

**Marmara University**  
**Institute of Educational Sciences**  
**Department of Foreign Language Education**  
**Division of English Language Teaching**

**THE USE OF DISCOURSE MARKERS IN WRITING: EFL UNIVERSITY  
STUDENTS' PRODUCTION AND TEACHERS' PERSPECTIVES**

**Mutlu ÇAM**  
**(M.A. Thesis)**

**İstanbul-2019**

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**İstanbul-2019**

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**Eđitim Bilimleri Enstitüsü**  
**Yabancı Diller Eđitimi Anabilim Dalı**  
**İngilizce Öğretmenliđi Bilim Dalı**

**YAZMADA SÖYLEM BELİRLEYİCİLERİNİN KULLANIMI: İNGİLİZCE'Yİ**  
**YABANCI DİL OLARAK ÖĞRENEN TÜRK ÜNİVERSİTE**  
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## THESIS APPROVAL

The thesis entitled "The Use of Discourse Markers in Writing: EFL University Students' Production and Teachers' Perspectives" completed by Mutlu ÇAM was defended successfully on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of September, 2019 and certified by examining committee members as thesis for the degree of Master of Arts.

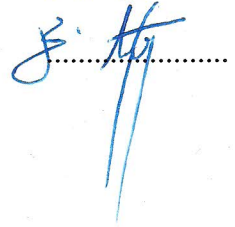
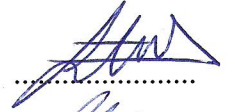
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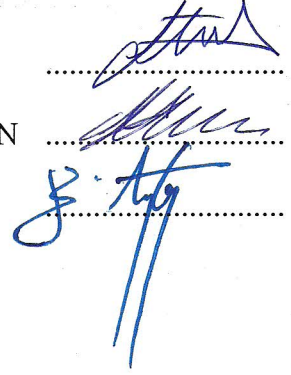
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Mutlu ÇAM

## ABSTRACT

The aim of this research was twofold. Firstly, it attempted to examine and compare the use of discourse markers (DMs) in English argumentative essays written by Turkish university students learning English as a foreign language and American university students. Secondly, it intended to explore teachers' perceptions of DMs in EFL writing in terms of the role, usage, and teaching of DMs. For these purposes, the following questions were addressed:

1. What are the most/least frequent discourse markers in native English and Turkish learner corpora?
2. Is there any difference in the total frequency of DMs between native English and Turkish learner corpora?
3. Are there any frequency-based differences across different classes of DMs:
  - a) within native English corpus,
  - b) within Turkish learner corpus,
  - c) between native English corpus and Turkish learner corpus?
4. What is the relationship between the frequency of DMs used in Turkish learners' essays and the scores given to them by the raters?
5. How do Turkish EFL teachers perceive the role, usage, and teaching of DMs in EFL writing?

The data in the current study was collected from three groups of subjects. The first group was the Turkish university students whose essays were compiled to build the Turkish learner corpus by the researcher. The second group was the native American university students whose essays were accessed online as a sub-corpus of LOCNESS. The third group was the teachers at the researcher's institution. For the first purpose of the study, the DMs in both corpora were identified using a corpus-tool and by manual analysis. Statistical analysis was conducted to see the differences between the two corpora and the relationship between the frequency of DMs and the essay scores. For the teachers' perceptions, the quantitative data was collected through a questionnaire

from 35 teachers, and the qualitative data was collected through semi-structured interviews conducted with 10 teachers.

The results showed that some certain DMs were used more frequently than the others in both corpora. Moreover, a statistically significant difference was found between the Turkish learner corpus and native English corpus in terms of the use of DMs. Turkish students used more DMs in their essays than American students. Also, the score of an essay was found to be positively correlated with the frequency of DMs in that essay. Regarding the teacher's opinions, the quantitative and qualitative results revealed that Turkish EFL teachers had very high positive opinions on the use of DMs and attached great importance to the role and teaching of DMs in EFL writing. These results were discussed in accordance with the related literature, and implications for practice and further research were suggested.

## ÖZET

Bu araştırmanın amacı iki yönlüdür. İlk olarak, İngilizceyi yabancı dil olarak öğrenen Türk üniversite öğrencileri ve Amerikalı üniversiteli öğrencileri tarafından yazılan tartışma metinlerinde söylem belirleyicilerinin kullanımını incelemeyi ve iki grubu karşılaştırmayı amaçlamaktadır. İkincil olarak ise, söylem belirleyicilerinin İngilizce yazmada rolü, kullanımını ve öğretimi açısından öğretmen görüşlerini araştırmayı hedeflemektedir. Bu amaçlara yönelik, aşağıdaki sorulara yanıt aranmıştır:

1. Ana dili İngilizce olan öğrenci derlemi ile Türk öğrenci derleminde en sık/az kullanılan söylem belirleyicileri nelerdir?
2. Ana dili İngilizce olan öğrenci derlemi ile Türk öğrenci derlemi arasında içerdikleri toplam söylem belirleyicileri sıklığı açısından bir fark var mıdır?
3. Farklı söylem belirleyici kategorileri arasında kullanım sıklığı açısından aşağıdaki derlemlerde fark var mıdır?
  - a) Ana dili İngilizce olan öğrenci derlemi içinde
  - b) Türk öğrenci derlemi içinde
  - c) Ana dili İngilizce olan öğrenci derlemi ile Türk öğrenci derlemi arasında
4. Türk öğrencilerin kompozisyonlarında kullanılan söylem belirleyicilerin sıklığı ile kompozisyonlara değerlendiriciler tarafından verilen puanların arasındaki ilişki nedir?
5. İngilizceyi yabancı dil olarak öğreten Türk öğretmenler söylem belirleyicilerinin İngilizce yazmadaki rolü, kullanımını ve öğretimi ile ilgili algıları nedir?

Bu çalışmanın verileri üç ayrı gruptan toplanmıştır. İlk grup, araştırmacı tarafından derlenen kompozisyonları yazan Türk üniversite öğrencileridir. İkinci grup ise, kompozisyonlarına internet üzerinden LOCNESS alt-derlemi olarak erişilen Amerikalı üniversite öğrencileridir. Üçüncü grup ise araştırmacının da içinde bulunduğu üniversitede çalışan öğretim elemanlarıdır. Araştırmanın ilk amacı için, her iki derlemdeki söylem belirleyicileri bir derlem aracı ile belirlenmiş ve manuel olarak analiz edilmiştir. Daha sonra, derlemler arasındaki farkları ve kompozisyonların

puanları ile kullanılan söylem belirleyicilerin sıklığı arasında ilişki olup olmadığını görmek için istatistiksel analizler yapılmıştır. Öğretmen görüşleri için, bir anket aracılığıyla 35 öğretmenden nicel veri, yarı-yapılandırılmış görüşme yoluyla da 10 öğretmenden nitel veri toplanmıştır.

Elde edilen sonuçlar, her iki derlemde bazı belirli söylem belirleyicilerinin diğerlerinden daha sık kullanıldığını göstermiştir. Ayrıca, söylem belirleyicilerinin kullanım sıklığı açısından Türk öğrenci derlemi ile ana dili İngilizce olan öğrenci derlemi arasında istatistiksel olarak anlamlı bir fark görülmüştür. Türk öğrenciler yazılı metinlerinde, Amerikalı öğrencilerden daha fazla sayıda söylem belirleyici kullanmıştır. Diğer yandan, bir kompozisyona değerlendiriciler tarafından verilen puan ile o kompozisyonda kullanılan söylem belirleyicilerinin sıklığı arasında pozitif yönde anlamlı bir ilişki bulunmuştur. Nitel ve nicel verilerin sonuçları, İngilizce'yi yabancı dil olarak öğreten Türk öğretmenlerin söylem belirleyicilerin kullanımına ilişkin görüşlerinin son derece olumlu olduğunu ve bu belirleyicilerin rolüne ve öğretimine büyük önem verdiğini göstermiştir. Bu sonuçlar, geçmişteki çalışmalarla ilişkilendirilerek tartışılmış ve uygulamaya yönelik çıkarımlarda bulunulmuştur.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>THESIS APPROVAL</b> .....	i
<b>ONAY</b> .....	ii
<b>CURRICULUM VITAE</b> .....	iii
<b>ÖZGEÇMİŞ</b> .....	v
<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</b> .....	vii
<b>ABSTRACT</b> .....	viii
<b>ÖZET</b> .....	x
<b>TABLE OF CONTENTS</b> .....	xii
<b>LIST OF TABLES</b> .....	xv
<b>LIST OF FIGURES</b> .....	xvii
<b>LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS</b> .....	xviii
<b>CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION</b> .....	1
1.1. Background of the Study .....	1
1.2. Statement of the Problem.....	2
1.3. Purpose of the Study .....	3
1.4. Research Questions .....	3
1.5. Significance of the Study .....	4
1.6. Limitations of the Study.....	4
<b>CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW</b> .....	6
2.1. Corpus Linguistics .....	6
2.1.1. Definition and Development of Corpus Linguistics .....	6
2.1.2. Designing a Corpus.....	7
2.1.3. Types of Corpora .....	9
2.1.4. Learner Corpus and Language Teaching .....	12
2.2. Discourse Analysis.....	16
2.2.1. Definition .....	16
2.2.2. The Scope of Discourse Analysis .....	17
2.2.3. Discourse Analysis and Corpus Linguistics .....	17
2.2.4. Discourse Analysis and Language Teaching .....	18
2.3. Discourse Markers .....	20
2.3.1. Definition .....	20

2.3.2.	Theories Underlying Discourse Markers .....	21
2.4.	Studies on Discourse Markers.....	27
2.4.1.	Studies on Discourse Markers in EFL Contexts Abroad.....	28
2.4.2.	Studies on Discourse Markers in EFL Context in Turkey.....	30
2.4.3.	Studies on Teachers' Perceptions of Discourse Markers.....	33
<b>CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY .....</b>		<b>36</b>
3.1.	Introduction.....	36
3.2.	Research Design.....	36
3.3.	Research Questions .....	37
3.4.	Setting .....	38
3.5.	Participants.....	38
3.6.	Data Collection Instruments.....	40
3.6.1.	Turkish Learner Corpus .....	41
3.6.2.	Native English Corpus .....	42
3.6.3.	The Questionnaire of Teachers' Perceptions of DMs in EFL Writing.....	42
3.6.4.	The Semi-Structured Interview.....	44
3.7.	Data Analysis Procedures .....	46
<b>CHAPTER IV: RESULTS .....</b>		<b>53</b>
4.1.	The Results for Research Question 1 - Frequency of DMs .....	53
4.2.	The Results for Research Question 2 - Comparison of DMs in Native English and Turkish Learner Corpora.....	57
4.3.	The Results for Research Question 3 - Comparison between Different Classes of DMs.....	58
4.4.	The Results for Research Question 4 - Relationship between the Frequency of DMs and the Scores Given to them by the Raters .....	62
4.5.	The Results for Research Question 5 - Turkish EFL Teachers' Perceptions of the Role, Usage, and Teaching of DMs .....	62
4.5.1.	The Results of Quantitative Data Analysis.....	63
4.5.2.	The Results of Qualitative Data Analysis.....	69
<b>CHAPTER V: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION .....</b>		<b>86</b>
5.1.	Discussion of Research Question 1 - Frequency of DMs .....	86
5.2.	Discussion of Research Question 2 - Comparison of DMs in Native English and Turkish Learner Corpora.....	90

5.3.	Discussion of Research Question 3 - Comparison between Different Classes of DMs.....	91
5.4.	Discussion of Research Question 4 - Relationship between the Frequency of DMs and the Scores Given to Them by the Raters .....	94
5.5.	Discussion of Research Question 5 - Turkish EFL Teachers' Perceptions of the Role, Usage, and Teaching of DMs .....	95
5.5.1.	The Potential and Practical Benefits of Using DMs .....	96
5.5.2.	Teaching of DMs .....	98
5.6.	Implications.....	101
5.6.1.	Implications for Practice .....	101
5.6.2.	Implications for Future Research.....	104
	<b>REFERENCES.....</b>	<b>107</b>
	<b>APPENDICES .....</b>	<b>114</b>
	<b>APPENDIX A - Fraser's (2009) Taxonomy Of Discourse Markers .....</b>	<b>115</b>
	<b>APPENDIX B - Turkish Learner Corpus Sample Essays .....</b>	<b>116</b>
	<b>APPENDIX C - Native Learner Corpus Sample Essay.....</b>	<b>118</b>
	<b>APPENDIX D - The Questionnaire of Teachers' Perceptions of Discourse Markers in EFL Writing.....</b>	<b>119</b>
	<b>APPENDIX E – Participant Information Sheet.....</b>	<b>121</b>
	<b>APPENDIX F - Semi-Structured Interview Questions .....</b>	<b>123</b>
	<b>APPENDIX G - Argumentative Essay Rubric .....</b>	<b>124</b>

## LIST OF TABLES

Table 2.1 Learner Corpus Design Criteria.....	8
Table 2.2 Details of BoE, COCA, and BNC Corpora .....	10
Table 3.1 Overall Research Design .....	37
Table 3.2 General Demographic Information of the Turkish Students .....	39
Table 3.3 General Demographic Information of the Teachers .....	40
Table 3.4 Essay Topics Used in Turkish Students' Argumentative Essays .....	41
Table 3.5 Six Categories in the Questionnaire of Teachers' Perceptions of Discourse Markers in EFL.....	43
Table 3.6 Duration of Teacher Interviews .....	44
Table 3.7 The Distribution of Teacher Interview Questions for Research Questions ....	45
Table 3.8 Research Questions, Data Collection Tools, and Data Analysis Methods .....	46
Table 3.9 The Use of 'so' as a Modifier in the Turkish Learner Corpus.....	48
Table 3.10 The Use of Coordinating Conjunction "so" as an IDM in the TL Corpus ...	48
Table 3.11 The Use of "and" Linking Two or More Parallel Expressions.....	48
Table 3.12 The Use of Coordinating Conjunction "and" as an EDM .....	49
Table 3.13 The Use of "since" as a Time Adverb .....	49
Table 3.14 The Use of Conjunction "since" as an IDM .....	49
Table 4.1 Frequency and Percentage of Occurrence of CDMs in Two Corpora.....	54
Table 4.2 Frequency and Percentage of Occurrence of EDMs in Two Corpora.....	55
Table 4.3 Frequency and Percentage of Occurrence of IDMs in Two Corpora .....	57
Table 4.4 Total Number of DMs and Tokens in Both Corpora.....	58
Table 4.5 Chi-Square Test Results of Total Number of DMs in Both Corpora .....	58
Table 4.6 Frequency Distribution of Discourse Markers across Three Main Categories in Turkish Learner and Native English Corpora.....	59
Table 4.7 Pearson Chi-Square Test Results of Three Categories in Two Corpora .....	60
Table 4.8 Chi-Square Test Results of Three DM Categories in TL Corpus.....	60
Table 4.9 Chi-Square Test Results of Three DM Categories in NE Corpus .....	61
Table 4.10 Chi-Square Test Results of Three DM Categories in Two Corpora.....	61
Table 4.11 The Correlation between the Essay Scores and the Frequency of DMs.....	62
Table 4.12. The Means and Standard Deviations of Pragmatic Value Category Items .	63
Table 4.13 The Frequency and Percentages of Pragmatic Value Category Items.....	64

Table 4.14 The Means and Std. Deviations of Pedagogical Value Category Items .....	64
Table 4.15 The Frequency and Percentages of Pedagogical Value Category Items .....	65
Table 4.16 The Means and Std. Deviations of Indispensable Value Category Items.....	65
Table 4.17 The Frequency and Percentages of Indispensable Value Category Items ....	65
Table 4.18 The Means and Std. Deviations of Identification with Native Speaker Norm Category Items.....	66
Table 4.19 The Frequency and Percentages of Identification with Native Speaker Norm Category Items .....	66
Table 4.20 The Means and Standard Deviations of Prioritizing Teaching of DMs Category Items .....	67
Table 4.21 The Frequency and Percentages of Prioritizing Teaching of DMs Category Items.....	67
Table 4.22 The Means and Standard Deviations of Representation of DMs in EFL Classrooms Category Items .....	68
Table 4.23 The Frequency and Percentages of Representation of DMs in EFL Classrooms Category Items .....	68
Table 4.24 The Means and Std. Deviations of Six Categories in the Questionnaire.....	68
Table 4.25 Predetermined Themes for the Interview Questions (2, 4, 5, and 9).....	69
Table 4.26 DMs Overused by Turkish Students - Teacher Interview Question 4.....	70
Table 4.27 DMs Misused by Turkish Students- Teacher Interview Question 4.....	71
Table 4.28 Order of Importance of DM Categories According to Teachers .....	73
Table 4.29 Teachers' Responses on the Overuse/Underuse of DMs by Turkish Students Compared to Native Speakers.....	74
Table 4.30 Codes under the Sub-theme of Reasons behind Overuse of DMs by Turkish Students.....	75
Table 4.31 Teachers' Opinions on the Relationship between the Frequency of DMs and the Essay Scores.....	77
Table 4.32 Predetermined/Emerged Themes and Categories for the Interview Questions (1, 3, 6, 7, 8, and 10) .....	78
Table 4.33 Themes and Codes under the Category of Potential and Practical Benefits of Using DMs .....	79
Table 4.34 Themes and Codes under the Category of Teaching of DMs.....	82

## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 2.1 The Concerns of Mainstream Language Teaching.....	12
Figure 2.2 Uses of Corpora of Relevance for Language Teaching .....	15
Figure 2.3 Help Boxes in the <i>Essential Activator Dictionary</i> .....	16
Figure 2.4 Fraser’s (2009) Taxonomy of Pragmatic Markers .....	24
Figure 3.1 A Screenshot of Concordance Software AntConc 3.5.8 .....	47
Figure 3.2 Components of Data Analysis: Interactive Model .....	51

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

<b>EFL:</b>	English as a Foreign Language
<b>ELT:</b>	English Language Teaching
<b>FL:</b>	Foreign Language
<b>SLA:</b>	Second Language Acquisition
<b>FLT:</b>	Foreign Language Teaching
<b>L1:</b>	First Language
<b>L2:</b>	Second Language
<b>DMs:</b>	Discourse Markers
<b>LOCNESS:</b>	Louvain Corpus of Native English Essays
<b>ICLE:</b>	International Corpus of Learner English
<b>CDMs:</b>	Contrastive Discourse Markers
<b>EDMs:</b>	Elaborative Discourse Markers
<b>IDMs:</b>	Inferential Discourse Markers
<b>NS:</b>	Native Speaker
<b>NNS:</b>	Non-Native Speaker
<b>NE:</b>	Native English
<b>TL:</b>	Turkish Learner

## **CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1. Background of the Study**

The inborn ability enables a child to acquire any language incredibly easily and fast (Hymes, 1972). This child does not only acquire knowledge of sentences but also “he or she acquires competence as to when to speak, what to talk about with whom, when, where, in what manner” (Hymes, 1972, p. 277). However, when compared to acquiring a mother-tongue, learning a second language (L2) is not an easy and speedy process. Brown (2000) indicates that a person should be totally committed and involved physically, intellectually and emotionally in this process. This process poses cognitive, personal and sociocultural challenges (Piechurska-Kuciel et al., 2017). What makes learning so challenging is that learning an L2 is not only constrained with grammatical structures and target vocabulary, but also accompanied by different personal, social, and cultural aspects. Hymes (1972) asserts the importance of these aspects implicitly in his words “there are rules of use without which the rules of grammar would be useless” (p. 278). Therefore, in order to be an independent user of a foreign language, one should deal with all these aspects of the target language.

Writing is one of the most important skills that foreign language learners need to develop. Salski (2014) compares writing to going on a journey. Going on a journey needs a motive and a wish to act and reach the destination. Likewise, writing “involves choices, decisions, strategies, and leads to a destination-the product” (Salski, 2014, p.38). However, as far as observed in writing classes, most EFL learners would not agree with this comparison because they do not think that writing is as enjoyable as going on a journey. The research shows that learning to write in a second language is an enormous challenge (Johns, 1997; Prior, 1998; Hinkel, 2002). Indeed, writing is a very complex, multidimensional skill requiring mastery of grammatical structures, vocabulary, punctuation, rules of organization, content knowledge about the topic, knowledge about how to achieve coherence and cohesion in a text, etc.

Since the introduction of cohesion by Halliday and Hasan (1976), several studies have focused on cohesion and coherence (e.g., Schiffrin, 1988; Fraser, 1999; Müller, 2005).

The devices that are used for cohesion in the text were at the centre of attention in these studies. Even though the researchers did not agree on the terminology of these devices, (e.g., discourse markers (Schiffrin, 1988), discourse connectives (Blakemore, 1987), pragmatic devices (van Dijk, 1981), pragmatic markers (Fraser, 1988)), they agreed on the essentiality of them to construct a cohesive text which successfully conveys a message.

## **1.2. Statement of the Problem**

One of the essential features of a well-formed written or spoken discourse is its unity and connectedness (Celce-Murcia & Olshtain, 2005). An independent foreign language user is expected to be competent in creating a coherent and cohesive written or spoken discourse. The unity needed in text or speech can be provided by the effective and appropriate use of discourse markers (DMs).

Research shows that second language learners have serious problems in using DMs appropriately and effectively while writing (Martinez, 2004; Mihaljevic Djigunovic & Vickov, 2010; Ha, 2016). All these studies show that learners tend to overuse, underuse or misuse DMs in their attempt to constitute a cohesive text.

As a researcher and teacher working at a university in Turkish educational context, I have observed my students and assessed what they wrote in writing courses, written assignments, quizzes, exams or other classroom activities. Based on my professional experience, I noticed that Turkish university students who are learning English find it very troublesome to construct an organized and coherent written text in English. A high number of teachers are complaining about this problem, as well.

Several studies conducted in Turkish EFL context also support these observations that Turkish learners of English confront the same problems during writing a text (Atasever, 2014; Yangın-Ersanlı, 2015; Aysu, 2017). These studies showed that Turkish EFL learners do not have an optimum pattern to use DMs. They over-, under-, or misuse the DMs, just like other non-native students. Also, the variety of DMs used by Turkish EFL students was found to be quite limited.

Polat (2011) puts forth that any overuse, underuse or misuse of DMs can cause semantic and pragmatic misunderstandings, which may have negative consequences for the writers. In light of this information, this study is deemed necessary to analyze this problem and suggest solutions for the students, teachers, and researchers.

Also, to the researcher's best knowledge, among the limited number of studies examining the use of DMs in Turkish EFL context, no study has examined the teachers' perceptions of DMs in EFL writing. Therefore, this study is a new attempt to contribute to the research on DMs in EFL writing by adding teachers' opinions on the role, usage, and teaching of DMs.

### **1.3. Purpose of the Study**

As mentioned above, this study focuses on the discourse markers from two perspectives; students' production and teachers' perceptions. The study first examines discourse markers in Turkish university students' essays, calculates the frequency of DMs in each category and in total. Similarly, the use of discourse markers in the American students' essays is examined. DMs are identified, and the frequencies in each category and in total are calculated. Secondly, the Turkish learner corpus and native English corpus are compared to see the differences between them in terms of the use of DMs. This comparison is supposed to reveal, if there is, any overuse/underuse of DMs by Turkish students. Also, the relationship between the number of DMs in an essay and the score of that essay is investigated. Finally, while examining such a significant element of writing, ignoring teachers' opinions would be a deficiency. For this reason, the final purpose of this study is to investigate teachers' perceptions of the role, usage, and teaching of DMs in EFL writing.

### **1.4. Research Questions**

The study will investigate the following research questions:

- 1) What are the most/least frequent discourse markers in native English and Turkish learner corpora?

- 2) Is there any difference in the total frequency of DMs between native English and Turkish learner corpora?
- 3) Are there any frequency-based differences across different classes of DMs:
  - a) within native English corpus,
  - b) within Turkish learner corpus,
  - c) between native English corpus and Turkish learner corpus?
- 4) What is the relationship between the frequency of DMs used in Turkish learners' essays and the scores given to them by the raters?
- 5) How do Turkish EFL teachers perceive the role, usage, and teaching of DMs in EFL writing?

### **1.5. Significance of the Study**

Although corpus studies are becoming popular day by day with the rapid development of technology, which helps to collect, store, and share data, there is a lack of research in this field in Turkish EFL context. This research gap makes this study significant for a few reasons. First of all, the data in Turkish learner corpus is collected and digitized by the researcher. Even though it is a small learner corpus, it is believed to contribute to the field of language teaching and language learning. Secondly, the relationship between the use of discourse markers and essay scores still needs to be explored. Therefore, this study will investigate this relationship by comparing the number of DMs in an essay with the score of that essay. Finally, this study tries to take the teachers' opinions about the role, usage, and teaching of DMs in EFL writing into consideration. When the literature is reviewed, it can be seen that there are studies focusing on the performance of language learners in using DMs; however, studies investigating teachers' opinions about DMs in writing is almost non-existent in Turkish EFL context.

### **1.6. Limitations of the Study**

Due to practical constraints, this study has several limitations. One of the limitations of the study is the Turkish learner corpus size. Since only 125 B2 level students' essays are

included in the Turkish learner corpus, the results of the current study may not be generalized to other educational settings.

Also, both corpora have only one type of genre, argumentative essay. Although, this type of essay is frequently used in corpus studies, for the generalization of the results some other types of essays may be included in the corpora.

Another limitation of the study is that only the frequency of discourse markers was investigated in the current study. No other semantic or functional analysis of DMs was performed. In order to provide more information on how Turkish EFL learners use DMs in writing, further investigations can be conducted for semantic and syntactic features or appropriate use of specific DMs.

The final limitation that should be noted is that only teachers' perceptions on DMs are investigated in the current study. How the students view DMs lies behind the scope of this study.

## **CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW**

This chapter presents the theoretical framework which forms the basis of this study. Since this study adopts a corpus-based approach to the use of discourse markers, firstly the concepts of corpus and corpus linguistics and their relevance to language teaching are presented. Next, the notions of discourse, discourse analysis and discourse markers are explained. Finally, previous studies conducted on DMs in EFL contexts abroad and in Turkey are analyzed.

### **2.1. Corpus Linguistics**

#### **2.1.1. Definition and Development of Corpus Linguistics**

The term “corpus” comes from Latin, and it means “body”. Different researchers give almost the same definition for ‘corpus’. Sinclair (1991) defines corpus as “a collection of naturally occurring language text, chosen to characterize a state or variety of a language” (p. 171). Meyer (2002) defines corpus as “either a collection of texts or parts of texts upon which some general linguistic analysis can be conducted” (p. xi). Flowerdew (2012) states that a corpus is viewed as “a collection of authentic language, either written or spoken, which has been compiled for a particular purpose” (p. 3). From these definitions it can be inferred that a corpus is, in its simple form, a ‘body of texts’, and in today’s world when a corpus is referred, the data is in machine-readable form and easy to access electronically.

