclusion of the previous explanation. From those three, *so* was employed mostly by the presenters in both presentations and discussions. It is in line with Fung and Carter (2007), in their research, *and*, *so*, and *but* were the top three DMs for both their Hong Kong participants and native speakers (stated in Wei in 2009, p.193). Also, it was supported by Wei (2009:192-193), in her research, it was found that in particular, *and*, *but*, *also*, *so* were the most often used for both the intermediate and advanced groups of Chinese learners. Moreover, she explains that *so* was often used since it marks a basic ideational relation in spoken discourse. Hence, it can be assumed that the presenter preferred to use *so* in giving a conclusion because *so* was common and simple to be used.

The sixth type is interactional markers. Table 1 shows that there were four interactional markers used mostly by the presenters, namely *ok*, *I think*, *actually*, and *I mean*. It is in line with Stenström (in Jönsson, 2013, p.3-4), who states that *actually*, *ah*, *all right*, *anyway*, *God*, *goodness*, *gosh*, *I mean*, *I see*, *I think*, and *etc* are functioned as interactional signals.

As a matter of fact, the finding shows that *ok* was employed mostly to interact in both presentations and oral responses in discussions. It is seen in this utterance “**Ok**, information transfer activity is the strategy used oo..for the tea..by the teacher, to.. to improve students' speaking ability where in this case, ...”. Moreover, those four interactional markers were mostly found in giving oral responses in the discussions rather than in the presentations given. It is might because the interaction between the presenters and the contributors mostly occur in the discussion sessions. Besides, *ok* was mostly employed because it is a simple word and usually used. It is argued by the presenters' statements taken from the data to interact in both activities.

Based on the research findings, it can be revealed that three types of discourse marker generally used in the presentations were topic change markers, elaborative

markers and inferential markers. Meanwhile, elaborative markers, inferential markers and interactional markers were mostly employed in giving oral responses in the discussions. In short, from the six types of discourse markers, elaborative markers were mostly used by all presenters in both activities.

2. Difficulties of Presenters in Using Discourse Markers in Thesis Presentations and Oral Responses in Discussion Sessions.

After doing this research, there were several difficulties faced by the presenters in using the six types of discourse marker. Based on the research findings, it was found four difficulties. The first difficulty was difficulty to control him or herself not to keep on using the same words, phrases or sentences from each type of discourse marker in delivering utterances. It can be seen from the following utterances taken from the data.

Inferential markers

Presenter 4 (PS 4):

The use of *I conclude that*

- (1) based on the ideas proposed by Hutchinson and Waters and also Stevrens, and Robinson, *I conclude that* aa.. the basic concept of ESP is aa.. the purpose of the learners in learning the language.
- (2) There are some experts who has defined a.. need analysis and based on their definition, *I conclude that* need analysis is a process of collecting information in order to reveal what the students are really need in order to perform effectively in the target situation.

The utterances show that the presenter tended to use *I conclude that* rather than other alternative words, phrases or sentences to conclude his or her explanation. It is described clearly in the transcription in which when the presenter gave a conclusion, *I conclude that* was mostly employed in delivering his or her utterances.

The difficulty might occur because the presenters were not convinced and afraid to employ words, phrases or sentences belong to each type of discourse marker that they do not really know. In accordance with Modhish (2012:59) the students tended to make use of DMs that they are pretty sure of how to use them and would not take the risk of trying to use some of the unfamiliar ones. He states that some learners are afraid of making mistakes so they feel reluctant to adventure with DMs that are unfamiliar to them.

It is also revealed by Kalajahi, et al (2012:197) the students cannot use variety of discourse marker. It can be stated that the presenters kept on using the same words, phrases, or sentences from each type of discourse marker. In other words, it might happen since they were not sure about other alternative words included in each type of discourse marker. Therefore, they might be afraid or doubt to use words which are unfamiliar to them and did not want to make mistakes. It has been proved by the data of this research.

From the six types of discourse markers, elaborative markers were the markers in which the presenters mostly kept on using the same word, phrase or sentence from the type of discourse marker in delivering their statements. Hence, from the findings, the difficulty was found in both presentations and discussions.

The second difficulty was underuse of discourse markers. The presenters did not use words, phrases or sentences that should be used in their statements. In other words, they did not use certain discourse markers which should have been used to assist them to lead the listeners. This finding is similar with Kalajahi, et al (2012:197) who note that some students apply some of the DMs frequently while some do not due to various reasons such as overuse, misuse, and underuse.

The following statement is one of the data given to see the presenters underused discourse markers.

Presenter 18 (PS 18):

“Two English teachers did this step by giving instruction to read the text by themselves. Two English teachers discussed about the text like identify the topic, main idea,”

The statement of PS 18 should be *“Two English teachers did this step by giving instruction to read the text by themselves. **Meanwhile**, two English teachers discussed about the text like identify the topic, main idea,”*.

