

The Frequently Used Discourse Markers by Saudi EFL Learners

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Abstract

The paper examines the use of discourse markers by Saudi English learners who struggle to master them when they write English essays. The hypothesis is, and based on previous studies of discourse markers by English learners, Saudi English learners overuse them. English essays are collected as a corpus for analysis and a concordance program is used to shed light on how frequently key words in contexts are used by learners. The study compares between Saudi learners and native speakers in their use of discourse markers and to investigate similarities and differences between the two groups. The results support previous studies as the analysis proves that Saudi learners overuse discourse markers. They have been used unnecessarily and redundantly. The preference of types of discourse markers has been investigated to show that learners use listing and resultive discourse markers mainly. The frequency count of the discourse markers in the collected corpus indicates their preference to vary specific types to avoid repetition and not to vary the semantic functions of discourse markers..

Keywords: corpus, discourse markers, EFL learners, frequency count

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