The development of corpora was not due to the linguistic climate in the 1950s, but thanks to the technological one (Bonelli, 2010). Although the first computers were too complicated to work with, their potential was noticed from the very beginning. Soon after the computers’ existence, the first electronic corpus of written language, the Brown Corpus, was compiled at Brown University by Nelson Francis and Henry Kucera in the 1960s. The invention of tape recorders and portable tape recorders enabled the researchers to build spoken corpus, and not surprisingly thanks to famous linguist John Sinclair the first electronic corpus of spoken language was compiled at the University of Edinburgh between 1963 and 1965 (Bonelli, 2010).

In the 1970s, the development was slow but steady as the technological advancements were steady. There were ongoing attempts around the world to compile different types of corpora, but it was the invention of scanners in the 1980s that led to a boom of corpora. The use of scanners and the growth of computer typesetting allowed accessing printed word very easily.

In the millennium, advances in graphics and optical character recognition (OCR) technologies and the growth of electronic communication have made unlimited amounts of information from the internet (Bonelli & Sinclair, 2006). Today, some general corpora such as British National Corpus (BNC), Bank of English, and Cambridge International Corpus (CIC) have reached several hundred million words.

The term corpus linguistics (CL) did not come to usage until the early 1980s (McEnery et al., 2011). CL has been gathering momentum over the past two decades, as computers have grown mentioned above (Granger, 1998). Today, CL makes contributions to various areas such as language teaching and learning, discourse analysis, pragmatics, sociolinguistics, etc. The ‘father’ of Corpus Linguistics, Sinclair (2000) defines Corpus Linguistics as “a linguistic methodology which is founded on the use of electronic collections of naturally occurring text, corpora” (p. 4). Another leading researcher and scholar Leech (1992) views Corpus Linguistics, as “a way of doing linguistics, a methodological basis for pursuing linguistic research” (p. 106).

This new computer-based methodology has differed from Chomskyan approach in terms of its focus being on performance (rather than competence), description (rather than universals) and quantitative as well as qualitative analysis (Leech, 1992). Finally, this methodological basis has “ended up defining the domain of the discipline” (Bonelli, 2010, p. 18).

### **2.1.2. Designing a Corpus**

It is a general agreement among the scholars that corpus is not merely a collection of random texts. The data in a corpus needs to include real language produced naturally and to be compiled with specific norms. There are a considerable number of norms involved in building a corpus (see Table 2.1). As this study focuses on written corpora,

a few crucial issues regarding how to build a written corpus are briefly presented in this part.

**Table 2.1. Learner Corpus Design Criteria**

<b>Language</b>	<b>Learner</b>
Medium	Age
Genre	Sex
Topic	Mother tongue
Technicality	Region
Task Setting	Other foreign languages
	Level
	Learning context
	Practical experience

(Granger, 1998, p. 8)

Before deciding to create a new written corpus, you should ask yourself: Why do you need a new written corpus? Also, you should make sure that the available corpora compiled previously do not fit your purpose. If you still decide to create your own corpus as a researcher, a teacher or an analyst, you need to ask a few more questions to yourself. How big should it be? How many samples should be included? How can you balance and represent the chosen language or variety of language?

The size of a corpus is one of the highly-disputed issues. Sinclair (1991) suggested that a corpus should be as large as possible. However, this suggestion was challenged in the following years (Flowerdew, 2004; O’Keeffe, McCarthy & Carter, 2007; Flowerdew, 2008; O’Keeffe & McCarthy, 2010). The size of the corpus is a matter of fitness for purpose. Nelson (2010) distinguished the need for a small corpus and a large corpus by claiming that corpora for lexicographical purposes should be as large as possible as the lexical items, except most common words, are relatively infrequent. However, a small corpus to look at the specific areas such as grammatical items (pronouns, prepositions, or modal verbs) in the language can be of great value in classroom teaching as they are very frequent. According to Koester (2010), a smaller corpus has a distinct advantage. With a small corpus, the corpus compiler is usually the analyst at the same time so that the quantitative findings can be supported by qualitative findings (Flowerdew, 2004 cited in Koester, 2010). Also, the contextual features of the corpus, such as information about the setting, the participants, and the purpose of communication are available to

the analyst. This enables to reveal connections between linguistic patterning and contexts of use (O’Keeffe, McCarthy & Carter, 2007).

The sample size of a corpus is another issue to determine. In this respect, the general approach is that the number of samples must be adjusted according to the issue to be studied. While more samples are needed for more general language issues, fewer can be enough for more specific issues (Nelson, 2010). Biber (1990) found out that common linguistic features (e.g. personal pronouns, contractions, and prepositions) are relatively stable in their occurrence in 1,000-word samples. Moreover, he found out that linguistic tendencies are stable with ten text samples per genre or register (Koester, 2010). If a corpus has enough samples to answer a research question and practical enough to work with, that would be adequate. Otherwise, as Timmis (2015) puts forth even British National Corpus (which is one of the largest corpora around the world) cannot fully represent how English is used. The answer to this problem lies in the relationship among the research question, representativeness, corpus design and size.

### 2.1.3. Types of Corpora

There are many corpora for various purposes, and it is not possible to list all of them here. The typology proposed by Hunston (2002) is presented below.

**Specialised Corpus:** This type of corpus includes texts of a particular type, such as newspaper editorials, geography textbooks, academic articles in a particular subject, lectures, casual conversations etc. Researchers sometimes need to collect their own specialised corpus to investigate the language they plan to examine. Two examples of this type of corpus are Cambridge and Nottingham Corpus of Discourse in English (CANCODE) and the Michigan Corpus of Academic Spoken English (MICASE) (Hunston, 2002).

**General Corpus:** This is a corpus of texts of many types. A general corpus may have a variety of written or spoken texts collected in only one country or several countries. It is much larger than a specialised corpus. The most popular ones are Bank of English Corpus (BoE), The Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA), and British National Corpus (BNC). Detailed information about these three corpora can be seen in Table 2.2.

**Table 2.2 Details of BoE, COCA, and BNC Corpora**

Feature	BoE	COCA	BNC
Availability	\$1150 year	Free / web	Free / web
Size (millions of words)	455	560	100
Time span	1970s-2005	1990-2017	1970s-1993
Number of words of text being added each year	0	20 million	0
Wide range of genres: spoken, fiction, popular magazine, newspaper, academic	(Yes)	Yes	Yes
Size of spoken (millions of words)	62	90	10
Spoken = conversational, unscripted ?	(Some)	(Mostly: <u>notes</u> )	Yes
Dialect	Br / Am +	American	British

(Retrieved from :<https://corpus.byu.edu/coca/old/help/compare.asp>, May 23, 2019)

**Comparable Corpora:** Any pair of corpora can be compared or contrasted in principle (Tognini-Bonelli, 2010). Whereas sometimes two corpora are specifically designed for comparison or contrast purposes. They are designed along with the same criteria and contain the same amount of data. “Comparable corpora of varieties of the same language can be used to compare those varieties. Comparable corpora of different languages can be used by translators and by learners to identify differences and equivalences in each language” (Hunston, 2002, p. 15).

**Parallel Corpora:** There are at least two corpora in different languages, including texts which have been translated from one language into the other. These corpora can be used by translators and learners to find potential equivalent expressions in each language and to investigate differences between languages.

**Learner Corpus:** This corpus is a collection of texts-essays produced by learners of a language. Learner corpora enable the researchers or teachers to find out the aspects that language learners differ from native speakers. In order to achieve this, a native speaker corpus is required.

The most well-known learner corpus is the International Corpus of Learner English (ICLE). ICLE can be regarded as the most popular and the best example of learner corpora around the world. This corpus is a project directed by Sylviane Granger at the Center for English Corpus Linguistics in Belgium. ICLE includes argumentative essays written by higher-intermediate to advanced learners from several mother tongue backgrounds (May, 2019). The first version was published on CD-ROM in 2002 and the second version was published in 2009. This version contains 3.7 million words and 16 mother tongue backgrounds. The team has been working the third generation since then. (Retrieved from <https://uclouvain.be/en/research-institutes/ilc/cecl/icle.html>)

As mentioned above, a native speaker corpus is compulsory to carry out contrastive analysis, and the Louvain Corpus of Native English Essays (LOCNESS) can be used for this purpose. LOCNESS is a corpus of native English essays. LOCNESS contains 149,574 words of argumentative essays written by American university students 18,826 words of literary-mixed essays written by American university students 95,695 words of argumentative and literary essays written by British university students 60,209 words of British A-level argumentative essays. The total number of words is 324,304. (Retrieved from: <https://uclouvain.be/fr/node/11973>)

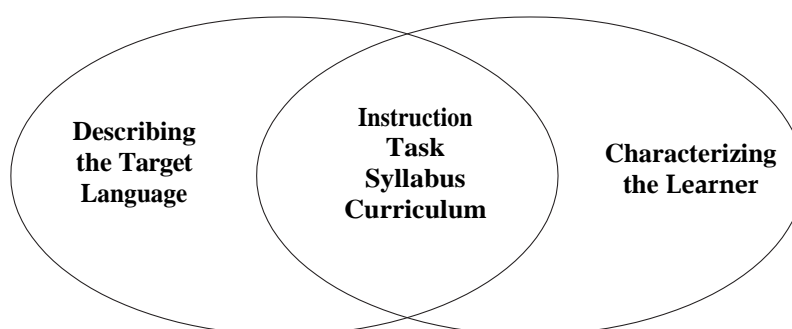
**Historic or diachronic Corpus:** This type of corpus includes texts from different periods. Diachronic corpora present ‘snapshots’ at intervals of time. The best-known example of this type is the Helsinki corpus, which consists of texts from 700 to 1700 and includes 1.5 million words.

**Monitor or synchronic Corpus:** This type of corpus was proposed by Sinclair (1982) (cited in McCarthy & O’Keeffe, 2010). While a diachronic corpus has data which belongs to a specific time period, a monitor corpus is synchronous. It is enlarged annually, monthly or even daily, so it rapidly increases in size. The Corpus of American Contemporary English is a good example of monitor corpus. As can be seen in the Table 2.2 above, COCA has been added almost 20 million words each year since 1990.

### 2.1.4. Learner Corpus and Language Teaching

Corpus-based studies carried out in the last twenty years have improved the descriptions of different registers and dialects of native English; however, investigations of non-native varieties have been relatively recent change (Granger, 2002). In the early 1990s, academics, publishers began compiling corpora of non-native English, which is now referred to as learner corpora.

Granger (2002) asserts that learner corpora present a new type of data which improves thinking both in SLA (Second Language Acquisition) and FLT (Foreign Language Teaching). According to Mark (1998), some dominant teaching approaches have worked with three components shown in Figure 2.1.



**Figure 2.1. The Concerns of Mainstream Language Teaching (Mark, 1998, p. 78)**

These concerns have been given a great deal of importance by SLA and FLT researchers for many years but the learner output was lacking (Mark, 1998). It is hoped that learner corpora will direct SLA and FLT researchers' attention from native speaker dominance towards the language of the learner by the help of electronic data, and this allows, at a classroom level, a body of language which learners can both create and work with (O'Keeffe & McCarthy, 2010). The benefits of analysing a learner corpus are explained as follows (Leech, 1998):

What linguistic features in the target language do the learners in question use significantly more often ('overuse') or less often ('underuse') than native speakers do?

How far is the target language behaviour of the learners influenced by their native language (NL transfer)?

In which areas do they tend to use ‘avoidance strategies’, failing to exploit the full range of the target language’s expressive possibilities?

In which areas do they appear to achieve native-like or non-native like performance? (p. xiv)

Based on Sinclair’s (1996) definition, Granger (2002) views computer learner corpora as “electronic collections of authentic FL/SL textual data assembled accordingly to explicit design criteria for a particular SLA/FLT purpose. They are encoded in a standardised and homogenous way and documented as to their origin and provenance” (p. 7). As stated in this definition, there are six characteristics of computer learner corpora. These features can be briefly explained as follows (Granger, 2002):

- Authenticity: A non-native speaker corpus must be as authentic as native corpus.
- FL/SL variety: Learner corpora must be situated in the non-native varieties of English either ESL or EFL.
- Textual data: A learner corpus must not consist of isolated sentences, words or chunks.
- Explicit design criteria: A learner corpus must be assembled according to explicit design criteria.
- SLA/FLT purpose: The data must be collected for a particular purpose such as to improve SLA theory or to contribute to the production of better FLT tools and methods.
- Standardization and documentation: A learner corpus must be in a standard and documented for details.

#### **2.1.4.1. Linguistic Analysis of Corpora**

- *Contrastive Interlanguage Analysis*

Granger (1998) claims that the Contrastive Interlanguage Analysis (CIA) lies at the heart of computer learner corpora based research. CIA includes two types of comparison: native speaker (NS) vs. non-native speaker (NNS) and NNS vs. NNS comparisons. According to Granger (2009), the first type of comparison has a vital

role in bringing to light the distinctive feature of learner language, while the second makes it possible to assess the generalizability of interlanguage (IL) features across learner populations and language situations.

NS/NNS (sometimes referred to NS vs. IL) comparisons are expected to inform the researchers about the “features of non-nativeness in learner writing and speech, i.e. not only errors but also instances of under-and overrepresentation of words, phrases and structures” (Granger, 2002, p. 12). For these comparisons, a control corpus of native English is required as it appears. International Corpus of English (ICE) and Louvain Corpus of Native English Essays (LOCNESS) can be given as examples of native English corpora.

The second type of comparisons is NNS/NNS comparisons. Comparing different learner populations enable researchers to improve their knowledge of interlanguage. Comparisons of learner data from different contexts, mother tongue backgrounds, and levels of proficiency shed new light on the development of language learners.

- *Computer-Aided Error Analysis*

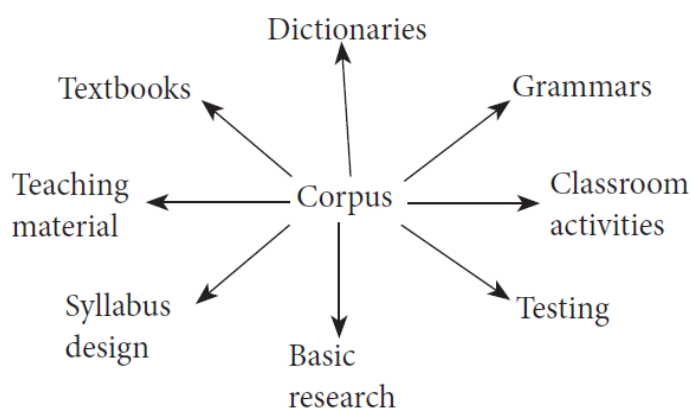
Different from previous error analysis studies, computer-aided studies are more standardised and present full of the context of the text in which errors occur (Granger, 2010).

This kind of analysis starts with selecting an error-prone linguistic item (word, phrase, syntactic structure, etc.) and scanning the corpus to find all erroneous uses of the item with the help of text retrieval software tools. Advantage of this method is being extremely fast; however, it has also a disadvantage. It is limited to the only item or items the researchers think to be problematic.

Granger (2010) states that “former error analysis was characterised by decontextualization of errors, disregard of learners’ correct use of language and non-standardised errors typologies, today’s error analysis investigates contextualised errors” (p. 14). In computer-aided error analysis, both the context of use and the linguistic context is always accessible in the corpus, the misuse of the linguistic item can be shown in more than one sentences, a paragraph or even a whole text, together with the correct instances.

### 2.1.4.2. Learner Corpus and Pedagogical Uses

Corpora have various applications which are relevant to language teaching (Johansson, 2009). Corpus studies help language teachers and researchers to investigate aspects of written/spoken English (or any other target language) obtained from the real world. By analysing a learner corpus, one can identify “what features of text, syntax, lexicon, and discourse may require special attention in the teaching of L2 skills to enhance and focus the quality of teaching” (Hinkel, 2002, p.13). Timmis (2015) notes that corpora for language teaching is valuable since the quantity and quality of corpora data provide more reliable and complete information of language than earlier research methods provided.



**Figure 2.2. Uses of Corpora of Relevance for Language Teaching (Johansson, 2009, p. 40)**

Although there are several fields that CLC has contributed (see figure 2.2), two areas seem to have improved more thanks to the CLC. These are teaching materials and classroom methodology. In materials design, the most remarkable change has occurred in the field of EFL dictionaries (Granger, 2002). The use of large corpora provided the publishers with a mine of information so that richer and more useful dictionaries have been created. For example, The *Longman Essential Activator Dictionary* is regarded to have made use of a learner corpus. Figure 2.3 shows help boxes which include common mistakes from Longman Learners’ Corpus to prevent the learners from making the same mistakes.

! Don't say 'informations'. Say <b>information</b> . ! Don't say 'an information'. Say <b>a piece of information</b> or <b>some information</b> .
--

! Don't say 'an important problem'. Say <b>a serious problem</b> or <b>a big problem</b> .
--

**Figure 2.3. Help Boxes in the *Essential Activator Dictionary* (Granger, 2002, p.25)**

The second field which has improved considerably is the classroom methodology. Concordance-based activities (now referred to as data-driven learning) bring about useful changes in the battery of teaching techniques (Granger, 2002). These activities are compatible with the new paradigm of Observe-Hypothesise-Experiment and gaining ground over the traditional 3Ps (Present-Practice-Produce) method.

## **2.2. Discourse Analysis**

### **2.2.1. Definition**

Thornbury (2010) defines the term discourse as *slippery* and *baggy* since it does not have a clear definition, and as it includes a large collection of linguistic and social phenomena. These two adjectives may not be the best adjectives to describe discourse, but they are hard to oppose when the rest of the explanation is read. Not surprisingly, there is an array of definitions for discourse based on different perspectives in the literature (Partington et al., 2013). Some of these definitions are structural. For example, discourse “is used to any piece of connected language, written or spoken, which contains more than one sentence” (Thornborrow & Wareing, 1998, p.240). From an old-fashioned perspective which distinguishes speech from writing, discourse “is used when talking about speech, whereas ‘text’ is used when discussing writing” (Carter, 1995, p.39). Thirdly, from a functional perspective Celce-Murcia and Olsthain (2000) described the discourse as follows:

Discourse is an instance of spoken or written language that has describable internal relationships of form and meaning that relate coherently to an external communicative function or purpose and a given audience/interlocutor. Furthermore, the external function or purpose can only be determined if one takes into account the context and participants (i.e., all the relevant situational, social, and cultural factors) in which the piece of discourse occurs. (p.4)

Built on the discourse definitions above, discourse analysis is concerned with the study of the relationship between language and the contexts in which it is used. Brown and Yule (1983) views discourse analysis as “the analysis of language in use” (p.1). Halliday (1985) defines it “language that is doing some job in some context” (p.10). Stubbs (1983) puts forth that discourse analysis “attempts to study the organisation of language above the sentence or above the clause, and therefore study larger linguistic units, such as conversational exchanges or written texts” (p.1).

### **2.2.2. The Scope of Discourse Analysis**

Harris introduced the term discourse analysis in his study titled ‘discourse analysis’ in 1952 (Partington et al., 2013). In the 1960s and 70s discourse analysis developed from the work in different disciplines such as linguistics, semiotics, psychology, anthropology and sociology, and today, it is a far-reaching and diverse discipline.

Discourse analysis tries to provide a deeper understanding and appreciation of both spoken and written interactions. People have a significant number of verbal encounters in daily life such as telephone conversations, casual conversations, classroom talks, service encounters etc. Besides, people consume hundreds of written and printed words: newspaper articles, emails, instant messages, notices, billboards etc. (McCarthy, 1991). All these conversations are supposed to be coherent and meaningful communications in which sentences/words are connected in an organised way. Therefore, discourse analysts are concerned with the organisation of both spoken and written interaction.

### **2.2.3. Discourse Analysis and Corpus Linguistics**

Discourse analysis is defined as an “area where corpus linguistics has been adopted as a means of looking at language patterns over much larger datasets” (O’Keffe & McCarthy, 2010, p.9). Discourse analysis and corpus linguistics both make use of spoken or written authentic texts. However, Flowerdew (2012) notes that “doing corpus analysis is not the same doing discourse analysis” (p. 175). While discourse analysis is regarded to be principally qualitative, corpus linguistics is mostly quantitative (McEnery et al., 2006). Thornburry (2010) asserts that quantitative data may not answer

all or even any of the questions brought to the study of discourse by the analysts. Another distinction observed by Biber et al. (1998) is that software tools used for corpus analysis are not suitable for discourse analysis. Thornbury (2010) also mentions the same distinction that “corpus tools allow researchers to track, tally and plot the surface features of discourse...They do not necessarily correlate with, or explain, the underlying semantic relations between parts of text...” (p. 275) According to Flowerdew (2012), the main epistemological difference between the two fields, as a result of their methodological status, corpus analyses “treat the text as product rather than as an unfolding process and social action...” (p. 175).

The differences mentioned above between corpus analysis and discourse analysis makes them not unrelated but complementary. As Thornbury (2010) points that the combination of corpus linguistics and discourse analysis is in such a way that they inform each other reciprocally and exploit a range of related disciplines so that they both move forward in a promising way. Discourse analysis and corpus linguistics benefit from strengths of each other.

#### **2.2.4. Discourse Analysis and Language Teaching**

The communicative approach to language teaching has changed the shift from grammatical competence to communicative competence since the 1970s. The objective of language teaching was to teach grammatical units before this approach. However, since the beginning of this communicative era, communicating effectively has become the objective of language teaching.

For many years the sentence was the basic unit of the analysis (Olshtain & Celce-Murcia, 2001). However, studying single sentences out of context caused the learners to lack the ability of combining these sentences into meaningful discourse (Olshtain & Celce-Murcia, 2001). Teaching a language via the communicative approach but not depending on discourse analysis would be inappropriate. Discourse analysis should be the main body of support to make decisions in language teaching and learning (Olshtain & Celce-Murcia, 2001). Coulthard (1985) points out that most of the activities carried out in foreign language classrooms are not authentically communicative. Surely, all the language used in the classroom is, in a way, artificial, but there are still significant

differences among the activities' potential to facilitate and encourage communication in the classroom. Language acquisition and language development can take place if proper contexts for interaction, which illustrate speaker/hearer/ and reader/writer exchanges, are created and provided for learners. As a result, discourse or text has become the basic unit of analysis rather than single sentences.

Upon the shift in methodology, discourse analysis has had profound applications in the teaching of the language areas. A discourse-oriented approach to grammar enables the learners to see contextualised uses of structures and grammatical terms and to consider if there are important areas which are present under-represented in grammar teaching and needed to be covered (McCarthy, 1991).

In the teaching and learning of vocabulary, the place of context is indisputable. Vocabulary cannot be taught or learned out of context. The intended meaning and lexical meaning of a word can only be derived from the combination of a given dictionary meaning and the contextual frame (in the sense of the situation in which discourse is produced) (Olshtain & Celce-Murcia, 2001; McCarthy, 1991).

In terms of the teaching of language skills, discourse keeps its seat in the front line. Productive skills (speaking and writing) carry our messages, ideas or intentions to an addressee, while receptive skills try to receive and understand the message or text produced by the interlocutor (Olshtain & Celce-Murcia, 2001). These processes can be briefly described as producing discourse and interpreting discourse. In these four skills, three participants are present: the writer/the speaker, the text/the message, and the reader/the listener. In any situation, the speaker or the writer is supposed to produce coherent and cohesive texts for the sake of the reader/listener. Gee and Handford (2012) contributed that "the main importance of discourse analysis lies in the fact that, through speaking or writing in the world, we make the world meaningful..." (p. 5). How different texts are organised and how the process of creating written/spoken discourse is realised at various levels, from small units to large, can be learned from discourse analysts so that the more authentic materials and activities for the classroom can be produced by teachers, syllabus designers, and language researchers (McCarthy, 1991; Olshtain & Celce-Murcia, 2001).

## 2.3. Discourse Markers

### 2.3.1. Definition

The studies of discourse markers were scattered in the 1980s; however, they have abounded in different branches of linguistics and allied fields since then (Maschler & Schiffrin, 2015). Fraser (1998) called discourse marker analysis “a growth market in linguistics”. However, there is not a consensus upon the terminology. Different researchers used different terms for discourse markers including but not limited to discourse markers (Schiffrin, 1987; Fraser, 1999); discourse connectives (Blakemore, 2002), discourse operators (Redeker, 1991, 2006), and discourse particles (Schourup, 1985) etc.

In her initial work on DMs, Schiffrin (1987) defined discourse markers in two ways: operationally and theoretically. At the operational level, she defined them as “sequentially dependent elements that bracket units of talk” (1987, p.31). At the theoretical level, she specified the conditions that a discourse marker needs to have: “syntactically detachable, initial position, range of prosodic contours, operates at both local and global levels, operate on different planes of discourse” (1987, p.321).

Another leading researcher, Fraser (2009) is interested in pragmatic interpretation of DMs and he uses the term discourse marker for the items which “...signal a relation between the discourse segment which hosts them, and the prior discourse segment” (p. 296). Fraser (1996) studies a group of expressions which are called “pragmatic markers”. Discourse markers are placed under the third type of pragmatic markers, commentary pragmatic markers. From past to present, Fraser specifically focuses on DMs and studies what their characteristics are, what their grammatical status is, and which words belong to this group and which words do not.

Redeker (1991) claims that a discourse operator is “a word or phrase, for instance, conjunction, adverbial, comment clause, interjection that is uttered with the primary function of bringing to listeners’ attention a particular kind of the upcoming utterance with the immediate discourse context” (p.1168).

Blakemore (1992), who calls these items as ‘discourse connectives’, claims that they are used to indicate how the relevance of one discourse segment is dependent on another.

### 2.3.2. Theories Underlying Discourse Markers

The variety of terms used for discourse markers partly derives from the fact that it is a relatively new domain of linguistic research, and from the divergence of theoretical approaches adopted to analyse them (Granger, 2018). In this section, two different and influential perspectives will be described.

#### 2.3.2.1. Discourse Coherence Model

Schiffrin (1987) adopted a sociolinguistic perspective in the analysis of discourse markers, and this perspective was caused by her “view of discourse not only as a unit of language but as a process of social interaction” (Schiffrin, 2001, p. 56). She defines the DMs as “sequentially dependent elements which bracket units of talk” (1987, p. 31). These items are non-obligatory, utterance-initial, and function with ongoing talk and text. According to Fung (2003), ‘sequentially dependent’ means that the units of talk before and after a discourse marker determine the type of marker to be used and are “indicative of the kinds of social and pragmatic meaning a speaker has inferred or is required to offer” (p. 45).