From the statement of PS 18, it shows that the presenter did not use a word included in contrastive markers. In fact, the statement uttered contrast with the previous one. Therefore, the presenter should have used a contrastive marker in the statement to emphasize two contrast things being explained.

Based on the findings, there were three types of discourse markers that were often missed to be employed by the presenters. They were topic change markers, elaborative markers and contrastive markers. Among those three types, it was discovered that underuse of discourse markers mostly occurred in using elaborative markers. Moreover, this difficulty mostly occurred in the presenters' presentations.

The third difficulty was overuse of discourse markers. From the transcriptions, it was found that all presenters had this difficulty. When they were delivering their statements or explanations, they often used too many discourse markers. As a result, there were many words, phrases, or sentences useless in their statements. As revealed by Kalajahi, et al (2012:197) some students apply some of the DMs frequently while some do not due to various reasons such as overuse, misuse, and underuse. This finding was also supported by Sadeghi and Yarandi's research (2014:119) in which sometimes students engaged in overuse of marker or inappropriate intonation.

The following utterance is one of data given to show the presenters used too many discourse markers when they were delivering their statements.

Presenter 1 (PS 1):

*“And **in conclusion**, aa... **I conclude that** Questioning the Author strategy gives a significant effect on students reading comprehension of narrative texts”*

For the statement of PS 1, the presenter overused inferential markers in delivering their statement. **In conclusion** and **I conclude that** were used in the sentence to give a conclusion for a topic that has been explained before. As a matter of fact, both of them are included as inferential markers. If both of them were used in the statement, one of

them will be useless. So, one of them should be omitted from the statement. The statement should be “aa... **I conclude that Questioning the Author strategy gives a significant effect on students reading comprehension of narrative texts**” **In conclusion** is removed from the statement.

From the result, it can be revealed that the difficulty related to overuse of discourse markers mostly occurred in the presenters’ presentations. Also, the findings explain that elaborative markers were the markers mostly contained the presenters’ difficulty related to overuse of discourse markers.

The last difficulty was misuse of the discourse markers. The findings describe that the presenters also used inappropriate words, phrases, or sentences which belong to each type of discourse marker investigated. This finding is in line with Kalajahi, et al (2012:197) who explain that some students apply some of the DMs frequently while some do not due to various reasons such as overuse, misuse, and underuse. This research finding was also similar with Al-Yaari et. al’s research (2013:12). They state that the use or usage of EDMs by Saudi EFL learners was inappropriate or incorrect most of the times. For example, “*and*” which is the most frequent EDM has been misused many times in different positions throughout the recordings.

The data gathered in this research show that there were many presenters used inappropriate words, phrases, or sentences which belong to particular type of discourse marker. One of data that shows the presenters misused certain type of discourse marker can be seen as follows:

Presenter 10 (PS 10):

“**Meanwhile**, the cognitive process, aa.. it is aa.. it is relates with the demands task make in time of learners output with way the output is mean.”

From the statement of PS 10, it shows that the use of **meanwhile** in the utterance was inappropriate. It is because the utterance was not contrast from the previous statement but it was an additional explanation. Therefore, **meanwhile** should be changed with words or phrases that are included in elaborative markers. The utterance will be “**Furthermore**, the cognitive process, aa.. it is aa.. it is relates with the demands task make in time of learners output with way the output is mean.” Hence, it can be seen that **meanwhile** is changed with **furthermore**.

Based on the findings, from the six types of discourse marker investigated, there were four types of discourse markers contained this difficulty. The four types were contrastive markers, causative markers, elaborative markers and inferential markers.

From those four difficulties faced by the presenters, it can be revealed that there were two dominant difficulties faced by the presenter in giving presentations and oral responses in the discussions. The difficulties were the difficulty to control him or herself not to keep on using the same words, phrases or sentences from each type of discourse marker in delivering utterances and the overuse of discourse markers. It was based on the number of presenters faced the difficulties and the total utterances that contained the difficulties.

3. Causes of the Difficulties in Using Discourse Markers

Based on the result of transcriptions and interviews, there were some factors found which were assumed as causes of those difficulties. The first factor which caused the presenters' difficulties was lack of practice. Based on the result of transcriptions, the presenters' statements contained the four difficulties discussed before, namely difficulty to control him or herself not to keep on using the same words, phrases, or sentences from each type of discourse marker in delivering utterances, underuse, overuse and misuse of the discourse markers. Those difficulties occurred because the presenters did not practice a lot to use them in their utterances. As revealed by Al-Yaari et.al (2013:12) there are many factors that influence the use of discourse markers by EFL learners in which the lack of practicing the language is one of factors.

Also, it is clearly seen from the results of interviews. The results of interviews show that mostly presenters stated that they had lack of practice to speak English. They just spoke English as they wanted to explain something or got turns to speak. Therefore, it naturally influenced them to use the appropriate discourse markers needed in their statements. In this research, it was seen when they were giving thesis presentations and oral responses in the discussion sessions. Hence, the lack of practice was one of factors that caused the presenters' difficulties to employ the discourse markers appropriately in delivering their utterances.