In their work, Maschler and Schiffrin (2015) proposed that discourse markers can be regarded as a set of linguistic expressions including members from divergent word classes such as conjunctions (e.g., and, but, or), interjections (e.g., oh), adverbs (e.g., now, then), and lexicalized phrases (e.g., y’know, I mean). Her model of discourse includes five different planes: a participation framework, information state, ideational structure, action structure, and exchange structure.

According to Maschler and Schiffrin’s (2015) analyses, discourse markers could work at different levels of discourse and connect utterances on either a single plane or different planes. The example of *because* is given below (Maschler and Schiffrin, 2015):

In (1a) and (1b), *because* connects actions and ideas, respectively. In (1a), *because* connects a request (to complete a task) and the justifications for the request.

(1a) Yeh, let’s get back, *because* she’ll never get home.

In (1b), *because* connects two idea units or representation of events:

(1b) And they holler Henry!!! Cause they really don't know! (p. 191)

Another aspect of Schiffrin's research presents that "markers display relationships that are local (between adjacent utterances) and/or global (across wider spans and/or structures of discourse)" (2001, p. 57.) Example from Schiffrin (1994) explains these relationships as below:

(3) Debby: a. Well some people before they go to the doctor, they talk to a friend,  
or a neighbour.

b. Is there anybody that uh...

Henry: c. Sometimes it works!

d. Because there's this guy Louie Gelman.

e. he went to a big specialist,

f. and the guy.... analyzed it wrong.

(narrative not included)

o. So doctors are-well they're not God either! (p. 34)

In this example, in (3d) '*because*' has both local and global functions. It has a local function as it gives a justification to the previous clause (3c), but also '*because*' links (3c) to a longer narrative discourse functioning at a global level (Schiffrin, 2001).

Contrary to the beginning of her analysis with an operational definition, Schiffrin (1987) ends up with more theoretical definitions. She specifies the conditions that a discourse marker needs: "syntactically detachable, initial position, range of prosodic contours, operate at both local and global levels, operate on different planes of discourse" (1987, p. 328). Also, Schiffrin claims that although these markers have primary functions, their use is multi-functional, and this multifunctionality enables to unify different processes during the construction of discourse.

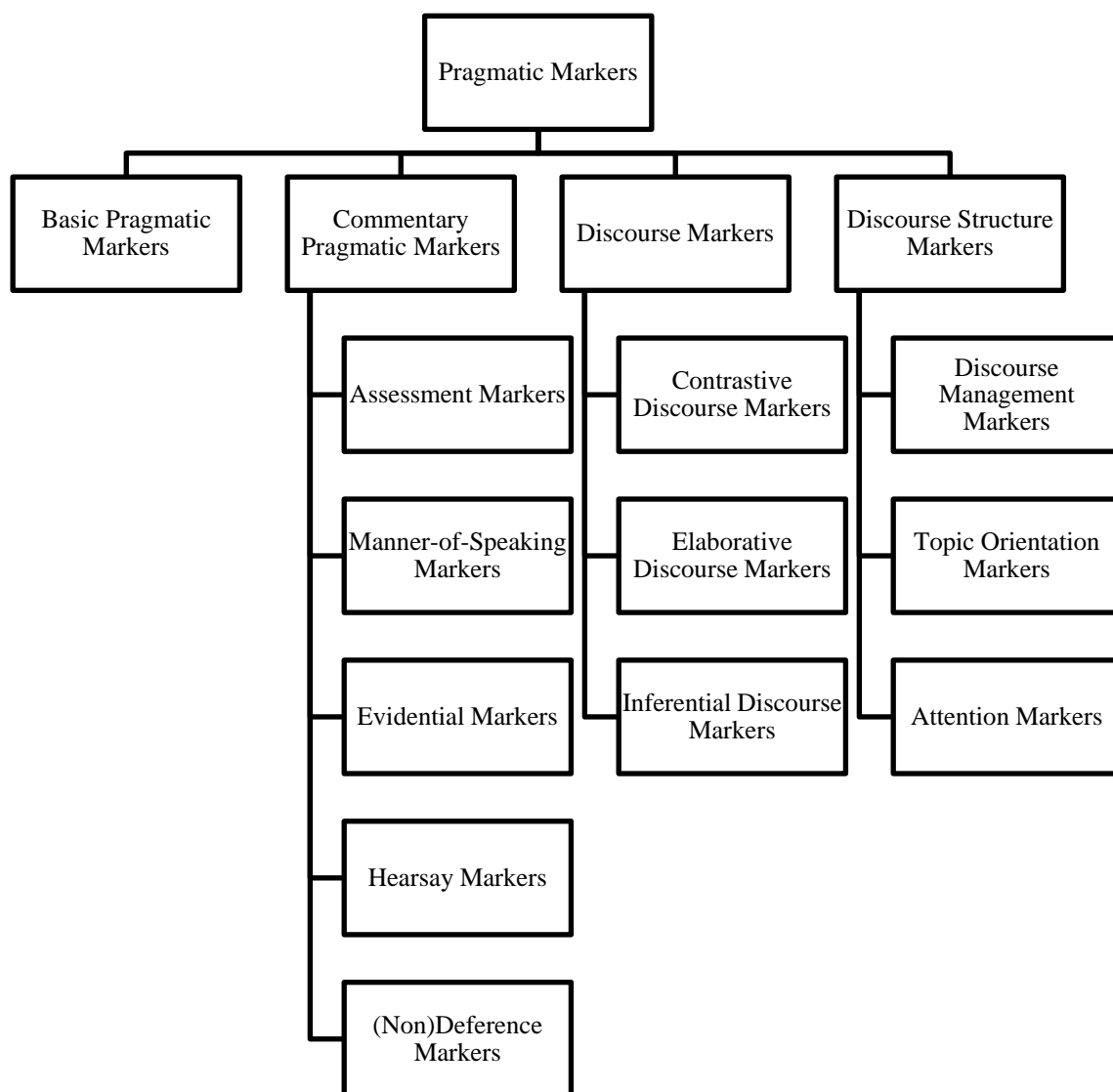
### 2.3.2.2. Grammatical-pragmatic Model

Fraser's (2009) article is titled 'An Account of Discourse Markers', he explains why he uses 'an account' instead of 'the account' in his own words in the same article: "I say *an account*, not *the account*, since there is considerable variation in what might be labelled Discourse Markers" (Fraser, 2009, p. 294). Even this brief explanation can show the divergence of research in discourse markers. As a leading scholar studying discourse markers for more than 30 years, Fraser (1996, 1999, 2006, and 2009) is interested in the

pragmatic role discourse markers have in expressing a semantic relationship between segments of discourse. Fraser (1996) puts forth that every language has a functional class of lexical expressions and he calls them '*pragmatic markers*'. These pragmatic markers are regarded as "linguistically encoded clues which signal the speaker's potential communicative intentions" (p. 168). Pragmatic markers are separate and distinct from the propositional content of the sentence. Fraser specifies the properties of this class as follows (2009):

- They are free morphemes.
- They are proposition-initial.
- They signal a specific message either about or in addition to the basic message.
- They are classified as pragmatic markers by virtue of their semantic/pragmatic functions.
- Many of them have homophonous lexical counterparts which are classified by virtue of their syntactic function, e.g. however, clearly, allegedly, so, etc. (p. 295)

Fraser (1996, 1999, 2009) divides pragmatic markers into four classes. These are Basic Pragmatic Markers, Commentary Pragmatic Markers, Discourse Markers, and Discourse Structure Markers.



**Figure 2.4. Fraser’s (2009) Taxonomy of Pragmatic Markers (Adapted from Fraser, 2009)**

Discourse markers class is one of these four classes illustrated in Figure 2.4. As stated earlier in this chapter, Fraser (2009) defines discourse markers as the lexical expressions that “signal a relation between the discourse segment (S2) which hosts them and the prior discourse segment (S1)” (p. 296). According to Fraser (1999) the term ‘*discourse segment*’ is used as “a cover term to refer to ‘*proposition*’, ‘*sentence*’, ‘*utterance*’ and ‘*message*’ unless more specificity is required” (p. 938). The three conditions that an expression must meet to be an acceptable DM are listed below (Fraser, 2009):

1. A DM is a lexical expression, for example, *but*, *so*, and *in addition*.

2. In a sequence of discourse segments S1-S2, a DM must occur as a part of the second discourse segment, S2.
3. A DM does not contribute to the semantic meaning of the segment but signals a specific semantic relationship which holds between the interpretation of the two Illocutionary Act segments, S1 and S2. (p. 297-299)

The first condition excludes syntactic structures, prosodic features such as stress, pauses, and intonation, and non-verbal expressions such as a grunt or a shrug. Fraser restricts his notion of DMs to lexical expressions. Fraser (2009) states that although Schiffrin (1987) defines DMs as "... a functional class of verbal (and non-verbal) devices ..." she never proposed a non-verbal DM.

In the second condition, S2 hosts the discourse marker if the segments are combined in one sentence, (e.g. 1a), or not combined as in (1b).

(1a) "We were late, but no one seemed to mind".

(1b) "We were late. But no one seemed to mind".

Fraser (2009) claims that every DM may occur in segment-initial position, some may occur in the segment medial and/or segment final position. This can be determined by the DM's syntactic analysis and depends on what it signals.

These three conditions of a DM eliminate the type of expressions below (Fraser, 2009):

- a. Interjections (damn, hey, wow, gosh,...)  
I like it here. Damn! I really like it here.
- b. Sentence adverbs (certainly, surely, definitely,...)  
John is very nice. Definitely, we should invite him over.
- c. Modal particles (few in English; German: doch, ja, eben,...)  
She is pretty. Indeed, she is.
- d. Focus particles (just, even, only,...)  
Everybody is ready. Even Harriet is on time.
- e. Evidential adverbs (allegedly, reportedly, according to,...)  
People are angry. Allegedly, it's because of Bush.
- f. Attitudinal adverbs (frankly, stupidly, cleverly,...)  
The weather is lousy. Frankly, I don't care. (p. 299)

Also, the types of expressions listed below are excluded as the relationship is grammatical or structural, not semantic (Fraser, 2009):

- Complementizers (grammatical relations such as *that, in order that, so as, for,...*)

I believe *that* John is right.

He fixed the door *in order that* the cat could get out.

- Topic Orientation Markers (...specifying relationships within the discourse such as *first, later, incidentally, oh that reminds me,...*)

Susan had to do the dishes. *First*, she did the glasses, as she had been instructed.

I have to go now. *Oh, that reminds me*, we were invited to John's for dinner. (p. 299)

Based on the definition and three necessary conditions that a DM needs to meet, the DMs in English are grouped in three functional classes (Fraser, 2009):

1. Contrastive Markers (CDMs): A CDM signals a direct or indirect contrast between S1 and S2.
2. Elaborative markers (EDMs): where an EDM signals an elaboration in S2 to the information contained in S1. The primary discourse marker of this category is ***and***.
3. Inferential markers (IDMs): An IDM signals that S1 provides a basis for inferring S2. The primary discourse marker of this category is ***so***. (pp.300-301)

In this classification each category has a primary discourse marker, ***but*** is the primary discourse marker of the CDMs, ***and*** is the primary discourse marker of EDMs, and ***so*** is the primary discourse marker of IDMs (Fraser, 2009). The full list of discourse markers in Fraser's taxonomy can be seen in Appendix A. Fraser's (2009) classification of DMs is functional and heterogeneous. The DMs listed in this classification are generally drawn from *conjunctions* (and, but, so, or, yet,...), *adverbials* (anyway, besides, consequently, furthermore, still, however,...), *prepositional phrases* (as a conclusion, as a result (of that), on the contrary, on the other hand,...) and very seldom from *nouns, adjectives, verbs, or prepositions*.

Fraser (1999) claims that semantically DMs "have a core meaning, which is procedural, not conceptual" (p. 950). More specific interpretation of their meaning is arranged by the linguistic and conceptual context. This procedural and/or conceptual meaning

dilemma is the point that Fraser is in strong conflict with Relevance Theory adherents. Like Blakemore (2002) and Hall (2007), Fraser also assumes meaning has at least two types; however he disagrees with the notion that a word has either a procedural meaning, or a conceptual meaning, but not both. Relevance theorists do not accept many expressions such as *in contrast*, *as a result*, and *as a consequence* as DMs since they have conceptual meaning in addition to their procedural meaning. Proponents of Relevance Theory assert that the expressions without any conceptual meaning such as *however*, *but*, *so*, *nevertheless*, and *thus* can be accepted as DMs (Blakemore, 2002). On the other hand, Fraser (2009) assumes that DMs potentially have both conceptual and procedural meaning, but not in equal proportions. He gives the example of *as a result* and *thus*. Both of these DMs signal that “S1 is the cause of S2”, or “S2 was caused from the action/state of S1”. However, when *thus* is used, the causality between two segments is assumed to follow logically.

#### **2.4. Studies on Discourse Markers**

Within the past thirty years or so there has been an increasing interest in the studies of discourse markers thanks to the advancements in the field of corpus linguistics. With the development of computer technology, more scholars could reach corpora compiled around the world and study different aspects of discourse markers. When the literature is reviewed, it is seen that some of the studies are descriptive and some of them are experimental. Descriptive studies have focused on theoretical status of DMs (Schiffrin, 1987; Redeker, 1991; Blakemore, 2002; Fraser, 2009). Experimental studies have mostly focused on the frequency of DMs in written discourse (Jalilifar, 2008; Mihaljević Djigunović & Vickov, 2010; Polat, 2011; Vaez Dalili & Vahid Dastjerdi, 2013; Ha, 2016; Alsharif, 2017; Dumlao & Wilang, 2019) and their relationship between the frequency of DMs and essay scores (Martinez, 2004; Rahimi, 2011). Very few experimental studies have focused on the teachers’ attitudes towards the discourse markers (Fung, 2011; Kalajahi & Abdullah, 2012; Aşık, 2015; Albeshar et al., 2017). In the following sections, experimental studies on discourse markers in L2 contexts abroad are presented firstly. Secondly, the studies on DMs conducted in Turkish EFL context are reviewed. Finally, the studies investigating teachers’ attitudes towards the DMs are

presented. Since there are only few studies concerning teachers' opinions, the studies conducted in Turkish EFL context and other contexts are presented in the same section.

#### **2.4.1. Studies on Discourse Markers in EFL Contexts Abroad**

Researchers have examined the use of DMs in different EFL contexts. In Spanish EFL context, Martinez (2004) investigated the use of discourse markers in the expository compositions of Spanish undergraduates. 78 compositions were collected and analysed according to Fraser's (1999) taxonomy of discourse markers. The results revealed that Spanish students used some of the DMs more frequently than the others. Elaborative markers were the most frequently used category of all. Also, the results showed that there was a statistically significant positive correlation between the frequency of discourse markers and the scores of the compositions. Highly-rated compositions included a greater number of discourse markers than poorly-rated compositions. Among the categories of DMs, elaborative markers were found to be the most closely correlated with the scores of compositions.

In the Persian EFL context, Jalilifar (2008) investigated discourse markers in descriptive compositions of 90 Iranian university students. 598 essays were compiled during 8 weeks. The essays were analysed qualitatively and quantitatively by adopting Fraser's (1999) taxonomy of discourse markers. The results were very similar to the Martinez's (2004) study. Iranian students used discourse markers with varying degrees of occurrence. Elaborative markers were also found to be the most frequently used category, followed by inferential and contrastive markers. The statistical analysis indicated a direct positive correlation between the number of discourse markers and the scores of the compositions. Based on these results, Jalilifar (2008) proposed that the scores given by the raters to the compositions are affected by the use of well-functioned DMs. The more frequently DMs were used appropriately, the higher the score of the composition was.

In the Croatian context, Mihaljevic Djigunovic and Vickov (2010) examined the Croatian primary and secondary school students' use of English discourse markers in writing. 100 primary and 100 secondary school students took part in the study. The participants were asked to read a short text and write a formal letter as a response.

While analysing the data, the researchers identified the DMs relying on Fraser's (1999) taxonomy and Swan's (2005) classifications. The frequency analysis of the data revealed that both groups (primary and secondary school students) employed the elaborative DMs the most frequently in their compositions. Moreover, the statistical analysis of the total frequency of DMs used by two groups showed significant differences. The results showed that the secondary school students used more DMs than primary school students. According to these findings, Mihaljevic Djigunovic and Vickov (2010) suggested that there may be a positive relationship between the amount of experience of learning EFL and the frequency of the use of English discourse markers. Furthermore, the results indicated that a single discourse marker was generally used in a particular category. The use of other DMs was almost symbolic.

In 2013, Vaez Dalili and Vahid Dastjerdi examined the use of discourse markers used by native English and non-native English corpora of written political discourse. They compiled two corpora of political news articles published in major US and Iranian newspapers. Each corpus was designed in similar ways so that they were really homogenous in terms of variety of the English language, the size, and the number of tokens of DMs. Based on the Fraser's (2004) taxonomy of discourse markers, the results revealed that in both corpora the elaborative discourse markers had the highest frequency, and the inferential discourse markers had the lowest frequency. Although, there were significant differences across the categories in both corpora, no significant difference was found between the total frequencies of DMs in native English and non-native English political news discourse. As there was no overuse or underuse of DMs in both corpora, the researchers claimed that advanced level non-native users of English seemed "to have access to some kind of discourse repertoire which is triggered upon long-term exposure to sufficient samples of L2 written discourse" (Vaez Dalili & Vahid Dastjerdi, 2013, p. 61).

In the Korean EFL context, Ha (2016) studied the linking adverbials in Korean university EFL learners' written productions using a corpus-based methodology. The learner corpus designed by the researcher included 105 essays written by first-year Korean university students. The control corpus was retrieved from the American LOCNESS sub-corpus. Ha (2016) used Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman's (1999) framework of linking adverbials. Four types of linking items were listed in this

framework: 1) additive, 2) adversative, 3) causal, 4) sequential. The adverbials in these categories were first identified using a corpus tool and then reviewed manually. The results showed that the distribution of the categories was similar between Korean EFL students' essays and American students' essays. The most frequently used category was the additive linking adverbials category, and it was followed by the causal, adversative, and sequential relations. However, despite this similar hierarchy, the Koreans overused the linking adverbials in all categories. Ha (2016) pointed that one reason of the overuse of linking adverbials such as *also*, *besides*, *furthermore* may be Korean EFL learners' attempts to ensure cohesive ties between two segments. Another reason suggested by Ha (2016) was that EFL learners were instructed to write as logically as possible, so they overused the sequential items.

One of latest studies on DMs was conducted by Dumlao and Wilang in Asian EFL context in 2019. Dumlao and Wilang (2019) investigated the use of DMs in reflective essays written by native English speakers and non-native English speakers in Philippines. They analysed 24 essays adopting Fraser's (2009) taxonomy of DMs. The results indicated that both groups employed elaborative markers the most frequently. However, L1 English users used contrastive markers the most frequently. The results of their study confirmed the results of the previous studies reviewed earlier that L2 English users employed a more limited set of discourse markers in their writings and relied heavily on some particular markers in each category. Dumlao and Wilang (2019) suggested that L2 students must be exposed to authentic English texts including a wide range of discourse markers so that they can see different variations. Also, it was stated that teaching methods should be revised and more focus should be given to beyond-sentence level. Thus, the students' attention could be drawn to discourse features, and repetition or redundancy may be avoided in the whole text.

#### **2.4.2. Studies on Discourse Markers in EFL Context in Turkey**

In contrast to the plethora of the studies on DMs in other EFL contexts, there are a limited number of studies in Turkish EFL context. The literature has been increasing very recently with research articles, master's theses, and doctoral dissertations

investigating DMs in Turkish EFL context (Özhan, 2012; Yangın-Ersanlı, 2015; Abal, 2016; Aysu, 2017; Tiryaki, 2017; Zorluer Özer & Okan, 2018).

To begin with, Özhan (2012) studied the use of three discourse markers ‘*but*’, ‘*however*’, and ‘*although*’ in Turkish university students’ argumentative essays in her doctoral dissertation. In this study, Özhan (2012) collected 120 essays from Turkish subcorpus of the International Corpus of Learner English (TICLE) and 120 essays from American subcorpus of Louvain Corpus of Native English Essays (ALOCNESS). She chose these DMs - ‘*but*’, ‘*however*’, and ‘*although*’- as they were the most frequent discourse connectives in TICLE and ALOCNESS. Özhan (2012) investigated the structural properties and metadiscourse functions of these three connectives. The results showed that there is no statistical significance in the use of these three connectives between Turkish learners of English and American students. However, when argumentation is analysed in both TICLE and ALOCNESS, it was seen that in ALOCNESS there was “more reliance on lexical items expressing modality and those signalling the argumentative nature of the text” (Özhan, 2012, p. 166). Moreover, Özhan (2012) stated that at the macrostructural level, Turkish students’ essays did not fully meet the requirements of argumentative writing.

Another study conducted in Turkish EFL context is Yangın-Ersanlı (2015). In her study, Yangın-Ersanlı compared the use of cohesive devices by Turkish EFL learners and native speakers of English. For the learner corpus, 151 essays were collected from 151 Turkish university students enrolled in the Academic Reading and Writing Course in an ELT department. The control corpus was the British Academic Written English corpus which is available for use upon request. The essays in both corpora were analyzed through AntConc corpus tool. Then, the cohesive devices were classified according to types such as addition, result, summation, contrast. After the frequency analysis, a common statistical test of significance was conducted to check the differences between two corpora. The results revealed that Turkish students’ sentences were much shorter and Turkish learners of English overused cohesive devices when compared to native speakers of English. Yangın-Ersanlı (2015) claimed that this may be due to the students’ desire to create an elaborative text to get higher scores. She suggested that Turkish learners should be trained to use fewer cohesive devices and to develop mastery in combining sentences and ideas.

The third study to review is Abal's (2016) study. Abal (2016) focused on the receptive and productive knowledge of discourse markers by ELT prospective teachers. 62 prospective teachers participated in her study. Firstly, they were given argumentative essays and asked to analyze linguistic elements. Secondly, they were asked to write argumentative essays on certain topics. Conducting an experimental study, she aimed to compare Turkish learners' ability of identifying linguistic elements (grammatical and lexical markers) in reading and the ability of using them in writing. This aim was achieved by evaluating all the reading and writing tests of the participants in the control group and treatment group and counting the discourse markers they used in their essays. While analysing the data, she adopted Halliday and Hasan's (1976) framework of DMs. The results revealed that prospective teachers of ELT were able to identify and produce discourse markers correctly in their writings. Also, she found out that the treatment helped the students to create a better grammatical and lexical variety. In the sub-category of conjunctions, additive and temporal conjunctions were used the most frequently by the students in their essays. However, the number of repetition in lexical category was very high. Based on this result, Abal (2016) claimed that the students had a lack of lexical variety, and this made them to use some words repetitively. As a result, the quality of essays decreased. Abal (2016) suggested that DMs help the learners to explain their ideas and argumentation in a clear way; therefore the teaching of DMs should be integrated in the language teaching objectives of writing instruction.

One of latest studies investigating discourse markers in written context is the one conducted by Aysu (2017). In this study, the researcher examined discourse markers used by elementary-level preparation school students studying English at a state university. The number of students participating in the study was 104, and they all were required to write a paragraph including 80-100 words. Fraser's (1999) taxonomy of discourse markers were used to identify and classify the DMs. The results revealed that the participants used elaborative markers (i.e. *and*) the most, contrastive markers (i.e. *but*) the second, causative markers (i.e. *because*) the third, and inferential markers (i.e. *so*). The researcher suggested that the reason behind the overuse of '*and*', '*but*', and '*because*' may be the participants' native language, Turkish, as these words are used frequently in Turkish language.

The final study to be reviewed in this section is Zorluel Özer and Okan's (2018) study. Different from the previous studies, this study focused on the teachers' use of DMs in EFL classrooms. The data was collected from the lectures of two Turkish and two native EFL teachers. The lectures were audio-recorded and transcribed for corpus analysis. The results of the corpus analysis showed that native English EFL teachers used a larger variety of DMs than Turkish EFL teachers during the lectures. It was also found out that most of the DMs were underused by Turkish EFL teachers in EFL classrooms when compared to the native English EFL teachers. Zorluel Özer and Okan (2018) suggested that non-native English language teachers' awareness should be raised through inclusion of corpus-based activities in pre-service education.

#### **2.4.3. Studies on Teachers' Perceptions of Discourse Markers**

When the literature is reviewed for the studies investigating teachers' perspectives on discourse markers, it can be easily noticed that there is a research gap. The most famous and noteworthy study is Fung's (2011) study that investigated teachers' views on DMs in spoken discourse. Fung (2011) studied Hong Kong secondary teachers' perspectives. The quantitative data was collected from 132 senior English teachers using a questionnaire. The questionnaire had seven different factors, each one focusing on different aspects of DMs. The qualitative data was collected from three teachers who filled in the questionnaire. Overall, the quantitative and qualitative results showed that the teachers considered DMs as very useful linguistic devices that are worth to teach in EFL classrooms. The findings also showed that DMs are underrepresented in EFL teaching materials and classrooms. Fung (2011) suggested that corpus-based activities should be utilized to exercise multifunctionality of DMs in different contexts and registers. Moreover, the teaching materials and curriculum should be modified to make learners' communication more effective.

The second study focusing on teachers' opinions was conducted by Kalajahi and Abdullah (2012). In their study, Kalajahi and Abdullah (2012) expanded the Fung's (2011) study and examined the role of DMs in teaching four skills of English (reading, writing, listening, and speaking). The participants of the study were 45 Iranian English language teachers. They completed a questionnaire which was prepared by Kalajahi and Abdullah by modifying the original questionnaire designed by Fung (2011). The results

of their study indicated that Iranian EFL teachers did not have highly positive attitudes but only moderately positive attitudes towards the use of DMs. The participants seemed to possess very positive opinions only about the pragmatic and practical value of DMs. These findings showed that there was a consensus on the benefits of using DMs in language comprehension and production. However, it was found out that Iranian EFL teachers did not favour Persian style of using DMs. Therefore, they suggested that the learners should be taught and exposed the way native speakers use the DMs. The relatively less positive attitudes towards the pedagogic and dispensable values of DMs showed that Iranian teachers were reluctant to highlight DMs. Kalajahi and Abdullah (2012) concluded that the participants may not believe or consider DMs to be critically important for discourse cohesion; therefore, the awareness of teachers on the effectiveness of DMs in creating discourse cohesion should be increased.

The next study reviewed for teachers' perceptions of DMs is Aşık's (2015) study which is one of the few studies conducted in Turkish context regarding teachers' perceptions. This study investigated the perceptions of Turkish EFL teachers towards the use of discourse markers in EFL classrooms. Aşık (2015) used an adapted version of Fung's (2011) questionnaire and investigated specifically the use of DMs in spoken discourse. The data was collected through a questionnaire from 104 instructors working at seven different state universities in four different cities of Turkey. The data was analyzed quantitatively. The analyses suggested that teachers had positive opinions towards the use of DMs and found them necessary for pragmatic competence of learners. The least positive opinions were about the identification with the native speaker norm which refers to the use of DMs by native speakers of English and its reflection in language classrooms and how DMs should be highlighted in EFL classrooms. Moreover, the results indicated that Turkish EFL teachers were fairly uncertain about how and when DMs should be included in the curriculum. Aşık (2015) asserted that the expectations about the learners should be realistic in language teaching and they should not be regarded as potential native speakers.

The last and latest study focusing on teachers' opinions was conducted by Albeshar, Farid, and Raja in Saudi EFL context in 2017. They aimed to find out how Saudi EFL teachers perceive the use of DMs in writing skills of their students compared to native English teachers. For this purpose, they adapted the Fung's questionnaire for writing

and gathered quantitative data from forty native teachers including 20 males and 20 females and forty non-native teachers including 20 males and 20 females. Another aim of the study was to investigate gender based differences on the perceptions of the use of DMs. The descriptive statistics revealed that the most positive attitudes were towards the pedagogic and pragmatic value of DMs. The least positive attitudes were towards the native speaker norm, which means Saudi EFL teachers are aware that their students do not have to be equal to the native speakers in the use of DMs in writing. The further analysis of the results showed that there was no significant difference between native and non-native teachers' perceptions of the use DMs regarding the five factors - pedagogical value of DMs, native speaker norm, pragmatic value of DMs, dispensable value of DMs, prioritizing for receptive purpose- in the questionnaire. Furthermore, the findings revealed that gender had nothing to do with teachers' perceptions of the importance of the use of DMs in EFL teaching.

## CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

### 3.1. Introduction

This chapter presents the methodology of the study. Information on research design, the research questions, the setting, and the participants of the study is given first. Then, the data collection instruments are explained. Finally, data analysis procedures are described.

### 3.2. Research Design

The current study aims to achieve two primary goals: 1) to examine and compare the use of DMs in English argumentative essays written by Turkish university students learning English as a foreign language and native American university students; 2) to explore the teachers' perceptions of DMs in EFL writing. To these objectives, both qualitative and quantitative data collection instruments were utilized.

Table 3.1 illustrates the pilot study phase and three phases of the main study. One year before the main study, a pilot study was conducted with a smaller Turkish learner corpus which included 43 essays written by B2 level university students and the native English corpus used in the main study so as to foresee and detect any potential problems that might be encountered during the data collection and analysis procedures. The data was computerized and analysed using the Fraser's (2009) taxonomy of DMs and AntConc concordance tool. Thanks to the pilot study, some minor notes were taken for the sake of practicality of the main study. No other significant decisions related to the main study were made based on this preliminary research.

During the main study, firstly, the data gathered from Turkish students was collected by following a corpus-based methodology and making use of a corpus tool. The American students' essays were accessed online. The data gathered from teachers was obtained through a questionnaire and a semi-structured interview. The questionnaire was completed first by the teachers. The interviews were held with 10 voluntary teachers out of 35. The interviews were delayed to be conducted almost one month after the questionnaires were completed in order to be sure that the teachers were not influenced

by the items in the questionnaire and they gave their opinions freely during the interview. While analysing the data, both quantitative and qualitative data analysis methods were employed. This mixed-methods research design was adopted to give detailed answers to the research questions in this study.

**Table 3.1 Overall Research Design**

Phase	Dates	Data Sources	Number of Participants	Purpose
1	April 30 – May 4 2018	Pilot- Collection of Turkish Learner Corpus and Access to Native English Corpus	43 Turkish university students 43 American university students	To examine Turkish and American students' actual use of DMs
	April 1-5, 2019	Main -Collection of Turkish Learner Corpus and Access to Native English Corpus	125 Turkish university students 43 American university students	
2	April 8-15, 2019	The Questionnaire of Turkish EFL Teachers Perceptions of DMs in EFL Writing	35 Turkish EFL teachers	To explore Turkish EFL teachers' perceptions of DMs
3	May 6-10, 2019	Semi-Structured Interviews	10 Turkish EFL teachers	

### 3.3. Research Questions

This study aimed to address the following research questions:

- 1) What are the most/least frequent discourse markers in native English and Turkish learner corpora?
- 2) Is there any difference in the total frequency of DMs between native English and Turkish learner corpora?
- 3) Are there any frequency-based differences across different classes of DMs:
  - a) within native English corpus,
  - b) within Turkish learner corpus,
  - c) between native English corpus and Turkish learner corpus?
- 4) What is the relationship between the frequency of DMs used in Turkish learners' essays and the scores given to them by the raters?
- 5) How do Turkish EFL teachers perceive the role, usage, and teaching of DMs in EFL writing?

### **3.4. Setting**

The study was conducted at the School of Foreign Languages at a state university. This school prepares its students for their English-medium departments at the faculties. A modular system is applied during the academic year. Each student starts at an appropriate level for them (A1, A2, B1 or B2 levels according to Common European Framework of Reference-CEFR) at the beginning of the academic year and they pass to the next level until they reach B2 level. When they take B2 level courses and complete the level's requirements successfully, they graduate from the preparatory school and start education in their major field of study. The courses provided for the students are general English courses such as main course, reading skills, writing skills, listening skills, speaking skills and grammar. Also, at B2 level the students take English for Specific Purposes (ESP) course for three hours a week.

The students are required to take writing skills courses between 6-8 hours a week from A2 level to B2 level. At the A2 level, the focus is on combining sentences and creating a paragraph. At the next level (B1), they learn how to write different types of paragraphs, and at the end of B1 level, they are instructed on how to write an essay. At the level of B2, they learn to write different types of essays. In each level, they have three pop-quizzes. They are given a few topics in these quizzes and asked to write a paragraph or an essay according to their level. Their writing course teachers assess these written assignments and the students are given feedback on their writing performance. Writing, as a productive skill, is attached great importance by the institution. Therefore, all examinations such as mid-term exams, final exams, or proficiency exams, include a writing part which asks the students to write either a paragraph or an essay in accordance with their level.

### **3.5. Participants**

The data in the current study was collected from three groups. The first group was the Turkish university students whose essays were compiled to build the learner corpus by the researcher. The second group was the native American university students whose essays were accessed online as a sub-corpus of LOCNESS. The third group was the instructors at the researcher's institution.

The first group included 125 Turkish university students. The learner corpus was compiled from their argumentative essays. These students were registered at either at the Faculty of Engineering or Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences, and they were studying English for their English-medium departments at the School of Foreign Languages during the 2018-2019 academic year.

All participants took an English placement test at the beginning of the academic year and were placed at A1 or A2 level. After studying for eight weeks at each level and fulfilling the requirements of the level (exams, pop quizzes, writing assignments, oral presentations, etc.), they passed to the next level. The students whose essays were collected were B2 (upper-intermediate) level students in this learning context. General demographic information of the students can be seen in Table 3.2 below.

**Table 3.2 General Demographic Information of the Turkish Students**

		N=125	%	Min.	Max.	Mean
<b>Gender</b>	Male	56	44,8 %			
	Female	69	55,2 %			
<b>Age</b>				18	24	19,4
<b>Number of Years of Learning English</b>				1	15	6,9
<b>Department</b>	Computer Engineering	26	20,8			
	Industrial Engineering	25	20,0			
	Energy Systems Engineering	11	8,8			
	Chemistry and Process Engineering	6	4,8			
	Polymer Engineering	4	3,2			
	Transportation Engineering	2	1,6			
	Economics	9	7,2			
	Management	14	11,2			
	International Relations	26	20,8			
	Other (Vocational Schools)	2	1,6			

The second group was the 43 American university students at the University of Michigan. The sub-corpus of LOCNESS used in this study was compiled from their argumentative essays. As this corpus was accessed online and not compiled by the researcher, the participants' information is quite limited. It was stated in the LOCNESS description that these students were all native speakers of English, and their ages ranged between 19-23 (Granger, 1998).

The third group of participants was the teachers working at the same school as the researcher. Teachers were invited to complete The Questionnaire of Teachers'

Perceptions of Discourse Markers in EFL Writing via email. Thirty-five teachers completed the questionnaire voluntarily. General demographic information of teachers can be seen in Table 3.3 below.

**Table 3.3 General Demographic Information of the Teachers**

		N	%
<b>Gender</b>	Male	10	28,6 %
	Female	25	71,4 %
<b>Age</b>	25-30 years	15	42,9 %
	30-35 years	17	48,6 %
	35-40 years	2	5,7 %
	Older than 40 years	1	2,8 %
<b>Experience</b>	5-10 years	26	74,3%
	10-15 years	7	20%
	More than 15 years	2	5,7%
<b>BA Degree</b>	English Language Teaching	23	65,8%
	English Language and Literature	9	25,7%
	American Culture and Literature	2	5,7%
	Translation and Interpretation in English	1	2,8%
<b>MA Degree</b>	Yes	20	57%
	No	15	43%

All teachers teach English for 18-20 hours a week. They teach different courses at various levels during the academic year and advise one of the classrooms. The advising teachers check their students' exam papers, quiz papers, and they are responsible for students' portfolio assignments.

Ten teachers were chosen randomly and asked for their consent to have an interview about the role, usage, and teaching of DMs in EFL writing. These teachers were given numbers for their confidentiality while analysing and presenting the interview data.

### **3.6. Data Collection Instruments**

As data collection tools, a Turkish learner corpus, a sub-corpus of LOCNESS as Native English (NE) corpus, a questionnaire and a semi-structured interview were used. In this part, data collection instruments and procedures are presented in details.

### 3.6.1. Turkish Learner Corpus

This corpus was compiled from Turkish university students' argumentative essays which they wrote as an in-class assignment after learning how to write an argumentative essay in their writing skills course. All 125 students wrote their essays at the same time in six different classrooms (see Appendix B for sample essays). The students were given two topics (see Table 3.4) and asked to choose one of them. They were asked to write at least five paragraphs; an introduction paragraph including background information about the topic and the thesis statement, at least three body paragraphs for three different arguments to support the thesis statement, and a conclusion paragraph summarizing the essay. The allocated time was 60 minutes, and no reference tool was allowed to use except hardcopy dictionaries. Also, cell phones were not allowed during writing to avoid plagiarism and other sharing possibilities.

**Table 3.4 Essay Topics Used in Turkish Students' Argumentative Essays**

Essay Topic	#	%
1-Some people believe that studying at university or college is necessary for a successful career while some others believe that it is better to get a job straight after school. Discuss both views and give your opinion.	78	62,4%
2- Some people think that some jobs are certainly suitable for men while other people think that some jobs are certainly for women. Discuss both views and give your opinion.	47	37,6%

The handwritten essays gathered from the students were typed up by the researcher in .txt file format to be able to use the data in a corpus tool. While typing, no mistake was corrected by the researcher; the essays were copied precisely the same into the computer. In total, the corpus included **37.718** words; this showed that each essay included around **300** words.

### 3.6.2. Native English Corpus

In order to do a Comparative Interlanguage Analysis (CIA) of the use of DMs between Turkish learners of English and American university students, a sub-corpus of The Louvain Corpus of Native English Essays was used. LOCNESS includes native English essays written by British and American students.

The sample used in the current study includes 43 argumentative essays written by fully English native speakers at the University of Michigan (see Appendix C for a sample essay). The total number of words in the corpus is **16,502**. The reason behind choosing this sample was the similarity between its design criteria and the Turkish learner corpus design criteria. Firstly, all the essays in this sample were argumentative essays, and each essay included less than 500 words. Secondly, participants had time limitation during writing, and they were not allowed to use reference tools such as books, magazines, articles etc. Also, in most parts of the sub-corpora of the LOCNESS, participants had a variety of topics to choose for their essays. Some of these topics were quite specific such as *“French Intellectual Tradition”* or *“A single Europe: A loss of sovereignty for Britain”*. The topic affects the content and style of the writing considerably, so it would not be rational to compare these essays with Turkish students’ essays. However, the writing topic in the sample used in this study was *“Great inventions and discoveries of the 20th century and their impact on people’s lives”*. This topic was relatively simpler than the other topics in the LOCNESS and very similar to the topics provided for Turkish students. Finally, the ages of the participants ranged between 19-23, which was another similarity. As a result, the most appropriate sample for contrastive analysis was found to be the one compiled at Michigan University.

### 3.6.3. The Questionnaire of Teachers’ Perceptions of Discourse Markers in EFL Writing

As a part of the present research, this questionnaire (see Appendix D) aimed at understanding and exploring teachers’ perceptions of DMs in EFL writing. The questionnaire was composed of 30 items by adapting the original version of Fung (2011). The original version used by Fung (2011) focused on the use of DMs in speaking and contained 48 items. In the adapted version, some of the items were

removed, and some were reworded to highlight writing skill instead of speaking. The adapted version of the questionnaire was examined by two other lecturers to provide feedback and to prevent any uncertainty in the modified items. Based on their feedback, some of the items were revised and reformed for the research context. In the final version, the questionnaire was targeted to explore teachers' perspectives in six categories with 30 items. The categories are: 1) pragmatic value of DMs, 2) pedagogic value of DMs, 3) indispensable value of DMs, 4) identification with native speaker norm, 5) prioritizing teaching of DMs, and 6) representation of DMs in EFL classrooms. Table 3.5 shows the categories and item numbers in these categories.

**Table 3.5 Six Categories in the Questionnaire of Teachers' Perceptions of DMs in EFL Writing**

<b>Category Name</b>	<b>Items in the Category</b>
1. Pragmatic Value of DMs	1, 2, 3, 19, 20, 29
2. Pedagogic Value of DMs	5, 8, 9, 10, 26, 30
3. Indispensable Value of DMs	4, 6, 11, 18, 23, 24
4. Identification with Native Speaker Norm	7, 16, 21, 25
5. Prioritizing Teaching of DMs	13, 14, 17, 27, 28
6. Representation of DMs in EFL Classrooms	12, 15, 22

A 5-point Likert scale was employed to elicit responses from teachers. Likert scales are regarded as the most commonly used scaling technique in second/foreign language research (Dörnyei & Taguchi, 2010). Likert scales are reliable and straightforward for quantitative research. In this study, the Likert scale responses were listed as '*1-Strongly Disagree*', '*2-Disagree*', '*3-Uncertain*', '*4-Agree*', and '*5-Strongly Agree*'. Five items were negatively worded to recheck the reliability of the statements.

The questionnaire was uploaded to Google Forms, the link of the questionnaire and a participant information sheet (see Appendix E) was emailed to the teachers. The information sheet informed the teachers about what a discourse marker refers to in the current study and presented examples of DMs. Also, sample sentences were provided for clarification. The participants were requested to read the information sheet and then complete the questionnaire.

### 3.6.4. The Semi-Structured Interview

A semi-structured interview was held with ten voluntary teachers. Interviews are advantageous “to investigate the phenomena which are not directly observable, such as learners’ self-reported perceptions or attitudes” (Mackey & Gass, 2005, p. 173). The main purpose of the interview was to triangulate the data gathered from the teachers through the Questionnaire of Teachers’ Perceptions of DMs in EFL Writing so that the learner corpus analysis results, the quantitative results of the teacher questionnaires, and the qualitative results of teacher interviews can be combined and compared. By this means, the validity of the conclusions drawn from the current study was aimed to increase.

10 questions were prepared before the interview by the researcher (see Appendix F), but as this was a semi-structured interview, some questions were skipped as the interviewee answered them while answering a different but related question or some probing questions were added by the researcher during the interview to dig deeper to find out more about teachers’ perceptions. The interview questions were formed to elicit more specific information or experiences from the teachers in this research context. The interview questions 2, 4, 5, and 9 were designed to obtain information from the teachers regarding the research questions 1, 2, 3, and 4 of the present study. The interview questions 1, 3, 6, 7, 8, and 10 focused on the aspects such as the role of DMs, the teaching of DMs, differences between Turkish and native English students’ writings, and representation of DMs in classrooms and the curriculum. Each interview lasted around 30 minutes. The duration of the interviews can be seen in Table 3.6. All the interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed for the coding by the researcher.

**Table 3.6 Duration of Teacher Interviews**

<b>Participant</b>	<b>Interview Duration</b>
Teacher 1	22 minutes
Teacher 2	20 minutes
Teacher 3	21 minutes
Teacher 4	19 minutes
Teacher 5	23 minutes
Teacher 6	25 minutes
Teacher 7	23 minutes
Teacher 8	21 minutes
Teacher 9	25 minutes
Teacher 10	25 Minutes

Table 3.7 shows the distribution of teacher interview questions for the research questions of the present study.

**Table 3.7 The Distribution of Teacher Interview Questions for Research Questions**

Research Question	Related Interview Question(s)
1- "What are the most/least frequent discourse markers in native English and Turkish learner corpora?"	4- Have you ever noticed that your students overuse or underuse any specific DM? If yes, can you give an example?
2- Is there any difference in the total frequency of DMs between native English and Turkish learner corpora?	9- How do TR students differ in the use of DMs from native speakers? Do you think they use them more/less frequently than native speakers? Why? What can be the possible reasons behind the overuse/underuse of DMs for TR students compared to native speakers?
3- Are there any frequency-based differences across different classes of DMs: a) within native English corpus, b) within Turkish learner corpus, and c) between native English corpus and Turkish learner corpus?	2- What do you think of the importance of the categories? If you are asked to number the categories of DMs in the order of importance, which category (IDM, EDM, or CDM) would be the first, second, and third? Why?
4- What is the relationship between the frequency of DMs used in Turkish learners' essays and the scores given to them by the raters?	5- What do you think of the relationship between the number of DMs used in an essay and the score obtained from that essay?
5- How do Turkish EFL teachers perceive the role, usage, and teaching of DMs in EFL writing?	<p>1- How do you perceive the role of DMs in writing? How important are DMs in a written text? What potential and practical benefits do DMs provide for students when they are used in writing?</p> <p>3- How do DMs affect the structure of a text/meaning of a text? Does the structure of a text/meaning of a text change significantly, if DMs are omitted? Or, will it be still possible to interpret the text if they are omitted?</p> <p>6-What is the most appropriate level to teach DMs? Why?</p> <p>7-How do you teach/highlight DMs in your classrooms? Can you think of any useful activity for the teaching of DMs in classrooms? Can you give an example?</p> <p>8-In which type of essays do the students have difficulty in using DMs? Have you noticed any difference among genres?</p> <p>10- What do you think of the representation of DMs in the existing writing curriculum? In relation to the objectives, exams, materials, teaching methods etc. is there enough emphasis on the use of DMs?</p>

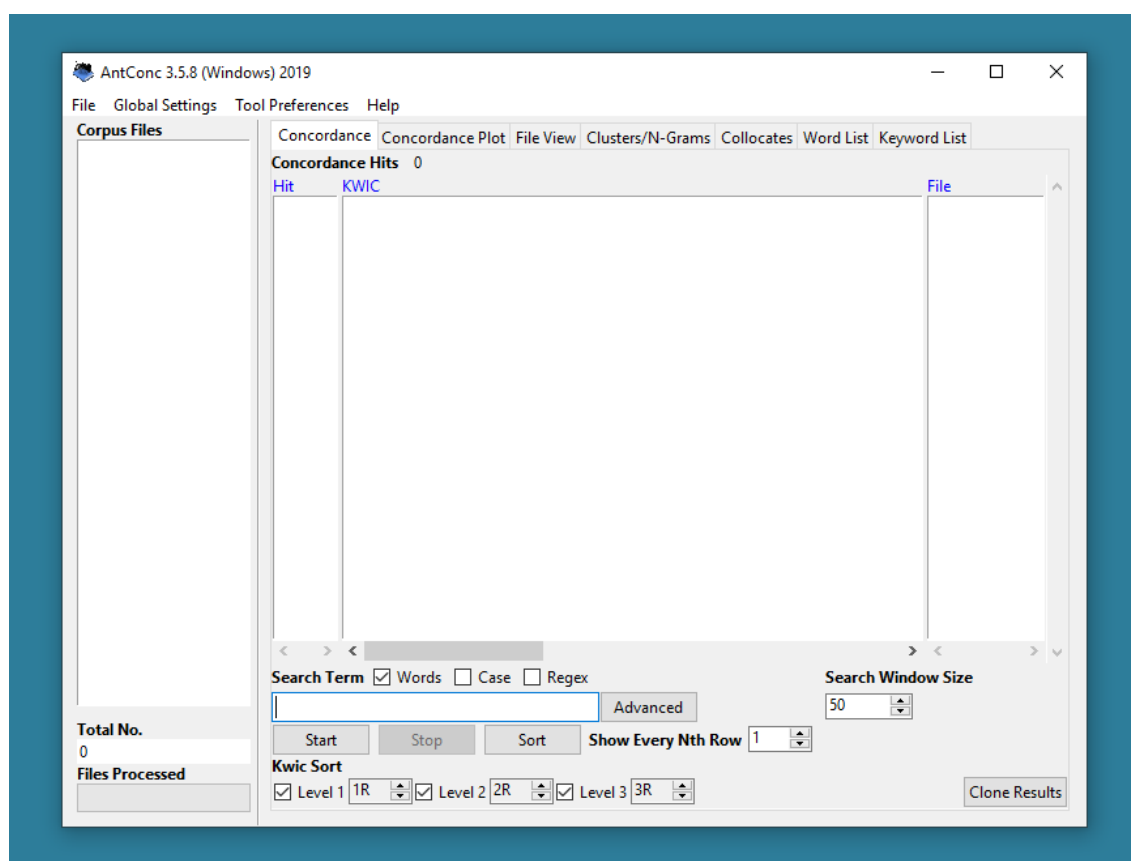
### 3.7. Data Analysis Procedures

This research is based on the use of DMs by Turkish learners of English and teachers' perceptions of DMs in EFL writing. The data gathered from various sources through data collection instruments were analysed using quantitative and qualitative analysis methods for each research question. Table 3.8 shows the research questions, the data collection instrument(s) for each question, and data analysis procedure for that instrument.

**Table 3.8 Research Questions, Data Collection Tools, and Data Analysis Methods**

Research Question	Data Collection Tool(s)	Data Analysis
<b>1:</b> What are the most/least frequent discourse markers in native English and Turkish learner corpora?	-Turkish Learner Corpus	Corpus analysis <b>(Qualitative)</b>
	-NE Corpus	Frequency Analysis <b>(Quantitative)</b>
<b>2:</b> Is there any difference in total frequency of DMs between native English and Turkish learner corpora?	-Turkish Learner Corpus	Chi-Square test <b>(Quantitative)</b>
	-NE Corpus	
<b>3:</b> Are there any frequency-based differences across three DM categories: <b>a)</b> within native English corpus, <b>b)</b> within Turkish learner corpus, <b>c)</b> between native English corpus and Turkish learner corpus?	-Turkish Learner Corpus	Chi-Square test <b>(Quantitative)</b>
	-NE Corpus	
<b>4:</b> What is the relationship between the frequency of DMs used in Turkish learners' essays and the scores given to them by the raters?	-Turkish Learner Corpus	Pearson Product Correlation Analysis <b>(Quantitative)</b>
	-Essay scores rated by instructors	
<b>5-</b> How do Turkish EFL teachers perceive the role, usage, and teaching of DMs in EFL writing?	-The Questionnaire of Teachers' Perceptions of DMs in EFL Writing	Descriptive statistics <b>(Quantitative)</b>
	-Semi-structured interview	Content Analysis <b>(Qualitative)</b>

**Research Question 1:** *“What are the most/least frequent discourse markers in native English and Turkish learner corpora?”* For this research question, the corpus-based analysis of the frequency of discourse markers in Turkish learner corpus and native English corpus were performed. Using the concordance software AntConc 3.5.8 (see Figure 3.1), each discourse marker in Fraser's (2009) classification was searched in both corpora.



**Figure 3.1 A Screenshot of Concordance Software AntConc 3.5.8**

However, the number of hits for each DM was not accepted as the frequency of DMs because as the nature of language, an expression may have more than one meaning or function, so the concordance outputs were checked manually to eliminate the uses which are not defined as discourse markers by Fraser (2009). The full list of DMs in Fraser's (2009) taxonomy can be seen in Appendix A. At this stage of data analysis, computer-based corpus analysis and traditional manual text analysis were combined. The necessity of bringing quantitative and qualitative methods together can be seen in the examples below. Table 3.9 below shows the concordances of "so" as a modifier in the Turkish learner corpus, while Table 3.10 shows the use of the conjunction "so" as an inferential discourse marker. While the concordances in Table 3.10 were considered as DMs during the data analysis, the concordances in Table 3.9 were not accepted as DMs because they did not host two segments and did not signal any relationship. They were only used to modify the adjectives coming after them. However, the concordances in Table 3.10 were used as coordinating conjunctions, and they signal a relationship between two segments.

**Table 3.9 The Use of ‘so’ as a Modifier in the Turkish Learner Corpus**


---

School is	so	important for your life. If school is not,
...cash in early ages and this is feeling	so	good but they can't think future.
... must go university or college. This is	so	important for yours job life. You will be
...jobs should be equal about. Woman are	so	powerful but most people don't recognise.
Have you ever worked a job? Work is	so	tiring sometimes. People say that "if you

---

**Table 3.10 The Use of Coordinating Conjunction “so” as an Inferential Discourse Marker (IDM) in the Turkish Learner corpus**


---

...women men and women are equal,	so	if men do any job, women can do.
...that easy to have amount of knowledge,	so	it's easy to get a job after...
...down women because they are sensitive,	so	people believe that men are more superior..
...think that women are weaker than men,	so	they don't want women to work heavy...
...you can communicate with people easily,	so	people should go to the university. To sum

---

The concordances in Table 3.11 below are samples taken from native American corpus used in this study. Although these concordances were presented in the results when the word “and” was searched in the AntConc software, these hits were eliminated during the manual analysis of the results as they were not considered as discourse markers because there were not two segments they were combining. They were linking two or more parallel expressions. The use of “and” as a coordinating conjunction can be seen in Table 3.12.

**Table 3.11 The Use of “and” Linking Two or More Parallel Expressions**


---

...y with smaller, better, faster microchips	and	advancements. With respect to the ...
...and much more. Every day new	and	and exciting improvements are being ...
...early discoveries included the wheel	and	and fire. In the long line of such ...
...about that very thing. My great Uncle	and	Aunt who are in their late eighties...

---

In the concordances in Table 3.12, “and” was used as a coordinating conjunction and combined two segments signalling an elaboration in segment 2 to the information contained in segment 1.