The second factor was the influence of mother tongue or first language and culture. From the findings taken from the transcriptions, they describe that when the presenters used the discourse markers in both activities, they were influenced by words, phrases or sentences usually used in their mother tongue or first language. It means that they brought the words into English when they were speaking. As a matter of fact, the words, phrases, or sentences that are usually used in the mother tongue or first language are naturally influenced by the culture. Thus, mother tongue or first language and culture also influenced them to use the discourse markers orally. As noted by Al-Yaari et al. (2013:12) the culture is also other factor which causes the use of DMs by EFL learners. It also is in line with their research in which some students misuse the rules due to influence of mother tongue or first language (Al-Yaari, et al. 2013, p.20). Moreover, Nejadansari and Mohammadi (2015:9) state that culture is another variable which is also taken as determining factor. Hence, the findings are in line with both theories.

Besides, it is supported by the result of the interviews in which all presenters proposed that mother tongue or first language and culture influenced them in employing the discourse markers in delivering their utterances. For instance, it can be seen from the use of several words found from the transcriptions, *and also, and, and next, so*. It seems that the words only brought from Indonesian into English as they were giving their presentation and oral responses in the discussions. It might occur since they often use those words while they are speaking or communicating in their society.

The third factor was students' awareness about the use of discourse markers. As described by the findings, the difficulties faced by the presenters to employ the discourse markers appropriately were caused by the presenters' awareness to employ the discourse markers in their statements. Furthermore, the interview results show that two of presenters proposed that they were not really aware to use the discourse markers. On the contrary, there was one of the presenters revealed that he or she has

been aware about it. Besides, the rest presenters responded that they have been aware enough. It can be noted that some presenters interviewed have been aware but few of them were not really aware. As stated by Huyên (2012:13), one of reasons accounting for the low occurrences of DMs in the students' speaking turns is students used to regard DMs as redundant words. From Huyên's explanation, in which students used to regard DMs as redundant words describes that they are not really aware to use DMs. Therefore, based on the presenters' responses, it shows that students' awareness about the use of discourse markers only gave a less influence for the presenters' difficulties in employing the markers investigated.

Besides the causes have been explained above, the presenters were also asked about other factors that might be the causes of their difficulties in using the discourse markers properly. Their responses show two other factors influenced them. They were willingness and knowledge about the discourse markers itself.

CONCLUSION

Based on the result of the research, there are three things that can be concluded. Firstly, there were six types of discourse markers used by the presenters in this research, such as topic change markers, contrastive markers, causative markers, elaborative markers, inferential markers and interactional markers. Those markers were mostly used in giving presentations rather than oral responses in discussions. From the six types of discourse markers, elaborative markers were mostly used by all presenters in both activities.

Second, there were four difficulties faced by the presenters. Those were difficulty to control him or herself not to keep on using the same words, phrases, or sentences from each type of discourse marker in delivering utterances, underusing, overusing, and misusing of discourse markers. From those four difficulties, there were two dominant difficulties obtained. They were difficulty to control him or herself not to keep on using the same words, phrases, or sentences from each type of discourse marker in delivering utterances and overuse of the discourse markers.

Third, it is about the causes of the presenters' difficulties in using the discourse markers. There were three factors caused the difficulties. They were lack of practice, the influence of mother tongue or first language and culture, and students' awareness about the use of discourse markers.

Basically, all factors influenced the presenters to employ the discourse markers in delivering their utterances. However, from the three factors, there were only two causes dominant, such as lack of practice, and the influence of mother tongue or first language and culture. Furthermore, as stated by some presenters in the interviews, willingness and knowledge about the discourse markers were two other factors which caused their difficulties.

Based on the result of the research, for the first, several suggestions can be given to the presenters. First, for English graduate students, as presenters, they should consider more types and the use of discourse markers in spoken discourse. They should improve their willingness to know more about words, phrases, or sentences included in each type of spoken discourse marker and use them appropriately in their statements. It is because they influence an effective communication in which the presenters as the

speakers can organize their speech and lead the listeners to the topic being discussed. In other words, it influences interactions occur between them.

Second, to use the discourse markers appropriately, the presenters should improve the frequency of speaking English especially at their campus. It means the presenters should encourage themselves to practice their speaking a lot. Therefore, the use of spoken discourse markers in their speaking can be more appropriate and assist them to build better interactions in their communication.

Third, it is also suggested that they should be involved in various types of talk or contexts. Through the interactions in various contexts, they will be easier to identify certain types of spoken discourse marker that are appropriate for particular context. Moreover, they can recognize the functions of each type of spoken discourse marker.

For the next suggestion is directed to the lecturers to guide and give more opportunities to their students to speak a lot not only in the classroom but also in different situations, for instance, in thesis seminars, international seminars, etc. Next, the lecturers are recommended to remind their students to regard important aspects which are needed in speaking including the use of spoken discourse markers. By giving the students many chances to share or explain their point of views or topics being discussed, it is expected they can interact each other better.

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