**Table 3.12 The Use of Coordinating Conjunction “and” as an Elaborative Discourse Marker (EDM)**

---

... have cured my grandmother of cancer,	and	they provide horizons of hope and ...
...more programs were made available,	and	they soon became more compatible with ...
...the Cold War. That wall is gone forever,	and	I feel lucky to be among the many ...
... my family, my parents work,	and	I go to school and work as well...

---

As a third example, “since” can be used both as an adverb meaning “until now and as a conjunction meaning “because” and “as”. In Table 3.13, the concordances were taken from native American corpus used in this study. These results were not accepted as discourse markers because they did not signal any relationship between two segments; their function was to indicate the time in the sentence. However, the concordances in Table 3.14 were taken from Turkish learner corpus, and they were all accepted as DMs as they signal a relationship between the previous segment and the host segment.

**Table 3.13 The Use of “since” as a Time Adverb**

---

...The computer has been around	since	the end of the Second World War.
...problems and difficulties. Therefore,	since	the invention of television, society has...
... much more quickly.	Since	1980 there have been many advances...
...change than our planet has seen	since	its genesis. Although the old habits die...

---

**Table 3.14 The Use of Conjunction “since” as an Inferential Discourse Marker (IDM)**

---

...college does not help to be successful,	since	it causes getting job at old ages.
...don't work before they don't graduate,	since	students should separate time ...
...power is not significant in different jobs	since	there aren't separation jobs for women...

---

After the manual analysis of the concordances in two corpora, the frequency counts of each discourse marker was calculated clearly.

**Research Question 2:** *“Is there any difference in the total frequency of DMs between native English and Turkish learner corpora?”* This question was answered by conducting a quantitative analysis on the frequency counts of the DMs in two corpora. Chi-square test was performed on SPSS, and it was used to figure out if there was any significant difference in the total frequency of DMs across two corpora.

**Research Question 3:** *Are there any frequency-based differences across different classes of DMs:*

- a) *within native English corpus,*
- b) *within Turkish learner corpus,*
- c) *between native English corpus and Turkish learner corpus?*

These questions were also answered by conducting quantitative analysis on the frequency counts of the discourse markers to check if there is a statistically significant difference between the numbers of DMs across the three categories in two corpora. SPSS 25.0 data analysis software was used, and the chi-square test was performed for statistical analysis. This test is used to determine if there is a significant relationship between two nominal (categorical) variables. It is one of the most commonly used significance tests for categorical variables in the social sciences.

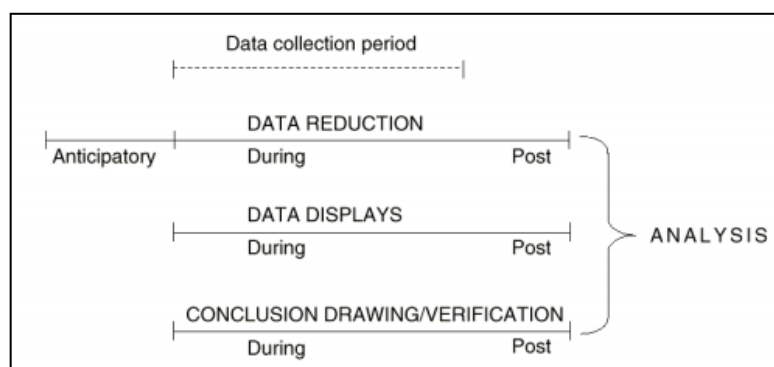
**Research Question 4:** *“What is the relationship between the frequency of DMs used in Turkish learners’ essays and the scores given to them by the raters?”* To answer this question, firstly, the argumentative essays were assessed and scored by the writing instructor of the students and the researcher using the same scoring rubric. The scoring rubric (see Appendix G) used in this study was prepared at a workshop by all instructors working at the School of Foreign Languages to assess students’ written assignments. It is specific for each essay type taught at B2 level Writing Skills course. The argumentative essay rubric includes three main parts: organization and content, unity and coherence, and mechanics. Each part had specific criteria to be fulfilled by the writer. The maximum score of the rubric was 25 points. Each essay was scored blindly by two independent raters according to this rubric. In the blind scoring technique, the rater did not know the student’s name who wrote the essay, and the raters did not know each other’s score for the same essay. This technique was used both to eliminate conscious or unconscious biases against the writer and to increase the reliability of the

assessment. After all the essays were scored, two raters compared their scores, and if the difference between two scores for an essay was more than 3 points, the raters discussed that essay to try to reach a consensus. Discussing all the scores which differed more than 3 points, two raters reduced the differences to less than 3 points. Then the average score was calculated for each essay.

Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Test was conducted on SPSS to figure out the correlation (if any) between an essay score and the number of DMs used in that essay. Pearson product-moment correlation is used “to provide a numerical summary of the direction and the strength of the linear relationship between two variables” (Pallant 2007, p. 114).

**Research Question 5:** “How do Turkish EFL teachers perceive the role, usage, and teaching of DMs in EFL writing?” The final question was answered through triangulating data collection/analysis methods. Firstly, the quantitative data collected from The Questionnaire of Teachers’ Perceptions of DMs was transferred to SPSS software, and six reverse items (Item 8, Item 13, Item 14, Item 18, Item 23, and Item 30) were reverse-scored. Descriptive statistics and frequency analysis were conducted to quantify and describe the responses from teachers. Secondly, teachers’ responses to the interview questions were subjected to content analysis and analysed in accordance with the previous research questions and the fifth research question.

For the analysis of all interview questions, firstly, the interviews were transcribed. As the data was qualitative, content analysis was carried out. While analysing the data, Miles-Huberman (1994) qualitative data analysis model was utilised. This model has three components (see Figure 3.2).



**Figure 3.2 Components of Data Analysis: Interactive Model (Miles and Huberman, 1994, p. 12)**

In Miles and Huberman model (1994), data reduction refers to the process of choosing, focusing, and transforming the data collected qualitatively. The second component, data display means presenting the organized, assembled information in a way that a conclusion can be drawn. This display can be done in graphs, charts, matrices, or networks. The final component is conclusion drawing/verification. During this stage, the lightly held conclusions are drawn, and these conclusions are verified in several ways such as by looking at the field notes or discussing the conclusions with colleagues etc. Adopting this model, the data was reduced by the researcher. After the reduction of the data, the content of each interview was analysed and for each pre-determined theme/category related responses were derived from the answers of the participants.

Finally, quantitative data results and qualitative results were combined to answer this research question. Qualitative interview results were checked whether they support the quantitative questionnaire results so that valid conclusions could be drawn.

## CHAPTER IV: RESULTS

In this chapter, the quantitative results of the corpus analysis, the descriptive statistics of the Questionnaire of Teachers' Perceptions of DMs in EFL Writing, and the qualitative analysis of interviews with teachers are presented. This chapter is divided into five sections including the answers of five research questions of the present study.

### 4.1. The Results for Research Question 1 - Frequency of DMs

The first research question of the study is: '*What are the most/least frequent discourse markers in native English and Turkish learner corpora?*' This question aimed to find out the frequency of DMs in Turkish learner corpus and native English corpus. The quantitative results for this question are presented in this part.

The DMs used by Turkish students and American students in their argumentative essays were grouped into three classes of DMs at the end of the corpus analysis. The DMs used in each class were listed. Adopting a Contrastive Interlanguage Analysis method, the raw frequency results, normalised frequency results and ratio of DMs in each corpus were presented in the tables. Normalised frequency results were given because the corpus sizes were different. Normalised frequencies are calculated using a base of normalisation (McEnery & Hardy, 2012). In this study, the normalisation base was set as 10.000 words. Normalised frequencies are essential while comparing two different-sized corpora because the raw frequency does not tell if the word is more or less common in either corpus (McEnery & Hardy, 2012). In this study, the Turkish learner corpus has 37.701 tokens, while native English corpus has 16.502 tokens. The normalised frequency tells how many times a DM occurs per 10.000 words.

Totally, 68 DMs were analysed in corpora one by one. If the number of frequency was found "zero" in two corpora, that DM was not included in the tables, but even if there was only one frequency count for one specific DM in either corpus, that DM was included in the tables.

**Table 4.1 Frequency and Percentage of Occurrence of Contrastive Discourse Markers (CDMs) in Two Corpora**

CDMs	Turkish Learner Corpus			Native English Corpus		
	Raw Frequency	Normalised Frequency	%	Raw Frequency	Normalised Frequency	%
but	167	44	38,75	47	28	41,59
however	146	39	33,87	31	19	27,43
although	60	16	13,92	7	4	6,19
on the other hand	20	5	4,64	3	2	2,65
even though	9	2	2,09	12	7	10,62
whereas	7	2	1,62	2	1	1,77
nevertheless	6	2	1,39	0	-	0
still	2	1	0,46	1	1	0,88
yet	3	1	0,70	5	3	4,42
on the contrary	2	1	0,46	1	1	0,88
despite (this/that)	4	1	0,93	0	0	0
in contrast (to this/that)	4	1	0,93	0	0	0
instead (of this/that)	0	0	0	2	1	1,77
rather (than this/that)	1	0	0,23	2	1	1,77
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>431</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>100</b>

*Notes: Normalised frequency per 10.000 words*

As Table 4.1 demonstrates, the most common contrastive discourse marker used by Turkish students and American students to signal contrast between two segments was found to be “but”. “But” was used 167 times (44 per 10,000 words) by Turkish students, and it was used 47 times (28 per 10.000 words) by American students. The percentage of “but” in the total number of CDMs was 38,75% in Turkish learner corpus, and 41,59% in native English corpus. The second common CDM in both corpora was also the same, “however”. “However” was used 146 times (39 per 10.000 words) by Turkish students, and it was used 31 times (19 per 10,000 words) by American students. The percentages of the frequency counts of “however” in CDMs in Turkish learner corpora and native English corpora were 33,87% and 27,43% respectively. The third most frequent CDM in Turkish learner corpus was “although”. It was used 60 times (16 per 10,000 words) by Turkish learners, and the percentage of “although” in CDMs was 13,92%. The third most frequent CDM in native English corpus was “even though”, the

alternative form of “although”. It was used 7 times 12 times (7 per 10,000 words) with a percentage of 10,62%.

**Table 4.2 Frequency and Percentage of Occurrence of Elaborative Discourse Markers (EDMS) in Two Corpora**

EDMs	Turkish Learner Corpus			Native English Corpus		
	Raw	Normalised		Raw	Normalised	
	Frequency	Frequency	%	Frequency	Frequency	%
and	256	68	55,77	91	55	70,54
for example	66	17	14,38	9	5	6,98
also	41	11	8,93	17	10	13,18
for instance	25	7	5,45	2	1	1,55
in addition	17	5	3,70	2	1	1,55
moreover	19	5	4,14	1	1	0,78
or	15	4	3,27	2	1	1,55
Further(more)	12	3	2,61	0	0	0
besides	7	2	1,53	1	1	0,78
in particular	0	0	0	2	1	1,55
more importantly	0	0	0	1	1	0,78
rather	0	0	0	1	1	0,78
Otherwise	1	0	0,22	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>459</b>	<b>122</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>129</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>100</b>

*Notes: Normalised frequency per 10.000 words*

As shown in Table 4.2, the most common elaborative discourse marker used in both corpora was “and”. “And” was used 256 times (68 per 10,000 words) by Turkish students, while it was used 91 times (55 per 10,000 words) by American students. The percentages of “and” in EDMs in both corpora were 55,77% in Turkish learner corpus and 70,54% in native English corpus. The second EDM which was used most frequently in Turkish learner corpus was “for example”. It was used 66 times (17 per 10,000 words) and the percentage of “for example” was calculated as 14,38%. However, the second most common EDM was different in native English corpus. American students preferred to use “also” 17 times (10 per 10,000 words) with 13,18% percentage of all EDMs used in native English corpus. The third most frequently used EDM by Turkish students was “also”. Turkish students used “also” 41 times (11 per 10,000 words) in their essays, and “also” was 8,93% of all EDMs. The third common EDM was “for

example” in American students’ essays. They used it 9 times (5 per 10,000 words). The percentage of “for example” in EDMs was 6,98%. One more DM to mention in Table 4.2 is “for instance”. “For instance”, just like “for example” is used to give examples, or elaborate the prior segment. It was used 25 times (7 per 10,000 words) by Turkish students. On the other hand, American students used “for instance” only twice (1 in 10,000 words). The other EDMs which were used from 1 to 25 times in both corpora, can be seen in Table 4.2.

Table 4.3 illustrates the number of inferential discourse markers in both corpora. As seen in Table 4.3, Turkish learners used “because” to signal an inference relationship between two segments. “Because” was used most frequently as 245 times (65 per 10,000 words) in the Turkish learner corpus. The percentage of “because” in IDMs used by Turkish learners is 49%. Similarly, the most common IDM in the native English corpus was found to be “because”. It was used 22 times (13 per 10,000 words) in American students’ argumentative essays.

The second common discourse marker was also the same in both corpora. “So” was used 118 times (31 per 10,000 words) in Turkish learner corpus, and it was used 13 times (8 per 10,000 words) by American students. The percentage of “so” in IDMs was 23,60% in Turkish learner corpus and 16,46% in native English corpus. The third frequently used discourse marker by Turkish students was “therefore”. “Therefore” was used 59 times (16 per 10,000 words) with a percentage of 11,80% in IDMs. However, the third discourse marker which was used frequently by American students was different. They preferred to use “due to (the fact that)” 12 times (7 per 10,000 words). The percentage of “due to (the fact that)” was 15,19% in IDMs identified in native English corpus.

**Table 4.3 Frequency and Percentage of Occurrence of Inferential Discourse Markers (IDMS) in Two Corpora**

IDMs	Turkish Learner Corpus			Native English Corpus		
	Raw Frequency	Normalised Frequency	%	Raw Frequency	Normalised Frequency	%
because (of the fact that)	245	65	49	22	13	27,85
so	118	31	23,60	13	8	16,46
therefore	59	16	11,80	8	5	10,13
as a conclusion	21	6	4,20	2	1	2,53
thus	19	5	3,80	4	2	5,06
then	9	2	1,80	8	5	10,13
since	9	2	1,80	5	3	6,33
as a result	7	2	1,40	1	1	1,27
hence	6	2	1,20	1	1	1,27
consequently	3	1	0,60	0	0	0
in this/that/any case	2	1	0,40	1	1	1,27
for this/that reason	1	0	0,20	2	1	2,53
all things considered	1	0	0,20	0	0	0
due to (the fact that)	0	0	0	12	7	15,19
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>100</b>

*Notes: Normalised frequency per 10.000 words*

#### **4.2. The Results for Research Question 2 - Comparison of DMs in Native English and Turkish Learner Corpora**

The second research question of the study: *‘Is there any difference in the total frequency of DMs between native English and Turkish learner corpora?’* This question was designed to examine if there is a statistically significant difference between the total number of DMs in Turkish learner corpus and native English corpus. This section presents the results of the quantitative data analysis of two corpora by conducting the chi-square test on SPSS.

In order to figure out any existence of statistically significant difference, the normalised frequency of DMs in each corpus was calculated and examined on SPSS by conducting the chi-square test. As seen in Table 4.4, Turkish students used 1390 DMs (369 per 10,000 words) in total, while American students used 321 DMs (194 per 10,000 words) in their essays.

**Table 4.4 Total Number of DMs and Tokens in Both Corpora**

	Turkish Learner Corpus			Native English Corpus		
	Raw Frequency	Normalised Frequency	%	Raw Frequency	Normalised Frequency	%
Total Number of DMs	1390	369	3,68%	321	194	1,19%
Total Number of Tokens		37,718			16,502	

Notes: Normalised frequency per 10.000 words

**Table 4.5 Chi-Square Test Results of Total Number of DMs in Both Corpora**

	Observed N	Expected N	Residual	Chi-Square
Turkish Learner Corpus	369	281,5	87,5	$x^2=54,396$ $p=,000^*$
Native English Corpus	194	281,5	-87,5	

Note: \* $p < ,05$

The results of the chi-square test are displayed in Table 4.5. The statistical results show that Turkish students used DMs more frequently than American students in their essays ( $x^2=54,396$ ,  $p=,000$ ).

### 4.3. The Results for Research Question 3 - Comparison between Different Classes of DMs

The third research question of the study is aimed to examine if there is a frequency-based statistically significant difference across different classes of DMs:

- a) within native English corpus,
- b) within Turkish learner corpus,
- c) between native English corpus and Turkish learner corpus.

The quantitative results for this research question are presented in this part. The DMs used by Turkish and American students were grouped into three categories: Contrastive

Discourse Markers, Elaborative Discourse Markers, and Inferential Discourse Markers to answer this question. The total raw and normalised frequency counts of DMs in each category can be seen in Table 4.6.

**Table 4.6 Frequency Distribution of Discourse Markers across Three Main Categories in Turkish Learner and Native English Corpora**

	Contrastive Discourse Markers (CDMs)		Elaborative Discourse Markers (EDMs)		Inferential Discourse Markers (IDMs)	
	Raw	Normalised	Raw	Normalised	Raw	Normalised
	Frequency	Frequency	Frequency	Frequency	Frequency	Frequency
Turkish Learner Corpus	431	114	459	122	500	133
Native English Corpus	113	68	129	78	79	48

*Notes: Normalised frequency per 10,000 words*

The results revealed that in the Turkish learner corpus, the most frequently used category of DMs was IDMs. IDMs were used 500 times (133 per 10,000 words). The second category was EDMs. EDMs were used 459 times (122 per 10,000 words). The third and final category was CDMs. CDMs were used 431 times (114 per 10,000 words). On the other hand, the hierarchy in native English corpus was different from Turkish learner corpus. The most frequently used category was EDMs. EDMs were used 129 times (78 per 10,000 words) by American students. The second category was CDMs. They were used 113 times (68 per 10,000 words). The third and final category in native English corpus was IDMs. They were used 79 times (48 per 10,000 words).

The order of total frequency counts in three categories in Turkish learner corpus was IDM >EDM>CDM, while the order in native English corpus was EDM>CDM>IDM.

In order to see if there is a statistically significant difference across categories within each corpus and between two corpora, the normalised frequency counts of each category were analysed on SPSS by running chi-square test to make comparisons. Separate chi-square tests were cross run for each of two categories compared in order to observe the significant difference among the three categories.

Table 4.7 presents the cross-tabulation of discourse marker categories and two corpora together with Pearson chi-square test results. The results showed that there is a statistically significant difference between the two corpora in terms of the frequency of DMs in three categories ( $\chi^2=7,558$ ,  $p=,023$ ). The percentages in Table 4.7 point that Turkish learners used DMs more frequently than American students.

**Table 4.7 Pearson Chi-Square Test Results of Three Categories in Two Corpora**

DM Category		Turkish Learner Corpus	Native English Corpus	Total	Pearson Chi-Square Test
CDM	N	114	68	182	$\chi^2=7,558$ $p=,023^*$
	%	62,6%	37,4%	100,0%	
EDM	N	122	78	200	
	%	61,0%	39,0%	100,0%	
IDM	N	133	48	181	
	%	73,5%	26,5%	100,0%	

Note:  $*p<,05$

The results of chi-square tests of three DM categories within Turkish learner corpus are presented in Table 4.8. As seen in Table 4.8, no statistically significant difference was found when CDMs and EDMs were compared in Turkish learner corpus ( $\chi^2=,271$ ,  $p=,603$ ). Similarly, the comparison of CDMs and IDMs showed no significant differences ( $\chi^2=1,462$ ,  $p=,227$ ). Finally, the frequency of EDMs and IDMs also showed no significant differences ( $\chi^2=,475$ ,  $p=,491$ ). These results show that there is no statistically significant difference in the frequency of three different DM categories. In other words, Turkish learners do not use any one of the three DM categories more frequently than the others. (Note:  $*p<,05$ )

**Table 4.8 Chi-Square Test Results of Three DM Categories in Turkish Learner Corpus**

	Observed N	Expected N	Residual	Chi-Square
CDMs	114	118	-4	$\chi^2=,271$ $p=,603$
EDMs	122	118	4	
CDMs	114	123,5	-9,5	$\chi^2=1,462$ $p=,227$
IDMs	133	123,5	9,5	
EDMs	122	127,5	-5,5	$\chi^2=,475$ $p=,491$
IDMs	133	127,5	5,5	

Table 4.9 illustrates the results of chi-square tests of three DM categories in native English corpus. As seen in Table 4.7, no significant difference was found when the frequency of CDMs and EDMs were compared ( $\chi^2=,685$ ,  $p=,408$ ). Similarly, there was no significant difference between the frequency of CDMs and IDMs ( $\chi^2=3,448$ ,  $p=,063$ ). However, when the frequency of EDMs and IDMs were compared, the results showed statistically significant results ( $\chi^2=7,143$ ,  $p=,008^*$ ). This means that American students used more EDMs than IDMs in their essays.

**Table 4.9 Chi-Square Test Results of Three DM Categories in Native English Corpus**

	Observed N	Expected N	Residual	Chi-Square
CDMs	68	73	-5	$\chi^2=,685$
EDMs	78	73	5	$p=,408$
CDMs	68	58	10	$\chi^2=3,448$
IDMs	48	58	-10	$p=,063$
EDMs	78	63	15	$\chi^2=7,143$
IDMs	48	63	-15	$p=,008^*$

*Note: \* $p < ,05$*

**Table 4.10 Chi-Square Test Results of Three DM Categories in Two Corpora**

		Observed N	Expected N	Residual	Chi-Square
CDMs	Turkish Learner Corpus	114	91	23	$\chi^2=11,626$
	Native English Corpus	68	91	-23	$p=,001^*$
EDMs	Turkish Learner Corpus	122	100	22	$\chi^2=9,680$
	Native English Corpus	78	100	-22	$p=,002^*$
IDMs	Turkish Learner Corpus	133	90,5	42,5	$\chi^2=39,917$
	Native English Corpus	48	90,5	-42,5	$p=,000^*$

*Note: \* $p < ,05$*

Table 4.10 shows the chi-square analyses of three categories of DMs used in Turkish learner corpus and native English corpus. Significant differences were found in Turkish and American students' use of CDMs ( $\chi^2=11,626$ ,  $p=,001$ ), EDMs ( $\chi^2=9,680$ ,  $p=,002$ ) and IDMs ( $\chi^2=39,917$ ,  $p=,000$ ). The results revealed that Turkish students used all three DMs categories more frequently than American students.

#### 4.4. The Results for Research Question 4 - Relationship between the Frequency of DMs Used in Turkish Learners' Essays and the Scores Given to Them by the Raters

The fourth research question posed in this study is: '*What is the relationship between the frequency of DMs used in Turkish learners' essays and the scores given to them by the raters?*' This question was addressed to explore the relationship between the number of DMs used in an essay and the essay score. The results of the quantitative analysis are presented in this section.

The essay scores and the frequency of DMs in each essay were computed, and Pearson Product-Moment Correlation test was run on SPSS to determine if any correlation existed between the frequency of DMs and the essay scores. As can be seen in Table 4.11, Pearson Product-Moment Correlation test results showed that a significant positive correlation was observed between the essay scores and the frequency of DMs ( $r=.306$ ;  $p<.01$ ). According to Cohen (1988), an absolute value of  $r$  of 0,3 is classified as *medium*, so the correlation between two variables was medium.

**Table 4.11 The Correlation between the Essay Scores and the Frequency of DMs**

Variable	N	r	p
Essay Scores	125	.306	,001*
The Number of DMs	125		

*Note: \*p<.01*

According to these results, the students who used more DMs got higher essay scores compared to the students who used fewer DMs.

#### 4.5. The Results for Research Question 5 - Turkish EFL Teachers' Perceptions of the Role, Usage, and Teaching of DMs

The fifth research question of this study is: '*How do Turkish EFL teachers perceive the role, usage, and teaching of DMs in EFL writing?*' This question was proposed to explore teachers' perceptions and learn more about their experiences. To this end, in the quantitative data analysis part, the answers of 35 teachers who completed the Questionnaire of Teachers' Perceptions of DMs in EFL Writing were analysed. In the

qualitative data analysis part, teacher interview questions were subjected to content analysis. Quantitative questionnaire data was triangulated through interview data. This research question was answered by using both quantitative and qualitative data analysis. The results are presented in the following sections.

#### 4.5.1. The Results of Quantitative Data Analysis

The quantitative data was gathered from the Questionnaire of Teachers' Perceptions of DMs in EFL Writing. The questionnaire included 30 items which fell into six different categories: 1) pragmatic value of DMs, 2) pedagogic value of DMs, 3) indispensable value of DMs, 4) identification with native speaker norm, 5) prioritizing teaching of DMs, and 6) representation of DMs in EFL classrooms. 35 teachers completed the questionnaire. Cronbach Alpha was performed on all 35 items using SPSS to measure the internal consistency. The questionnaire yielded a Cronbach alpha value of .824 with overall robust reliability (Taber, 2017). Then descriptive statistics and frequency analysis were performed on SPSS to analyze the data statistically and answer the research question. The results were displayed on a categorical basis.

Category 1 was defined by six items indicating that knowledge of DMs is related to success in written communication, comprehension of texts, and in examinations. The means and standard deviations of the items in this category can be seen in Table 4.12. The frequency and percentages of the items can be seen in Table 4.13.

**Table 4.12. The Means and Standard Deviations of Pragmatic Value Category Items**

Items	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	SD
Item-1(Written Communication)	35	4,00	5,00	4,62	,49
Item-2 (Processing information)	35	2,00	5,00	4,65	,63
Item-3 (Displaying writer style)	35	3,00	5,00	4,51	,56
Item-19 (Sequence of thoughts)	35	3,00	5,00	4,28	,62
Item-20 (Public examinations)	35	4,00	5,00	4,60	,49
Item-29 (Comprehension of texts)	35	3,00	5,00	4,54	,56

**Table 4.13 The Frequency and Percentages of Pragmatic Value Category Items**

Items	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Uncertain		Agree		Strongly Agree	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Item-1(Written Communication)							13	37,1	22	62,9
Item-2 (Processing information)			1	2,9			9	25,7	25	71,4
Item-3 (Displaying writer style)					1	2,9	15	42,9	19	54,3
Item-19 (Sequence of mental thoughts)					3	8,6	19	54,3	13	37,1
Item-20 (Public examinations)							14	40	21	60
Item-29 (Comprehension of texts)					1	2,9	14	40	20	57,1

The results of the means (4,28 – 4,65) showed that teachers have obviously positive perceptions of *the pragmatic value of DMs*. Most of the teachers strongly agreed that DMs improve written communication, enable to process information in writing, and help students in public examinations as the items 1, 2, and 20 clearly reflect. Moreover, teachers also agreed that DMs are useful for understanding the texts and writers better (Items 3, 19, and 29).

Category 2 included six items regarding *the pedagogic value of DMs*. The items in this category were related to the significance of teaching and learning of DMs. Table 4.14 demonstrates the means and standard deviations of the related items, and Table 4.15 demonstrates the frequency and percentages of the items. The results showed that teachers attach great importance to the pedagogic value of DMs. According to items 5, 9, 10, and 26 DMs should definitely be taught and highlighted in the classroom. Moreover, most of the teachers agreed that DMs are necessary by disagreeing negatively worded statements.

**Table 4.14 The Means and Standard Deviations of Pedagogical Value Category Items**

Items	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	SD
Item-5 – (Awareness and proficiency of DMs)	35	3,00	5,00	4,77	,49
Item-8 (R) (Redundancy of DMs)	35	3,00	5,00	4,42	,55
Item-9 (Need to highlight DMs)	35	3,00	5,00	4,37	,64
Item-10 (Helping students)	35	2,00	5,00	4,68	,63
Item-26 (Teaching of DMs)	35	3,00	5,00	4,71	,51
Item-30 (R) (Teaching value of DMs)	35	4,00	5,00	4,62	,49

(R): Reverse scored

**Table 4.15 The Frequency and Percentages of Pedagogical Value Category Items**

Items	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Uncertain		Agree		Strongly Agree	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Item-5 – (Awareness and proficiency of					1	2,9	6	17,1	28	80
Item-8 (R) (Redundancy of DMs)	16	45,7	18	51,4	1	2,9				
Item-9 (Need to highlight DMs)					3	8,6	16	45,7	16	45,7
Item-10 (Helping students)			1	2,9			8	22,9	26	74,3
Item-26 (Teaching of DMs)					1	2,9	8	22,9	26	74,3
Item-30 (R) (Teaching value of DMs)	22	62,9	13	37,1						

(R): Reverse scored

The third category, *indispensable value of DMs*, consisted of six items. The items in this category were explicitly designed to measure the usefulness and essentiality of DMs. In Table 4.16, the means and standard deviations of the items in this category are displayed, and in Table 4.17, the frequency and percentages of the items can be seen.

**Table 4.16 The Means and Standard Deviations of Indispensable Value Category Items**

Items	N	Min.	Max.	M	SD
Item-4 (Guiding readers)	35	2,00	5,00	4,54	,65
Item-6 (Orientating the readers)	35	4,00	5,00	4,54	,50
Item-11 (Necessity of DMs)	35	3,00	5,00	4,20	,67
Item-18 (R) (Redundancy of DMs)	35	2,00	5,00	3,57	,88
Item-23 (R) Understanding a text without DMS)	35	1,00	5,00	2,74	,91
Item-24 (Signalling relationships)	35	4,00	5,00	4,74	,44

(R): Reverse scored

**Table 4.17 The Frequency and Percentages of Indispensable Value Category Items**

Items	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Uncertain		Agree		Strongly Agree	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Item-4 (Guiding readers)			1	2,9			13	37,1	21	60
Item-6 (Orientating the readers)							16	45,7	19	54,3
Item-11 (Necessity of DMs)					5	14,3	18	51,4	12	34,3
Item-18 (R) (Redundancy of DMs)	5	14,3	14	40	12	34,3	4	11,4		
Item-23 (R) Understanding a text without DMS)	1	2,9	6	17,1	13	37,1	13	37,1	2	5,7
Item-24 (Signalling relationships)							9	25,7	26	74,3

(R): Reverse scored

Items 4, 6, and 24 indicated that DMs are beneficial to understand written texts (for readers), to orientate the readers to the overall idea, and to signal relationships between ideas in a text (for readers). However, items 11, 18, and 23 revealed that teachers are not sure about their essentiality. Some of the participating teachers agreed that a text is still interpretable or understandable using different linguistic clues other than DMs.

The next category in the questionnaire was *identification with native speaker norm*. Four items were included in this category, and they focused on the native speaker norm as a target proficiency level in using DMs. Table 4.18 displays the means and standard deviations of the items in this category, and Table 4.19 displays the frequency and percentages of the items. The mean scores of the items in this category are considerably low when compared to other categories. The results showed that teachers do not accept that requiring the students to use DMs like native speakers of English a realistic and attainable goal (items 7 and 21). Moreover, teachers mostly disagree that being a competent writer means writing like a native speaker (item 16). On the other hand, teachers support the view that students should be taught how native speakers use DMs (item 25).

**Table 4.18 The Means and Standard Deviations of Identification with Native Speaker Norm Category Items**

Items	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	SD
Item-7 (Using DMs like native speakers)	35	1,00	4,00	2,65	,72
Item-16 (Writing like a native speaker)	35	1,00	5,00	2,48	,98
Item-21 (Using DMs like native speakers)	35	1,00	4,00	2,65	,90
Item-25 (Teaching how native speakers use DMs)	35	1,00	5,00	3,74	,91

**Table 4.19 The Frequency and Percentages of Identification with Native Speaker Norm Category Items**

Items	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Uncertain		Agree		Strongly Agree	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Item-7 (Using DMs like native speakers)	2	5,7	11	31,4	19	54,3	3	8,6		
Item-16 (Writing like a native speaker)	5	14,3	14	40	11	31,4	4	11,4	1	2,9
Item-21 (Using DMs like native speakers)	4	11,4	10	28,6	15	42,9	6	17,1		
Item-25 (Teaching how native speakers use DMs)	2	5,7	1	2,9	5	14,3	23	65,7	4	11,4

Category 5 in the questionnaire was *prioritizing teaching of DMs*. This category consisted of five items which were related to prioritizing teaching of DMs, integrating them with other language skills, and highlighting them in other lessons apart from writing. The means and standard deviations are shown in Table 4.20. The frequency and percentages can be seen in Table 4.21. The means of items 17 and 27 (mean: 4,54 – 4,34) reflected that teaching of DMs should take place in other courses as well and be integrated with other skills. On the other hand, the responses to item 13 revealed that teachers doubted that the Preparatory Year Program may not be enough to learn the use of DMs effectively. Also, the responses to item 14 showed that teachers were not sure about delaying the teaching of DMs until awareness of DMs as a reading skill and listening skill has been grasped.

**Table 4.20 The Means and Standard Deviations of Prioritizing Teaching of DMs Category Items**

Items	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	SD
Item-13 (R) (Period to learn DMs effectively)	35	1,00	5,00	3,54	,91
Item-14 (R) (Delay of teaching DMs)	35	1,00	5,00	3,74	,88
Item-17 (Integration with other courses)	35	4,00	5,00	4,54	,50
Item-27 (Integration with other skills)	35	4,00	5,00	4,34	,48
Item-28 (Developing writing skills)	35	2,00	5,00	3,31	,83

(R): Reverse scored

**Table 4.21 The Frequency and Percentages of Prioritizing Teaching of DMs Category Items**

Items	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Uncertain		Agree		Strongly Agree	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Item-13 (R) (Period to learn DMs effectively)	3	8,6	19	54,3	8	22,9	4	11,4	1	2,9
Item-14 (R) (Delay of teaching DMs)	6	17,1	17	48,6	10	28,6	1	2,9	1	2,9
Item-17 (Integration with other courses)							16	45,7	19	54,3
Item-27 (Integration with other skills)							23	65,7	12	34,3
Item-28 (Developing writing skills)			7	20	11	31,4	16	45,7	1	2,9

(R): Reverse scored

The final category included in the questionnaire was the *representation of DMs in EFL classrooms*. There were three items in this category, and they investigated if DMs were highlighted in EFL classrooms regarding both writing and other course materials. Table

4.22 presents the means and standard deviations of the items in this category, and Table 4.23 presents the frequency and percentages of the items. The highest mean score of item 22 indicates that teachers have considerably positive attitudes towards highlighting DMs in writing lessons. The results of items 12 and 15 showed that DMs are highlighted in both writing materials and other language skills materials.

**Table 4.22 The Means and Standard Deviations of Representation of DMs in EFL Classrooms Category Items**

Items	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	SD
Item-12 (Representation of DMs in writing materials)	35	1,00	5,00	4,22	,80
Item-15 (Representation of DMs in other skills' materials)	35	2,00	5,00	3,97	,85
Item-22 (Highlighting DMs)	35	3,00	5,00	4,51	,61

**Table 4.23 The Frequency and Percentages of Representation of DMs in EFL Classrooms Category Items**

Items	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Uncertain		Agree		Strongly Agree	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Item-12 (Representation of DMs in writing materials)	1	2,9			2	5,7	19	54,3	13	37,1
Item-15 (Representation of DMs in other skills' materials)			3	8,6	4	11,4	19	54,3	9	25,7
Item-22 (Highlighting DMs)					2	5,7	13	37,1	20	57,1

The overall mean scores and standard deviations of the six categories in the questionnaire can be seen in Table 4.24. The results showed that participating teachers tend to give more value to the pragmatic and pedagogic aspects of DMs than the others. On the other hand, identification with native speaker norm had the lowest mean score. This indicates that although Turkish teachers attach great importance to the use and teaching of DMs, they do not expect their students to have a native-like mastery of these expressions.

**Table 4.24 The Means and Standard Deviations of Six Categories in the Questionnaire**

Categories	N (Items)	Min.	Max.	M	SD
Category 1: Pragmatic Value of DMs	6	4,28	4,65	4,53	2,08
Category 2: Pedagogic Value of DMs	6	4,37	4,77	4,60	2,53
Category 3: Indispensable Value of DMs	6	2,74	4,74	4,05	2,04
Category 4: Identification with Native Speaker Norm	4	2,48	3,74	2,88	2,72
Category 5: Prioritizing Teaching of DMs	5	3,31	4,54	3,89	1,93
Category 6: Representation of DMs in EFL Classrooms	3	3,97	4,51	4,23	1,40

#### 4.5.2. The Results of Qualitative Data Analysis

The teachers were asked about their perceptions of the role of DMs, the order of importance of DM categories, DMs' effects on the structure and meaning of a text, overuse/underuse/misuse of DMs by Turkish students, the relationship between the frequency of DMs and essay scores, appropriate level to start teaching DMs, how they teach/highlight DMs in their classrooms, what type of essays are difficult to use DMs for students, the difference between Turkish students and native speakers in terms of use of DMs, and the representation of DMs in the curriculum.

##### 4.5.2.1. The Results of Interview Questions 2, 4, 5, and 9

The results of the interview questions 2, 4, 5, and 9 are presented under four predetermined themes. Table 4.25 illustrates the interview questions and the predetermined themes for these interview questions.

**Table 4.25 Predetermined Themes for the Interview Questions (2, 4, 5, and 9)**

# of Interview Question	Predetermined Themes
4	Overuse/Underuse/Misuse of DMs by Turkish students
2	The order of importance for DM categories
9	The Comparison between Turkish students and native speakers of English
5	The relationship between the frequency of DMs in essays and essay scores

#### **Theme 1: Overuse/Misuse/Underuse of DMs by Turkish Students**

During the semi-structured interview, teachers were asked if they had ever noticed any overuse/misuse/underuse of any specific discourse marker in Turkish students' essays. Also, they were asked to give specific examples of DMs if they had noticed. Teachers' responses to this interview question gave evidence for teachers' awareness level of discourse markers' use in students' essays.

- Interview question 4: *Have you ever noticed that your students overuse/underuse/misuse any specific DM? If yes, can you give an example?*

Table 4.26 indicates what teachers reported as DMs overused by Turkish students. Almost all of the teachers interviewed stated that "but" is overused in students'

writings. Two teachers mentioned that “however” is overused, and one teacher reported that “although” is overused in contrastive discourse markers category.

T5 shared her opinions on the overuse of “but” as follows:

“‘But’ can be given as an example of overuse. When I asked a student why he didn’t use “however” instead of writing “but” 5 times in the same paragraph, he said that he already used “but”, and “but” and “however” were the same.”

**Table 4.26 DMs Overused by Turkish Students - Teacher Interview Question 4**

Discourse Marker Category	Discourse Marker	Teacher’s Code	f
Contrastive Discourse Markers	But	T1, T3, T4, T5, T6, T7, T8, T9, T10	9
	However	T3, T8	2
	Although	T8	1
Elaborative Discourse Markers	And	T1, T2, T4, T5, T7, T8	6
	Also	T9	1
Inferential Discourse Markers	So	T1, T5, T6, T8	4
	Because	T7, T10	2
	As a result	T10	1
	In conclusion	T4	1
	Then	T6	1

Another teacher, T9, supported her view as below:

“In the contrastive discourse marker category, the students do not use most of the DMs. “But” is incredibly overused. When a student uses “but” three times one after another in a paragraph, I tell her to use “although” instead of “but” but she does not prefer to use it in future essays. They cannot take risks if they do not completely learn how to use a new discourse marker.”

In the elaborative discourse markers category, six teachers reported that “and” is overused to elaborate segment one in segment two. One teacher stated that “also” is overused. T7 explained the overuse of “and” as follows:

“The students use “and” as it is very easy to use. They are not aware of different variations of DMs.”

In inferential discourse marker category, four teachers pointed out that “so” is overused; two teachers stated that “because” is overused. “As a result”, “in conclusion”, and

“then” were provided by one teacher for each as an example of IDMs overused by Turkish students. T1 commented on the overuse of “so” as seen below:

“Overused DMs are “and”, “but”, and “so”. They learn them starting from A1 level, so they find them easy to use instead of trying other alternatives. They repeat them constantly even in their essays.”

Table 4.27 shows the DMs misused by Turkish students according to their teachers.

**Table 4.27 DMs Misused by Turkish Students- Teacher Interview Question 4**

Discourse Marker Category	Discourse Marker	Teacher’s Code	f
Inferential Discourse Markers	Because	T2, T3, T5, T6, T10	5
	So	T6	1
Contrastive Discourse Markers	On the other hand	T3, T5	2
	However	T9	1
Elaborative Discourse Markers	And	T6	1

Five teachers reported that “because” is misused very frequently. T6 explained her views as follows:

“Students misuse “because” grammatically. I think they think in Turkish and prefer to use in an independent clause.”

T2 mentioned about the misuse of “because” as below:

“What I noticed is that our students often misuse “because”. They start an independent clause with “because” and do not add a dependent clause. They do not need/learn to combine a dependent clause and an independent clause.”

Another inferential discourse marker which was reported as misused was “so”. It was mentioned by one teacher (T6).

In the contrastive discourse marker category, two teachers reported the misuse of “on the other hand”, and one teacher mentioned about “however”. T3 illustrated her view of the misuse of ‘on the other hand’ as follows:

“‘On the other hand’ is definitely misused. They use it in the meaning of ‘in addition to’”.

One teacher (T9) reported that “however” is also misused by Turkish students in CDMs. The only elaborative discourse marker which was reported by interviewees is “and”. One teacher (T6) reported that “and” is misused:

“Students generally misuse “and” and “so”. They write “so” in combining two sentences not to make an inference but to make an elaboration or addition.”

DMs which were overused and misused by Turkish students according to their teachers were presented above. The teachers interviewed in this study did not name any specific discourse marker which was underused by the students. The teachers generally complained about the lack of variation in the DMs in students’ essays.

As seen in Table 4.26, there are some basic DMs which are used repeatedly, and this reduces the variation in DMs and causes underuse of different alternatives. T7 commented on this lack of variation as follows:

“Although it is not necessary, they use “and” as it is easy to use. If they need to explain a contrast, they use “but”. If there is a cause-effect relationship to signal, they use “because”. They are not aware of different alternatives.”

T3 complained about lack of variety giving the example of “however”, and this may be interpreted as underuse of some other CDMs.

“‘However’ is overused. There is no alternative (referring to students’ essays). Although there are a number DMs to write instead of ‘however’, they do not prefer to use. They find them difficult...”

## **Theme 2: The Importance of DM Categories for Teachers**

During the semi-structured interview, the teachers were asked if they could rank the categories of DMs by order of importance. Teachers’ responses to this question were analysed to see if there is a connection between the importance teachers attach to the categories and how frequently they are used by their students.

- Interview question 2: *What do you think of the importance of the categories? If you are asked to number the categories of DMs in the order of importance, which category (IDM, EDM, or CDM) would be the first, second, and third? Why?*

Table 4.28 demonstrates teachers' opinions on the importance of DMs categories. Six out of ten teachers (T1, T2, T3, T5, T6, and T8) stated that all categories were equally important, and it was not possible to bring one of them to the fore.

T2 mentioned about the order of importance as below:

“Maybe, EDMs come to the forefront while writing supporting paragraphs or sentences but they (three categories) all have special positions to use. For example, the students need to use inferential markers in the conclusion paragraph. It can be said that the three categories are equally important.”

**Table 4.28 Order of Importance of DM Categories According to Teachers**

Teachers' Codes	Order of Importance
T1	Equally important
T2	Equally important
T3	Equally important
T4	IDMs >CDMs>EDMs
T5	Equally important
T6	Equally important
T7	EDMs > CDMs >IDMs
T8	Equally important
T9	CDMs > IDMs >EDMs
T10	EDMs > IDMs > CDMs

Similarly, T3 reported what she thought as follows:

“I think they are all equally important. There are some specific DMs which should be taught earlier than the others, but as a category, I give no priority to any of them.”

As can be seen in Table 4.28, two teachers (T7 and T10) stated that EDMs were the most critical category. However, their sequencing was not wholly the same. While T7 placed CDMs in the second place and IDMs in the third place, T10 thought IDMs were more critical than CDMs. T7 explained her sequencing, as seen below:

“The students need to know elaborative markers in the first place. They need to know them starting from A1 level. Later on, they will need the others depending on the essay type they are writing. To me, the second important group is the CDMs, and the third is the IDMS.”

One teacher (T9) reported that CDMs were the most important of all, and IDMs were more important than EDMs. Another teacher (T4) suggested a different sequencing and put the IDMs in the first place, CDMs the second, and the EDMs the third. T4 made his point below:

“I think IDMs are more important than the others. To me, inferring is a higher-order language skill. Therefore, while assessing EDMs and CDMs on the sentence level, I think IDMs go beyond the sentence level.”

### **Theme 3: The Comparison between Turkish Students and Native Speakers of English**

As the comparison between two corpora is one of the essential parts of this study, teachers were asked one main question and two follow-up interview questions to obtain their opinions regarding the difference between Turkish students and native speakers in terms of using DMs?

- Interview question 9: *How do Turkish students differ from native speakers? Do you think Turkish students use DMs more/less frequently than American university students in their essays? What can be the possible reasons behind the overuse/underuse (if there is) of DMs for Turkish students?*

The answers of the participants revealed that most of the teachers were aware of the overuse of DMs by Turkish students when compared to native speakers of English. Table 4.29 demonstrates that eight teachers out of ten thought that Turkish students used DMs more frequently than native English students. Only two teachers declared that Turkish students used fewer DMs than native speakers.

**Table 4.29 Teachers’ Responses on the Overuse/Underuse of DMs by Turkish Students Compared to Native Speakers**

<b>Responses</b>	<b>Teachers’ Codes</b>	<b>f</b>
TR students use more DMs than American students.	T1, T2, T3, T4, T7, T8, T9, T10	8
TR students use fewer DMs than American students.	T5, T6	2

At the end of the content analysis of teachers’ responses, seven different codes emerged under the sub-theme of *‘reasons behind the overuse of DMs by Turkish learners’*.

As indicated in Table 4.30, four teachers reported that students' "anxiety to get a high score from their essay" was one of the primary reasons behind the overuse of DMs. According to these teachers, the students tended to overuse DMs to get a higher score from their writing assignments. T3 explained her view as follows:

"There may be an overuse of DMs because we tell the students that we assess the use of DMs while scoring their essays. For this reason, they may overuse DMs to get a higher score."

**Table 4.30 Codes under the Sub-theme of Reasons behind Overuse of DMs by Turkish Students**

Sub-theme	Codes	Teachers' Codes	f
Reasons behind the overuse of DMs by Turkish students	Anxiety to get a high score	T1, T2, T3, T4	4
	Covering up lack of writing competence	T2, T4, T8, T10	4
	Limited knowledge of expressions	T3, T7, T8	3
	Teachers' overemphasis of DMs in writing and grammar classes	T1, T4, T9	3
	Native language effect	T9	1
	The need to be understood clearly	T10	1

Another reason reported by four teachers was "covering up lack of writing competence". These teachers believed that the students who were not good at writing tried to compensate for their lack of general writing competence by adding more DMs than necessary. T8 mentioned about this lack of writing proficiency as below:

"If a student's language proficiency level is not very high, or if he is not good at generating ideas, this may reduce the length of his/her essay and the number of sentences. Therefore, that student may stick to using more DMs than needed to cover up".

Three teachers addressed "the limited knowledge of expressions" as the reason behind the overuse of DMs. They pointed out that their students had a very limited number of expressions in their mind, and they used the same expressions repeatedly in their essays. T7 commented on this reason as follows:

"Our students' interaction with native speakers is not available neither written nor spoken. They write their essays using the expressions which they were exposed to in their classroom materials. They even memorize these expressions. They try to use the same DMs they see in the materials".

The next reason explained by three teachers was "teachers' overemphasis of DMs in writing and grammar classes". These teachers indicated that highlighting DMs in

teaching may encourage the students to overuse them. T1 shared her experience as below:

“As I regularly emphasize the importance of DMs in my writing classes, the students think that they can get a higher score when they use them more frequently. This may cause an overuse”.

One teacher (T9) reported that Turkish “students’ native language” might be the reason for overuse. As most of the students thought what they would write in their essays firstly in their native language and then translate it into English, their native language may affect their use of DMs. The final reason stated by one teacher was “the need to be understood clearly”. This teacher believed that while writing in a foreign language, some students wanted to be sure that their message was delivered correctly. Therefore, some students used DMs again and again to avoid misunderstandings.

The results revealed that although several reasons were set out, two of them (anxiety to get a high score and covering up lack of writing competence) were more apparent than the others.

#### **Theme 4: The Relationship between the Frequency of DMs in Essays and Essay Scores**

The fifth question of the semi-structured interview was aimed to obtain teachers’ perceptions of the relationship between the essay scores and the frequency of DMs.

- Interview question 5: *What do you think of the relationship between the number of DMs used in an essay and the score obtained from that essay? How important is the use of DMs in writing while scoring an essay for you? Does the number of DMs used in an essay affect your score?*

The responses were content analyzed, and the results were compared with the quantitative results. Table 4.31 shows teachers’ opinions about the relationship between the frequency of DMs and the essay scores.

**Table 4.31 Teachers’ Opinions on the Relationship between the Frequency of DMs and the Essay Scores**

<b>Responses</b>	<b>Teachers’ Codes</b>	<b>f</b>
Positive Relationship	T1, T3, T4, T7, T8, T9, T10	7

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No Relationship	T2, T5, T6	3
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Six teachers believed that there is a positive relationship between the scores given by the raters to the essays and the frequency of DMs. For example, T9 mentioned about the relationship as below:

“I think there is a positive relationship. Not very strong, but there is. The use of DMs specifically increases the organization score of the essay, and lack of them decreases it. So there is a positive relationship.”

T10 commented on the positive relationship as follows:

“We assess the essays according to the rubric. It (the frequency of DMs) doesn’t affect our assessment. However, the more DMs a student uses, the higher the essay score that student gets.”

On the other hand, three teachers claimed that there was no relationship between these variables. One of them (T6) put forward that assessment was carried out according to the rubric, so the frequency of DMs would not affect the score. T2 and T5 claimed that the frequency of DMs could not affect the score because there were more decisive variables than the frequency of DMs in an essay. T5 supported her opinions as below:

“Actually only DMs do not affect the score. Mechanics, writing a strong thesis statement, or using the new structures that we taught in the classroom all together affect the score and help the students to get a higher score.”

#### **4.5.2.2. The Results of Interview Questions 1, 3, 6, 7, 8, and 10**

The results of the interview questions 1, 3, 6, 7, 8, and 10 were presented under two categories derived from two categories in the Questionnaire of Teachers’ Perceptions of DMs in EFL Writing. The first category, *‘potential and practical benefits of using DMs’*, was predetermined based on the questionnaire categories: *pragmatic value of DMs* and *dispensable value of DMs*. On the other hand, the second category, *teaching of DMs* was based on the category named *pedagogic value of DMs* in the questionnaire. The themes under the first category emerged from the content analysis, while the themes under the second category were predetermined themes based on the interview questions. Table 4.32 illustrates the interview questions and the predetermined/emerged themes and categories to answer the fifth research question.

**Table 4.32 Predetermined/Emerged Themes and Categories for the Interview Questions (1, 3, 6, 7, 8, and 10)**

# of Interview Question(s)	Emerged Themes	Predetermined Category
1, 3	Reader	The Potential and Practical Benefits of DMs in EFL Writing
	Organization	
	Writer	
	Content	
	Predetermined Themes	Predetermined Category
7	Classroom activities	Teaching of DMs
10	Curriculum emphasis	
6	Level to start teaching DMs	
8	Essay types	

### **Category 1: Potential and Practical Benefits of Using DMs**

As seen in Table 4.33, based on the codes emerged during the content analysis of semi-structured interview data, four themes were generated under the category of '*potential and practical benefits of using DMs*'. These themes were '*reader*', '*organization*', '*writer*' and '*content*' to which or whom the potential and practical benefits of DMs were addressed.

Majority of comments - almost half of them (48,8 %) were about '*readers*'. While teachers were commenting on the benefits of DMs, they mentioned most frequently how DMs make texts easier for the reader to read (5 teachers). How DMs make the text less confusing (4 teachers) and reduce the ambiguity in meaning (4 teachers) were among the practical benefits they also mentioned. Moreover, there were some other benefits reported by some or individual teachers such as using DMs make the text easier to assess (3 teachers), sound more sophisticated (3 teachers), less boring (2 teachers), and artificial (1 teacher). T7 explained the benefit of using DMs for readers as follows:

“DMs help the reader to follow the text. For example, the reader struggles to understand a contrasting relationship if a necessary CDM is not used. They ease the reader’s job.”

**Table 4.33 Themes and Codes under the Category of Potential and Practical Benefits of Using DMs**

Category	Themes	Codes	Teachers' Codes	f	Total f (%)
Potential and Practical Benefits of Using DMs	Reader	Making a text easier to read,	T1, T2, T3, T7, T10	5	22,7
		Making a text less confusing	T5, T7, T9, T10	4	18,2
		Reducing the ambiguity in meaning	T6, T8, T9, T10	4	18,2
		Making a text easier to assess	T2, T3, T5	3	13,6
		Making a text sound more sophisticated	T1, T2, T4	3	13,6
		Making a text less boring	T4, T10	2	9,1
		Making a text less artificial	T3	1	4,6
		<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>22</b>	<b>100</b>
	Organization	Achieving unity and coherence in writing	T1, T2, T3, T4, T5, T9	6	60
		Combining sentences logically	T1, T2, T5	3	30
		Achieving cohesion	T5,	1	10
		<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>10</b>	<b>100</b>
	Writer	Showing the writer's mastery of sentence structure	T3, T4, T10	3	42,8
		Creating an effective text easily	T1, T9	2	28,6
		Improving the wording	T2	1	14,3
		Conveying the message in a text accurately	T6	1	14,3
		<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>7</b>	<b>100</b>
	Content	Generating new ideas	T1, T5, T8	3	50
		Enriching the content in a writing	T1, T2, T3	3	50
		<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>6</b>	<b>100</b>

T10 complained that students liked to finish a sentence as soon as possible. She added that this situation sometimes made the text confusing. The following extract is from her comments about how the use of DMs makes the text less confusing:

“Our students like to finish a sentence immediately and then start a new one. They do not need to add to related sentences together. When I ask why he/she did not add a linking word to signal the relationship, they say the relationship is already understandable. However, it is a torture for the reader.”

T6 indicated that using DMs reduces the ambiguity in a sentence and enables the meaning of the sentence to be more objective. She mentioned this as follows:

“For example, if a student does not use an IDM, the inference drawn from the previous sentence is lacking. It may look like an addition, but actually, it is an inference. Readers have to interpret what the sentence means, but then this interpretation can be subjective, and may change from person to person.”

The second most frequently referred theme *‘organization’* was created from the comments related to the organization of the ideas and sentences. Almost one-fourth of the comments belonged to this theme. The comments were generally about unity, coherence, logical connection of sentences, and cohesion. Six teachers reported that using DMs can help the students achieve unity and coherence in writing. Three teachers pointed out the role of DMs in combining sentences logically, and one teacher stated that using DMs can be beneficial to achieve cohesion in writing. T1 commented on achieving unity and coherence by using DMs as follows:

“I think a written text is not complete if DMs are not used. They enable to add ideas together logically. They provide unity and coherence in writing, so before assigning student something to write these expressions should be taught.”

T2 explained the importance of using DMs to combine sentences logically as below:

“I think DMs are one of the most important parts. They facilitate adding ideas and sentences logically and making transitions between sentences.”

The third theme derived from the content analysis is *‘writer’*. This theme includes comments on the benefits of using DMs for writers. Seven comments (15,5%) were elicited from the qualitative data. These were mostly about showing the writer’s mastery of sentence structure, creating an effective text easily, improving the wording, and conveying the message accurately. Three teachers stated that using DMs are beneficial as they show the writer’s mastery of sentence structure. Two teachers reported that DMs are practical to create an effective text easily. One teacher indicated that DMs can be helpful to improve the wording. One teacher remarked that by means of DMs a writer can convey the message in a text more clearly. T4 believed that using DMs gives evidence about a student’s proficiency in making complex sentences as seen in the extract below:

“I teach DMs as much as I can in writing lessons because the contrastive markers and elaborative markers you mentioned are the expressions that show us the students’ mastery of sentence structure. Actually, the students can make compound and complex sentences using these expressions. They are not confined to writing simple sentences.”

T9 commented on creating an effective text easily by using DMs as follows:

“It takes a long time to enlarge vocabulary and to improve grammar skills for students. However, some students organize their ideas in writing by using DMs so carefully that the grammar or vocabulary mistakes do not disturb me. Practically, if students become aware of this and use the DMs strategically, they can easily write an effective text.”

The final theme created under this category is ‘*content*’. This theme includes comments related to the contributions of using DMs to the content of the writing. The comments in this theme are about generating new ideas and enriching the content. Three teachers reported that using DMs in writing helps the students to generate new ideas. Moreover, three teachers stated that using DMs helps to enrich the content in writing. T5 mentioned about how using DMs help create new ideas as below:

“I believe DMs are critical for generating ideas. To me, learning to write is learning to think. I think they should definitely use DMs to generate new ideas.”

T3 commented on how using DMs contribute to enriching the content in writing as follows:

“If students know to use DMs, they can make their ideas more connected, and expand their writing. I tell them to use DMs to expand. DMs both make the sentences more connected and expand a paragraph from three sentences to five sentences.”

## **Category 2: Teaching of DMs**

The second category intended to elicit qualitative data is ‘*teaching of DMs*’. Four themes were predetermined under this category. These themes are ‘*classroom activities*’, ‘*level to start teaching DMs*’, ‘*essay types*’, and ‘*curriculum emphasis*’. Table 4.34 displays the themes under the category of teaching of DMs.

**Table 4.34 Themes and Codes under the Category of Teaching of DMs**

Category	Themes	Codes	Teachers' Codes	f	Total f (%)
Teaching of DMs	Classroom Activities	Paraphrasing a sentence using different DMs	T2, T3, T6, T7, T9, T10	6	28,75
		Combining two sentences using DMs	T2, T5, T7, T9	4	19
		Filling in the gaps with DMs	T1, T3, T5	3	14,25
		Writing a paragraph/an essay using the target DMs	T1, T7, T8	3	14,25
		Contextualizing the target DMs	T6, T9	2	9,5
		Comparing a text with DMs with a text without DMs	T4	1	4,75
		Asking for variations of DMs used in a text	T8	1	4,75
		Showing examples	T9	1	4,75
		<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>21</b>
	Curriculum Emphasis	Enough emphasis	T2, T4, T5, T7, T9	5	45,4
		Lack of integration with other language skills	T3, T10	2	18,2
		Lack of time for practice	T1, T6	2	18,2
		Lack of authentic materials and life-like situations	T8	1	9,1
		Lack of variety in DMs in the materials	T3,	1	9,1
		<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>11</b>
	Level to start highlighting DMs	A2 Level	T2, T4, T5, T8, T9, T10	6	60
		A1 Level	T1, T3, T6, T7	4	40
		<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>10</b>
	Essay Types	Opinion-Argumentative essay	T2, T5, T6, T7, T9, T10	6	60
		Compare-contrast essay	T1, T3, T4, T8	4	40
		<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>10</b>

The first theme under this category is '*classroom activities*'. When teachers were asked what kind of activities they found useful to teach DMs, they reported several different activities. Paraphrasing a sentence using different DMs was offered by six teachers. Four teachers suggested combining two sentences using DMs. Three teachers stated that

writing a paragraph or an essay using the target DMs and filling in the gaps with DMs can be useful. Two teachers mentioned that they tried to contextualize the target DMs by narrating or making up a story. Comparing a text with DMs with a text without DMs, asking for variations of DMs used in a text, and showing examples of DMs were suggested by three teachers in total.

T10 explained that paraphrasing a sentence using a different DM is beneficial. The extract shows an example of her suggestion:

“For example, I write an example sentence using *however*, and I ask the students how they can rewrite that sentence. I ask them if using *in spite of*, or *on the contrary* is possible. It takes time but it is useful.”

T2 thought that the best activity for him was combining two sentences. He explained it in his own words as below:

“I think the best activity to teach them is giving two sentences and asking the students how to combine them. We use it in writing and grammar lessons.”

The second predetermined theme in teaching of DMs category is the ‘*curriculum emphasis*’. When the teachers’ opinions were asked about the emphasis of DMs in the curriculum, most of them (5 teachers) remarked that there is enough emphasis. The other teachers expressed some concerns. Two teachers complained about the lack of time for practice. Two teachers stated that teaching of DMs should be more integrated with other language skills apart from writing. One teacher complained about the lack of authentic materials and life-like situations to teach DMs in the curriculum. Finally, one teacher reported that a wider variety of DMs should be offered in the materials. T2 thought that the emphasis is enough. He also warned that overemphasis of DMs may cause overuse of them, which is another problem. He explained this as follows:

“I find the emphasis enough while teaching and assessing. We have a scoring part for transitions in our rubric. If we overemphasize them, there may be a backlash. They feel the need for using a few markers in every sentence, and this may cause ambiguous wording. I believe there is moderation in the curriculum and assessment.”

T10 commented on the integration of DMs with other language skills as below:

“DMs are constricted in writing. However, one of the greatest needs of the students in speaking is DMs. They put the sentences one after another in

speech, but we cannot understand the relationship. I ask them to speak in Turkish and attract their attention to how often they use DMs while speaking in their native language. While speaking in English, they do not use them. I suppose they do not pay attention to DMs in reading texts or listening tracks as well.”

‘*The level to start highlighting DMs*’ is the third predetermined theme. The teachers were asked what level is appropriate to start teaching DMs to their students. The comments showed that teaching DMs should start as early as possible. Most of the participants (6 teachers) stated that A2 level is appropriate. Four teachers reported that teaching should start from the beginner level, A1.

T4 supported starting teaching DMs at A2 level as A1 is too early for the students to make complex sentences as seen in the extract below:

“I think A2 is appropriate. At A1 level, we use main course books. A1 is the level they meet the target language so according to me so I think it is not the right time to start teaching them.”

On the other hand, T7 claimed that DMs should be highlighted starting from A1 level to help the students express their ideas as seen below:

“We should start teaching the simple one at A1 level. The teaching of more complicated ones can be postponed to higher levels. The ones which help students to express their ideas in the simplest form should be taught at A1.”

The final theme in this category focuses on the ‘*essay types*’. The essay types which students have difficulty in using DMs were asked to the teachers, and their responses revealed that opinion/argumentative essay writing is more challenging for the students in terms of using DMs. While six teachers reported that students experience difficulty in opinion/argumentative essay type, four teachers reported that compare-contrast essay type was more problematic to use DMs.

T9 commented on the difficulty of opinion/argumentative essay as follows:

“Since the students already face difficulty in generating ideas, it is hard for them to link these ideas with a marker in opinion/argumentative essays. They may use “for example” inappropriately, as they are not aware of the difference of giving an example or adding extra information.”

T3 believed that using DMs in compare-contrast essays is harder as seen below:

“Writing compare-contrast is more difficult for them because there is a variety of DMs, and they are all used differently. *But, whereas, however* are

all used differently. Sometimes neither...nor or not only...but also is needed. They all have different grammatical rules; therefore they have more difficulty in the compare-contrast essay. The other types, inferential or elaborative markers, are easier.”

## CHAPTER V: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This chapter presents an in-depth discussion of research results and asserts several explanations regarding the use of DMs by Turkish students and Turkish EFL teachers' perceptions of the role of DMs. As in the results section, the results of each research question are discussed separately. In the discussion of the first question, the frequently used DMs by students are addressed. Possible reasons behind the overused and underused DMs in Turkish learner corpus are explained from different points of view. For the second research question, the frequency of DMs in three categories is compared within Turkish learner corpus and native English corpus and between two corpora. The results are discussed together with the teachers' opinions and the previous research results in the field. In the discussion of the third research question, the total number of DMs used in Turkish learner corpus and native English corpus is reviewed with the underlying reasons behind the differences between two corpora. For the fourth research question, the positive relationship between the frequency of DMs used in Turkish learners' essays and the scores given to them by the raters is discussed. Major causes of this relationship are attempted to be identified and are presented with the results of previous studies. Then, teachers' perceptions of DMs are discussed for the fifth research question. Teachers' opinions are reviewed to discuss the role, usage, and teaching of DMs in EFL writing. Finally, conclusions drawn from the current study results, implications for practice, and suggestions for further research are presented.

### 5.1. Discussion of Research Question 1 - Frequency of DMs

The first research question of the study is: *What are the most/least frequent discourse markers in native English and Turkish learner corpora?* The quantitative results for this question showed that there are both similarities and differences between Turkish and American students regarding the use of DMs in their argumentative essays. In both corpora, a couple of DMs in each category were used much more frequently than others.

In the CDMs category, Turkish students used 'but' the most frequently, 'however' the second, and 'although' the third to signal a direct or indirect contrast. The frequency of the next DM (on the other hand) used by Turkish students commonly in this category is far below the third one. Similarly, American students used 'but' the most, 'however' the

second, and ‘even though’ the third to show contrast relationship between two segments. When the results are examined in a detailed way, it can be observed that ‘but’ and ‘however’ are overused in both corpora. It is not surprising to find out the marker ‘but’ as the most frequent DM since it is regarded as the primary DM of the contrastive markers class (Fraser, 2009). These findings are in line with several studies in the literature which investigated the use of DMs by EFL learners in various native language contexts and identified the overuse of ‘but’ and ‘however’ (Martinez, 2004; Djigunovic & Vickov 2010; Vaez Dalili & Vahid Dastjerdi, 2013; Ali & Mahadin, 2016; Aysu, 2017; Dumlao & Wilang, 2019). It can be observed in the results that the occurrence of other CDMs such as ‘whereas’, ‘nevertheless’, ‘yet’ etc. were either non-existent or symbolic in both corpora.

The quantitative analysis of IDMs showed similar results in the order of occurrence of two most commonly used IDMs in both corpora although their frequency counts were markedly different in Turkish learner and native English corpus. Turkish students relied heavily on ‘because’ to signal that segment one is the basis of inference in segment two. The second IDM employed more frequently than the others was ‘so’, and the third one was ‘therefore’. Similar to the results in CDMs category, the frequency of other IDMs such as ‘thus’, ‘since’, and ‘hence’ were very symbolic in the Turkish learner corpus. In native English corpus, American students also utilised ‘because’ most frequently, ‘so’ the second, and ‘due to (the fact that)’ third. The frequency of other IDMs was highly symbolic in this corpus. Surprisingly, Fraser (2009) defines ‘so’ as the primary DM of the inferential markers class, so this result contradicts with his definition. The results of this category are consistent with other studies (Martinez, 2004; Djigunovic & Vickov 2010; Prommas & Sinwongsuwat, 2011; Vaez Dalili & Vahid Dastjerdi, 2013; Ali & Mahadin, 2016; Aysu, 2017).

The third category of DMs investigated in the current study is elaborative discourse markers. These markers are used to signal an elaboration in segment two to the information given in segment one (Fraser, 2009). In this category, Turkish students employed a large variety of DMs when compared to American students. The most frequently employed item is ‘and’ in this category. ‘And’ is identified as the primary marker of the EDMs class (Fraser, 2009). The second item is ‘for example’ which is used to provide an example for the information given in the former segment. The third

most frequently occurring item is 'also'. The fourth elaborative discourse marker observed in this corpus is 'for instance', a synonym of 'for example'. When the quantitative results of native English corpus are analysed carefully, it can be observed that American students used a limited number of EDMs with a very low variety. 'And' had the highest frequency in native English corpus. Marker 'also' ranked the second, and 'for example' ranked the third in frequency. Although lower frequencies were recorded for the remaining EDMs such as 'in addition', 'moreover' when compared to the topmost frequent EDMs, it can be noticed that Turkish students had a tendency to use more EDMs both in frequency and variation. The results in this category confirmed the results in previous studies (Prommas & Sinwongsuwat, 2011; Rahimi, 2011; Vaez Dalili & Vahid Dastjerdi, 2013; Ali & Mahadin, 2016; Aysu, 2017; Dumlao & Wilang, 2019).

The qualitative analysis of the semi-structured interview conducted with ten teachers showed that Turkish teachers are aware of the overuse of some certain DMs in each category. Almost all of the teachers indicated that Turkish students overused contrastive marker 'but' in their writings. Moreover, more than half of the teachers reported that elaborative discourse marker 'and' was overused. These results are consistent with the quantitative results of the corpus data. On the other hand, while students dominantly used 'because' as an inferential discourse marker in their essays, the majority of teachers claimed that 'so' is overused. Teachers participated in this study did not name any specific discourse marker which was underused by the students. They complained about the lack of variation in the DMs. All of them emphasized that different alternatives of overused DMs should be employed by the students in their essays. This complaint seems to be justified when the symbolic frequencies of the other DMs except the dominant ones in each category are taken into consideration.

Several reasons can be attributed to the overuse of one or two markers within each discourse marker category. Mihaljevic Djiguvonic and Vickov (2010) investigated the use of discourse markers in Croatian primary and secondary school students' essays. The results of their study corroborate the findings of the present study. Croatian students learning English used a very small range of DMs and overused almost the same DMs in their written productions as in the present study. Mihaljevic Djiguvonic and Vickov (2010) claimed that L1 interference may be one of the reasons behind this

overuse. This reason may be valid for Turkish students, too. The top three overused DMs in Turkish learner corpus ‘and’, ‘but’, ‘because’ are the equivalents of most common discourse markers ‘ve’, ‘ama/fakat/ancak’, and ‘çünkü’ in Turkish. While teaching writing or invigilating students during a writing assignment, it is often observed that some students write their paragraphs or essays first in Turkish and then translate them into English. Moreover, some students report that they make mental translation. They first create the sentences in Turkish in their minds and translate these sentences into English. This translation process may be pushing the students to use identical words of Turkish markers in English. This reason is also suggested by Demirci and Kleiner (1997) who investigated the use of discourse markers by advanced Turkish learners of English. According to Demirci and Kleiner (1997) Turkish EFL students attempt to translate the discourse markers from L1.

Another reason for the dominance of the discourse markers discussed above may be the simple characteristics of them. Mihaljevic Djigunovic and Vickov (2010) states that “markers such as *and*, *but*, *because* and *I think* are very simple in their orthographic and phonological structure, and are semantically unambiguous, which makes them easy to both acquire and use” (p. 273). It is a widely held view that language learners, especially adults and young adults, are quite anxious about making mistakes while using the target language. Therefore, they usually choose not to take risks and try to use the safe words or structures that they already know. The simplicity of ‘and’, ‘but’, and ‘because’ and ease of their use may make them more preferable than other less frequently used DMs for EFL students.

There is another likely cause of the overuse of some certain discourse markers. These expressions are generally given as a long list whereas necessary information about the usage of each specific marker is mostly neglected or not detailed enough in grammar or writing books. Since English is a foreign language in the Turkish context, the students do not have the chance of exposure to these markers in authentic contexts. Therefore, they do not learn or acquire different variations or functions of a marker, and they tend to use the same marker repeatedly.

It is necessary to make final note that the reasons provided for the high frequency of certain discourse markers above can be the reasons for underuse of other markers which

were found in symbolic frequencies. The overuse of contrastive marker ‘but’ may be linked to the underuse of contrastive marker ‘yet’ or ‘whereas’. This is also similar in the case of elaborative marker ‘and’. The overuse of EDM ‘and’ may be an important factor in the underuse of markers ‘besides’, ‘furthermore’ or ‘moreover’. Finally, the overuse of inferential markers ‘because’ and ‘so’ may have contributed to the decrease in the use of other inferential markers such as ‘since’, ‘thus’ or ‘hence’. The reason for the underuse of these markers may be connected to their lower familiarity with the usage.

## **5.2. Discussion of Research Question 2 - Comparison of DMs in Native English and Turkish Learner Corpora**

The second research question was whether there was a statistically significant difference in the total frequency of DMs between native English and Turkish learner corpora or not. The quantitative results indicated that there was a statistically significant difference between the total number of DMs used by Turkish and American students. These results are in agreement with several findings that showed that L2 learners tend to overuse discourse markers when compared to L1 users (Babanoğlu, 2014; Yangın-Ersanlı, 2015; Alsharif, 2017; Dumlao & Wilang, 2019). Moreover, teachers’ responses to the interview question about the difference between Turkish students and native speakers discourse marker use are also consistent with these results. The responses showed that almost all of the teachers were aware of the overuse of DMs in their students’ essays. When Turkish teachers were asked about the reasons behind this overuse, several reasons were suggested.

The two most frequent reasons for overuse given by the teachers were students’ ‘*anxiety to get a high score*’ and their need for ‘*covering up lack of writing competence*’. The third and fourth reasons were ‘*limited knowledge of expressions*’ and ‘*teachers’ overemphasis of DMs in writing and grammar classes*’. Although no reasons were tested or proved in this study, these suggestions may be quite related to the tendency to overuse discourse markers. As observed in the classrooms, most Turkish students are score-oriented individuals as the education system in Turkey is quite exam-based. All students have to take several public exams until they start their university education, and the competition is very intense in these exams. In this context, the essays

were also scored for the unity and coherence of the text; therefore, the students may have overused the DMs to get a higher score. Moreover, the students may be holding the view that if they use these expressions and write longer and more complex sentences including more than one segment, they could show a higher level of proficiency in English. When this view meets with the students' limited knowledge of expressions and their teachers' overemphasis of DMs in writing classes, the simple DMs such as 'and', 'but', and 'because' may increase in their writings. This explanation can be supported by Ali and Mahadin's (2016) study. They investigated the relationship between the use of DMs and the proficiency level of students. Relying on Fraser's (2009) taxonomy, they compared intermediate and advanced learners' use of DMs. Their results showed that "lower proficiency EFL learners tend to use more restricted and redundant sets of DMs" such as '*and*' and '*or*' (Ali & Mahadin, 2016, p. 32). Since the native speakers do not have the concerns discussed above, the DMs may not be employed in their writings as frequent as the L2 user's writings.

The final possible reason for the overuse of DMs by L2 students may be the teaching materials (Mihaljevic Djigunovic & Vickov, 2010; Ha, 2016; Alsharif, 2017). As presented in most textbooks, providing long lists of DMs is not enough to teach them. The lack of systematic teaching of syntactic and semantic features of English discourse markers may cause the dominance of particular discourse markers which they have studied since the beginning of EFL learning (Mihaljevic Djigunovic & Vickov, 2010).

### **5.3. Discussion of Research Question 3 - Comparison between Different Classes of DMs**

The third research question of this study is: *Are there any frequency-based differences across different classes of DMs:*

- a) between native English corpus and Turkish learner corpus,*
- b) within native English corpus,*
- c) within Turkish learner corpus?*

This question aimed to figure out if there is any statistical difference across different classes of DMs between two corpora and within each corpus.

The quantitative results of this question showed that there are significant differences between Turkish students and American students regarding the frequency counts of DMs in three categories.

In the first point of comparison, the statistical analysis comparing the frequency of DMs used by Turkish and American students in each category revealed that there were statistically significant differences between the two corpora. That is, Turkish students tended to overuse contrastive, elaborative, and inferential discourse markers compared to American university students.

Secondly, the quantitative results of corpus analysis revealed that American students tend to use the elaborative markers most frequently in their essays. The contrastive markers were the second most frequently used category and inferential markers were the least frequently used category. The statistical analysis of the frequency counts showed that the only statistically significant difference was between the use of inferential discourse markers and elaborative discourse markers. This means that statistically American students use elaborative markers more frequently than inferential markers. The results showed that American students can rely heavily on ‘and’ to join two sentences or statements. The hierarchy of the frequency counts of three categories in the native English corpus matches those observed in some other non-native English corpora in earlier studies (Vaez Dalili & Vahid Dastjerdi, 2013; Ha, 2016). Ha (2016) examined the linking adverbials in first-year Korean university EFL learners’ writing. Ha (2016) compared Korean students’ argumentative essays with American students’ essays. The results were very similar. American students employed additive linking adverbials such as ‘and’, ‘also’ most often.

In the present study, Turkish students used inferential discourse markers most frequently. The elaborative markers were employed as the second most frequent category. Contrastive discourse markers had the lowest frequency counts among the three categories. However, statistical analysis revealed that there were no significant differences across the categories in the Turkish learner corpus. The lack of statistical significance shows that Turkish students do not overuse/underuse any category of markers. This result is consistent with the qualitative analysis of the teacher interviews because more than half of the teachers reported that all categories are equally important

for them. On the other hand, the hierarchy of three categories contradicts with some published studies (Martinez, 2004; Mihaljevic Djigunovic & Vickov, 2010; Vaez Dalili & Vahid Dastjerdi, 2013; Ali & Mahadin, 2016; Aysu, 2017; Dumlao & Wilang, 2019). In most of the studies reviewed in the literature, elaborative discourse markers were found to be the most frequently used category by EFL learners. Martinez (2004) investigated the use of English discourse markers in the expository compositions of Spanish EFL learners and found that elaborative markers were used more frequently than other categories. Similarly, Vaez Dalili & Vahid Dastjerdi (2013) investigated the frequency of discourse markers in native English and non-native English media discourse. They compared two corpora consisted of political news articles from major American and Iranian newspapers. The results revealed that Iranian journalists employed elaborative markers most in their articles written in English.

A possible explanation of the high frequency of inferential markers in Turkish learner corpus might be the argumentative essay type which constitutes the corpus. The discourse markers ‘because’ and ‘so’ are outliers in this category with extremely high frequency counts. ‘Because’ and ‘so’ are both subordinating conjunctions. While ‘because’ introduces clauses of cause or reason, ‘so’ introduces clauses of result or decision. By its nature, in argumentative writing writers are required to provide reasons, evidence, and counterarguments to support their argument and persuade the readers. This may have increased the number of inferential markers in students’ essays. This explanation is also supported by Prommas and Sinwongsuwat (2011). Prommas and Sinwongsuwat (2011) studied the use of discourse connectors in English argumentative compositions of Thai undergraduates. The results showed that Thai students used ‘because’ as the most frequent discourse marker in their essays.

On the other hand, the reason behind the less frequent use of CDMs when compared to other categories may be the students’ lower familiarity with the usage of CDMs. Since contrastive relations include a positive and negative statement at the same time, the students may avoid using CDMs. For example, the grammatical usage of for CDMs such as ‘whereas’, ‘nevertheless’, and ‘despite’ may be harder to use for Turkish students.

#### **5.4. Discussion of Research Question 4 - Relationship between the Frequency of DMs Used in Turkish Learners' Essays and the Scores Given to Them by the Raters**

The current study also examined if there was a relationship between the number of DMs used in Turkish learners' essays and the scores given to them by the raters. The quantitative results for the fourth research question showed a significant positive relationship between these two variables. The correlation coefficient indicated a moderate association between the number of DMs in an essay and the score of the same essay. Based on the findings of this study, it can be concluded that the frequency of use of DMs may be an indicator of the quality of the essays. While this result is in agreement with several studies in the literature (Martinez, 2004; Jalilifar, 2008; Crossley et al., 2016; Chanyoo, 2018), no evidence of relationship was found in Rahimi (2011). Martinez (2004) examined a sample of 78 essays and found a statistically significant relationship between the frequency of DMs and the composition scores. Also, further statistical analysis revealed that the number of DMs used in a composition explains 41% of the differences among scores (Martinez, 2004).

Although there are various elements affecting the score of an essay, the significant relationship between the frequency of DMs and the essays scores found in the current study can be explained by the fact that these devices contribute directly to the unity, coherence and cohesion of a text. Since the scoring rubric used in this study asks the teachers to assess the students' use of transition words and logical connectors for unity and consistency, it is not surprising that a higher number of DMs resulted in a higher-rated essay score. Also, despite not being examined in this study, it is often observed that more proficient learners write longer texts than less proficient learners. Elaboration on ideas, providing reasons for the argument, or giving examples to support the argument requires using DMs to flow smoothly from word to word, phrase to phrase, and sentence to sentence. If a student writes a longer text including more words, more DMs may be needed to employ, and this yields a higher score of writing (Chanyoo, 2018).

From the teachers' point of view, this relationship is also not surprising. When teachers were asked about their opinions on the relationship between the number of DMs in an essay and the score of the same essay during the interview, most of them reported that

there may be a positive relationship. As teachers are at the same time assessors of the essays, this result may give information about their decisions. Essays with more DMs may be considered as more cohesive by teachers even though they are not the only means for a well-organized and cohesive text (Jalilifar, 2008).

Finally, due to the small sample size and the medium level of correlation, this result must be interpreted with caution because the frequent use of DMs does not mean that the quality of the writing is excellent. Rahimi (2011) investigated the frequency and the type of DMs used in the argumentative and expository writings of Iranian EFL learners. Moreover, the influence of the use of DMs on the participants' writing scores was examined. The results showed that the use of DMs cannot be a significant predictor of the writing quality.

In conclusion, the scores given by the raters to the essays cannot be explained solely by the number of DMs. There are numerous elements that increase the coherence and scores of texts (Rahimi, 2011). However, the use of DMs, which is identified to be a discriminating factor in the scores of the students' essays, deserves special and long-term attention (Jalilifar, 2008).

### **5.5. Discussion of Research Question 5 - Turkish EFL Teachers' Perceptions of the Role, Usage, and Teaching of DMs**

The final concern of the current study was to explore teachers' opinions and experiences regarding the DMs in EFL writing. The fifth research question asks: '***How do Turkish EFL teachers' perceive the role, usage, and teaching of DMs in EFL writing?***' In the following, the quantitative and qualitative results are discussed together under two sections: 1) The Potential and Practical Benefits of Using DMs, 2) Teaching of DMs. In the first section, the two categories of the questionnaire: *the pragmatic value of DMs* and *indispensable value of DMs* are discussed together with the semi-structured interview results. In the second section, *pedagogic value*, *identification with native speaker norm*, *prioritizing teaching of DMs*, and *representation of DMs in EFL classrooms* are discussed together with the semi-structured interview results

### 5.5.1. The Potential and Practical Benefits of Using DMs

#### Pragmatic Value of DMs

The results of the questionnaire showed that Turkish EFL teachers had very positive perceptions of DMs concerning their communicative and practical benefits. This result is consistent with the limited number of studies in the literature (Albeshier et al., 2017). Also, although they focused on the teachers' perceptions of the DMs in spoken discourse, the positive perceptions of teachers on the pragmatic value of DMs are consistent with the results of Fung (2011), and Aşık (2015). The findings revealed that on the communicative side, teachers are aware of the DMs contribution to the written communication, comprehension of texts, processing information, and display of writer's thoughts. On the practical side, teachers agree that DMs are beneficial for the students' success in public examinations.

In line with the quantitative results of the questionnaire, teachers' responses to interview questions showed that using DMs are considered as very beneficial. The majority of teachers referred '*reader*' by concluding that DMs make a text easier to read, reduce the ambiguity in meaning, make a text less confusing, boring and artificial. These findings confirm the ideas of Crossley et al. (2016) who suggested that thanks to cohesive devices, the comprehensibility of a text increases for especially low-knowledge readers. Regarding the artificiality, a very similar comment was made in Fung's (2011) study conducted in spoken discourse. One of the interviewees in Fung's (2011) study expressed that DMs can bring naturalness to a conversation. Correspondingly, Mihaljevic Djigunovic and Vickov (2010) point out that if an EFL learner uses DMs inadequately, their language may be interpreted as deficient, boring, impolite, and weird. Making a text easier to assess was another important comment reported by the teachers on the benefits of DMs for the readers. Similarly, according to Alsharif (2017), DMs reduce the processing effort spent by the readers by making a text more objective.

Another benefit of DMs referred by the teachers was '*organization*'. They commented on how DMs help to organize ideas and sentences in a text. In line with the quantitative results of the teachers' questionnaire, the findings revealed that teachers found DMs useful in achieving unity and coherence in writing, combining sentence logically, and achieving cohesion. This result is not surprising as the use of DMs directly contributes

to the organization of a text. Discourse markers have a key role in creating coherent and cohesive discourse (Schiffrin, 1987; Fraser, 1999).

The next benefit was about the '*writer*'. Some comments revealed that using DMs can show the writer's mastery of sentence structure. Also, teachers reported that by the help of DMs a student can easily create effective texts. That is, using DMs not only facilitates reading but also facilitates writing. Likewise, Fung's (2003) study resulted in similar findings regarding the use of DMs in spoken discourse. One of the interviewees in Fung's (2003) study commented that discourse markers help the speakers to gather their thoughts and serve to mark hesitation. This can be interpreted for written discourse in a way that by using elaborative, inferential, or contrastive markers students can gather their thoughts and express themselves more effectively and accurately.

The final benefit was about the '*content*'. The teachers stated that using DMs are essential to generate new ideas and enrich the content in writing. Fung and Carter's (2007) study investigated the production of DMs by native speakers and learners of English. In their multi-categorical framework of DMs, one of the categories was identified as a cognitive category. Fung and Carter (2007) claimed that DMs are indicators of the cognitive state of speakers. The discourse markers such as '*well*', '*I think*', '*I see*', '*and*', '*in other words*' were grouped in this category in their framework. These DMs were supposed "to denote the thinking process" (p. 415). Similarly, teachers may have thought that using DMs may represent the thinking process in writing. Elaborating ideas or making inferences requires the writers to reflect on what they wrote earlier, and what they will write next. To this end, teachers may have assumed that using DMs can encourage the students to develop new ideas, and not to repeat the content that they have already written. In this way, the content of the writing is also enriched and enlarged in size.

### **Indispensable Value of DMs**

The results indicated that DMs guide and orientate the readers to understand written texts. In this respect, the results are generally consistent with the pragmatic value of DMs. However, the responses for the item about understanding a text without DMs show that some teachers may be unsure about DMs' necessity to understand a written text. Actually, this result can be explained by DMs' optionality in sentences. Fraser

(2009) claims that DMs are detachable from the propositional content of the segments preceding or following them. Likewise, according to Schourup (1999) DMs are syntactically optional which means that their omission does not change the grammaticality of the host sentence.

### **5.5.2. Teaching of DMs**

#### **Pedagogic Value of DMs**

Teachers responded to the questionnaire items related to the pedagogic value of DMs most positively. This result is also in agreement with the results of Albeshier et al.'s (2017) study. The results of both Albeshier et al.'s (2017) study and the current study suggest that DMs should definitely be taught and highlighted in EFL classrooms. Moreover, there is a strong consensus among the teachers that the learners' awareness of DMs should be increased, and they should be helped to take advantage of DMs to improve their writing skills. During the semi-structured interview, teachers commented on how to teach and when to start teaching DMs, representation of DMs in the curriculum and which essay types are more difficult to use DMs for students.

In order to teach DMs, several classroom activities were suggested by the teachers. More than half of the teachers found rewriting activities useful for students. The quantitative results of the corpus analysis revealed that Turkish students overuse some certain DMs in each category and underuse the rest of them. Therefore, the teachers may have found the rewriting activities useful. Rewriting a sentence with a different discourse marker without changing the meaning may encourage the students to employ variations of discourse markers in their writings. The second activity underlined by the teachers was combining two sentences using DMs. Teachers reported that this type of activity may be helpful to show the discourse connections to the students and help them to achieve cohesion between sentences. The next activity is a traditional activity which can be found profoundly in EFL materials. That is filling in the gaps with DMs. Although this traditional activity may be suggested as it is one of the most common activities in EFL textbooks, or just because the teachers themselves may have learned how to use DMs in this way, it can be helpful in increasing the students' awareness of different DMs. Thus, the frequency of underused DMs can be increased in students'

written productions. In addition to the controlled or semi-controlled activities discussed above, a free activity indicated by the teachers was writing a paragraph or an essay using the target DMs. This may be regarded as a sign that teachers are aware of the inefficiency of these controlled activities. Freewriting activities might be essential to assess the students' proficiency in using DMs more accurately. Sentence-based activities may be misleading about the students' success while teaching a foreign language. Writing a text is regarded to be far difficult than combining or rewriting sentences. As a productive skill, writing process involves a lot of components such as grammatical, lexical, and content knowledge, organization of the content, mechanics, etc. The challenging nature of writing a text may be the reason behind the teachers' suggestion. The students' productions allow EFL teachers to examine their students' use of DMs in harmony with other aspects of EFL writing. Meanwhile, teachers may have had the opinion that students' using DMs while writing down their ideas may be the most effective way to learn to use them in writing. The final three activities reported by the teachers were comparing a text with DMs with a text without DMs, asking for variations of DMs used in a text, and showing examples. All of these activities can be helpful when practised purposefully and effectively to teach the students to use the DMs correctly and appropriately.

When teachers were asked what type of essay was more difficult for students in terms of using DMs, argumentative and compare/contrast essay types were reported. Between these two, the argumentative essay was found more difficult than compare/contrast essay. This result supports the idea that argumentative essays are likely to include more DMs than narrative essays (Prommas & Sinwongsuwat, 2011). Argumentative writing requires critical thinking skills as the writer has to produce a number of reasons, provide evidence to support the argument, and refute the counter-arguments in order to persuade the reader. Managing an argument and organizing opposing ideas may need a great mastery of the use of DMs. Due to this challenging nature, argumentative essays are highly preferable in several corpus-based studies examining DM usage (Rahimi, 2011; Yang & Sun, 2012; Babanoğlu, 2014; Alsharif, 2017). The second type of essays regarded as difficult for students to use DMs was compare/contrast essay type. This essay type may be difficult for students as it requires including contrastive relations in the same paragraph or essay. Teachers might think that organizing these conflicting

ideas with contrastive discourse markers are more challenging for students than elaborating ideas, or making inferences.

### **Prioritizing Teaching of DMs**

Teachers' opinions on prioritizing teaching of DMs were moderately positive. While there is a strong consensus on the integration of teaching DMs with other skills and courses, teachers were cautious that teaching of DMs should be delayed until awareness of DMs has been grasped through receptive skills, listening and reading. Also, the results revealed that teachers vacillated over how much time is needed to learn to use DMs effectively. The qualitative findings indicated that the teachers were not sure about when to start teaching DMs. The majority of interviewed teachers preferred A2 level as the right level to start teaching DMs rather than A1. This finding seems to corroborate Fung's (2003) findings. The subjects in Fung's study held the view that knowing DMs could be more beneficial at higher levels. However, since Fung's study was conducted at secondary schools and in spoken discourse, the comparison must be made with caution.

### **Representation of DMs in EFL Classrooms**

The quantitative results revealed a very high representation of DMs in EFL classrooms. Most of the teachers strongly agreed that they highlighted the DMs in writing lessons. Also, the teaching materials for writing and other courses were reported to be representing DMs. This result is in line with Aşık's (2015) study. The results of Aşık (2015) also revealed that teachers were aware of the significant values of DMs. This result is promising in terms of the use of DMs in EFL classrooms (Aşık, 2015). However, due to the limited number of items related to this category and small sample size, this finding might be unique to the setting of the current study, and might not be generalizable. When the teachers were asked about their opinions on the representation of DMs in the curriculum during the interviews, the findings were not much supportive of the quantitative results of the questionnaire. During the interview, half of the teachers reported that there was enough emphasis. The complaints were about not having a curriculum which integrates the teaching of DMs with other language skills, lack of time for practice, lack of authentic materials and life-like situations, and lack of variety in DMs in the materials. In Fung's (2003) study which was carried out in spoken

discourse, the qualitative findings also revealed that DMs had a very low status in the Hong Kong classrooms. Highlighting DMs in the language skills other than writing may eliminate the problems about the lack of integration and lack of time for practice. The lack of authentic materials is a very common and problematic aspect of language teaching and learning. In Fung's (2003) study the importance of 'real life interaction' and 'natural context' to teach DMs used in spoken discourse was also addressed. This lack of life-like situations may cause inappropriate or redundant uses of DMs in writing as well. The materials should expose the students to authentic written language with a variety of DMs to raise the awareness of the students to facilitate written communication (Ha, 2016).

### **Identification with native speaker norm**

Turkish EFL teachers held the least positive opinions on sticking native speaker norm of using DMs. The quantitative results indicated that DMs should be taught how native speakers use them. However, there is not a consensus on aiming at native-like proficiency in the use of DMs. Turkish teachers do not accept that requiring the students to use DMs like native speakers of English is realistic and justifiable. This result is in line with the results of Fung's (2011) study and Albeshier et al.'s study (2017). Fung's (2011) results showed that teachers thought that their students may never reach this target in EFL speaking. Similarly, Albeshier et al. (2017) found that Saudi EFL teachers are aware of the importance of DMs in writing but they did not expect their students to be equal to the native speakers. Teachers may have had this opinion since English is a foreign language in the Turkish context and the students' exposure to English is extremely limited. Therefore, expecting the Turkish students to conform to the native speakers' norm to use these markers may be ill-advised.

## **5.6. Implications**

### **5.6.1. Implications for Practice**

Based on the findings, this study has some pedagogical implications for EFL students, teachers, and curriculum and material designers.

Regarding the students, firstly, the uneven distribution of the occurrences of DMs should be addressed. The overuse of some certain DMs by Turkish EFL learners needs to be prevented by Turkish EFL teachers' guidance. The students should be informed that using DMs again and again does not make a text more cohesive (Polat, 2011). Furthermore, learners seem to employ some DMs more readily than others since they are easier to use between segments, and this may cause underuse of other markers. Their attention must be drawn on these underused DMs by their teachers during the lectures. Language activities that raise learners' awareness of variations of DMs should be prepared.

As one of the principal elements of teaching and learning some implications for teachers can be arisen. A teacher is a major source of language exposure for students in EFL contexts where students' exposure to language is limited. Undoubtedly, how EFL teachers view, use, and teach DMs in classrooms affect the students' use of DMs. For this reason, teachers should keep in mind that they are models during their students' language learning process. However, as Zorluer Özer and Okan (2018) found out, Turkish EFL teachers may, in general, tend to underuse some certain DMs during the lectures when compared to native teachers in EFL classrooms. As the findings of the current study showed, the Turkish students overused some certain DMs. Therefore, the teachers should be more selective about the markers which they use during teaching. If a variety of DMs are used by the teachers, the variations of DMs used by the students may tend to increase.

Furthermore, feedback is extremely essential in language teaching and learning. Giving detailed feedback on the written work is likely to reduce the inappropriate use of discourse markers by the students. Also, if a teacher gives detailed feedback which draws the students' attention to the repetition of the same discourse markers, the students may be encouraged to try new DMs which they have not used before.

Adding different types of activities in writing classrooms is another urgent need that should be addressed by the teachers. Although several activities were suggested by the teachers to teach DMs, these activities were very traditional ones which have been practiced abundantly in EFL classrooms for years. On the other hand, up to date electronic language corpora have brought several positive changes in how language is

taught (Yoon, 2008; Hyland, 2009). Technology-based activities should be preferred to increase learners' motivation and engagement in EFL classrooms. In this respect, corpus technology can be utilized in writing instruction. Corpus-based activities can help EFL practitioners to produce teaching materials that include authentic examples of DMs (Leech, 1997). Garner (2013) claims that thanks to the data-driven learning approach students do not only receive information, they can also examine the language evidence and reach their own conclusions. Thus, the students have more control over their learning. For classroom practise, through concordancing techniques, students can learn more about the meanings and usage of DMs. Garner (2013) suggests that if students get engaged in deep processing while studying concordance lines in a corpus, this shifts them from being passive receivers of information to language researchers. Moreover, if access to different corpora including different registers or contexts is provided to the students, they can compare the distribution of DMs in multiple registers and learn how language differs in these circumstances such as formal, informal, or casual.

In line with the expectations that are supposed to be fulfilled by the teachers, pre-service and in-service teachers' knowledge on how to use corpus technology needs to be enhanced. For prospective teachers, courses or lessons on how to teach writing skill and how to use corpus technology in teaching writing should be offered in teacher education programmes. For in-service teachers, training programmes or workshops on how to use corpora in language teaching or specifically in writing should be set up by the institutions. The higher education institutions across the country should provide online or on-site courses for the benefit of ELT teacher candidates and teachers. Also, the attendance on these events should definitely be promoted by teacher educators at universities or school administrators.

The final implication for the teachers is in testing and assessment of writing. As an important part of writing, the use of DMs should be well documented so that teachers/raters can make valid judgements about how many points are to be awarded for which part of the rubric. In other words, the descriptors in rating scales should include clear explanations on how the variation and correct use of DMs are to be evaluated.

In terms of curriculum designers, the first implication of the present study is the integration of teaching DMs with other language skills. The teachers in this study

strongly agreed that teaching of DMs should not only be limited to writing or grammar courses, time and place for the teaching of DMs should be allocated in reading, listening, and speaking syllabi. This integration may help learners become more aware of the importance of DMs. Teaching DMs through authentic language input in listening and reading courses may increase the learners' recognition of their functions and the slight differences in their meanings. As a result, this input may be transferred into output by the students in the form of more cohesive and organized written texts or spoken utterances.

EFL textbooks should be modified in connection with the developments in corpus technology (Fung, 2011; Ha, 2016). The traditional activities reported to be applied by the teachers in the current study are profoundly encountered in writing coursebooks available in the market. Most of these coursebooks provide long lists of linking adverbials; however, they do not include the slight differences in meaning and style (Garner, 2013; Ha, 2016). Instead of these activities, a variety of native speaker corpora and learner corpora can be exploited to produce new materials which may solve learners' attested problems in the use of DMs in writing (Ha, 2016). Recently, the EFL coursebooks have started providing access to online materials or electronic workbooks which students can study whenever and wherever they want using their mobile devices. The activities on these web-based platforms can easily be adapted for corpus use for students. In that way, these online materials, platforms or packages will go beyond providing activities which can easily be found in printed course books. For example, a concordancer accessed through an EFL textbook's online material (website, software, or mobile phone application) can present hundreds or thousands of examples even for a single discourse marker depending on the corpus in which the search is carried out. This allows the students both to see multiple uses and meanings of a single DM and to discover what mistakes or errors they make while using that marker.

### **5.6.2. Implications for Future Research**

The first recommendation for further research is to carry out a similar study with two larger native and non-native English corpora including a variety of essay types. In corpus-based studies, the size of the corpus should be as large as possible. Therefore,

investigating the same research questions in larger corpora which include not only argumentative essays but also other genres may provide more generalizable results and yield to broader pedagogical implications.

Secondly, the sampling of teachers in this study is quite limited. The perceptions of teachers working at other institutions or primary, secondary, or high schools can also be studied in future studies.

In the current study, Fraser's (2009) taxonomy of DMs was adopted. While a great number of discourse markers were included in this taxonomy, there may still be other discourse markers that were not searched in the corpus analysis. Therefore, using other classifications may provide additional information in relation to the use of discourse markers in EFL writing.

Another recommendation for further research is to examine the reasons behind the overuse of DMs examined in the current study. Since no reason was tested, or no treatment was conducted in the present study, the suggested reasons and explanations are hypothetical. In order to test the reasons and explanations in the current study, a longitudinal experimental study with explicit instruction on DMs can be implemented so that the reasons and explanations of this study can be validated. In addition to the data collection tools in this study, classroom observations can be conducted to gain insights into classroom teaching behind the closed doors. Thus, which DMs the teachers use more frequently or less frequently in lectures can be observed. Moreover, their teaching styles and ways of giving feedback on the misuses or inappropriate uses of DMs can be monitored.

In this study, the discourse markers were only analysed in terms of their frequency. The syntactic features or appropriate use of specific DMs were not investigated. Further research focusing on the syntactic features of the DMs may provide information in two ways. First of all, if the distribution of the DMs across the syntactic categories such as coordinate conjunctions, subordinate conjunctions, prepositions, prepositional phrases, adverbials etc. is examined, which category is more frequently employed, or which category is avoided to use by the students can be explored. Secondly, the DMs positions in a sentence can be investigated to check whether they appear sentence-initially, medially, or finally in EFL learners' sentences. On the pragmatic side, follow-up studies

to explore the functions of the DMs used by the students can fill a research gap in the Turkish EFL context. In the current study, the DMs which belong to three pragmatic functional classes are searched in two corpora. However, appropriate use of single DMs was in the scope of this study. The frequently used DMs can be focused in future studies to reveal what functions they serve.

The Turkish learner corpus of the current study included only B2 (upper-intermediate) level students' essays. The use of DMs at lower levels of proficiency was not in the scope of this study. Written productions of A1, A2, or B1 level students can be examined to gain insights about the developmental trends in the use of DMs across various proficiency levels. Similarly, it can be investigated whether the variety or appropriate use of DMs increases in parallel to the proficiency level of students.

One of the objectives of the present study was to investigate the relationship between the scores given by the raters to an essay and the number of DMs used in that essay. Although DMs were found to be a critical part of writing, there are other components that contribute to the writing score such as lexicon or syntax (Crossley, et al., 2016). As the moderate effect size found in the current study indicates, the DMs do not operate in isolation. The interaction among the use of discourse markers and these elements can be investigated in the follow-up studies. For example, whether improvement in vocabulary or grammar knowledge contributes to the variety or appropriate use of DMs in writing may be searched for an answer. By this way, the researchers and practitioners are likely to gain more insights about the developmental process of cohesive and effective writing.

Finally, the current study aimed to investigate the use of DMs in written productions of EFL learners and native speakers. Further investigations comparing written and oral productions of EFL students can shed more light on the use of DMs and can increase the understanding of the acquisition of DMs.

In conclusion, as a research study with small sample size, the present study cannot claim the generalization of its findings. The purpose of the current study was to address an important area of written language and to contribute to the field of second or foreign language pedagogy. In order to have more precise evidence of the use, role and teaching of DMs in EFL classrooms, there is a need for much larger data collection and further longitudinal, experimental, and observational investigations.

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## **APPENDICES**

## APPENDIX A

### FRASER'S (2009) TAXONOMY OF DISCOURSE MARKERS

- **Contrastive markers:** *but, alternatively, although, contrariwise, contrary to expectations, conversely, despite (this/that), even so, however, in spite of (this/that), in comparison (with this/that), in contrast (to this/that), instead (of this/that), nevertheless, nonetheless, (this/that point), notwithstanding, on the other hand, on the contrary, rather (than this/that), regardless (of this/that), still, though, whereas, yet.*
- **Elaborative markers:** *and, above all, after all, also, alternatively, analogously, besides, by the same token, correspondingly, equally, for example, for instance, further (more), in addition, in other words, in particular, likewise, more accurately, more importantly, more precisely, more to the point, moreover, on that basis, on top of it all, or, otherwise, rather, similarly.*
- **Inferential markers:** *so, all things considered, as a conclusion, as a consequence (of this/that), as a result (of this/that), because (of this/that), consequently, for this/that reason, hence, it follows that, accordingly, in this/that/any case, on this/that condition, on these/those grounds, then, therefore, thus.*

## APPENDIX B

### TURKISH LEARNER CORPUS SAMPLE ESSAYS

#### SAMPLE ESSAY I (Score: 23 / 25)

Nowadays, almost all the people want their children to study university. They think that university is the only way for a successful career. *Although* they support this, I believe that children can have a successful career without studying university.

Some people argue that university is important for a career. They believe that theoretical information is the best thing for job. *However*, practical information is more valuable than theoretical information. Children who get a job straight after high school can have a lot of time for experience. They can improve "their skills and abilities without wasting time at a university. *Thus*, they can find their job type thanks to their experiences.

Many people support that all students study at university. They believe that even students don't want to study, they have to attend a university because of a good career in their future. *Therefore*, students cannot graduate their departments even leave their universities. Actually, children who get a job after high school can change their occupations. They can learn how to choose a job. They can decide their decision themselves. They can be self-confident manager in their future.

Finally, many people believe that university is necessary for a successful career *because* they think that they have a high-paid job when they graduate university. They believe that promotion depends a university diploma. *However*, people who don't study a university can have a high-paid job. When they start working after high school they can promote their jobs at the same age people who study at a university. They can have a lot of job *or* they can have promotion opportunities thanks to their experiences, such as hairdressers, make up artists, and mechanics.

*Even though* people underpin that university is the only way for a good career, I suppose that people who get a job straight after high school can have many opportunities for a successful career. They shouldn't put pressure on people for studying university. People can have a successful career when they do what they want.

**SAMPLE ESSAY II (Score: 13,5 / 25)**

School is so important for your life. If school is not, you could not start yours life. Information is necessary since if it is not you do not achive in yours life. Everybody have to go to the school. You have to go school for a good job and good future, but sometimes only school is not enough. Sometimes, many people believe that better to get a job straight after school. I do not with agree because university or collage's education the most significant than school.

Firstly, some people believe that better you directly got a job after school, since you have a insurence in early. This is big advantages in addition to they. Also you will be earn money. Thus this situation could very logical, but I do not think so. In my opinion people must go university or college. This is so important for yours job life. You will be owner most information, and therefore, you could be front one step.

Secondly, you have bilingual who some job places want to, but if you get a job just now after school you could not learn different language. You won't time, and you may lose your chance. The opposite of you go to the university or collage, you could learn a lot of language because there are a lot of alternative at the university or college. In this way there will be a chance in job world. In my opinion, people must go university and you must win a choice.

Finally, if you start suddenly after school you could not live your students life and this term is very important students have to live these year's. They have to fun, they have to go outside with friend, they have to live these age's. If you start to job now after school, students will not these days. People have to go university or college. They must learn life.

As a conclusion, many people think, if you start got a job just now after school, everything will be better than, but I do not with agree them. In my opinion people must go university or college. They must see real life. People should more than take an information, they should develop yourself, and you should learn more than one languages. Lastly, People must live students life. In my wiew, university or collage is necessary for successful career in future. I hope to people do yours want, and everything will be good.

## APPENDIX C

### NATIVE LEARNER CORPUS SAMPLE ESSAY

How could people live without the invention of the computer? Computers have become a part of everyday life for many people. Computers can be found everywhere from schools to huge businesses. People often rely greatly on computers. Computers have significantly changed people's lives.

For many people computers have become a part of their everyday life. In people's homes calculators as usually found and often even personal computers can be found in a private home. At the office, in school, or while shopping one will find many computers being used. People use computers in many different settings because they are so useful and speed-up many laboreous tasks.

Computers are relied on greatly for help with things such as filing, finding information, and solving equations. Computers speed-up tasks that used to take up a lot of time. Schools use computers to teach children because it is fun and exciting. Businesses use computers because they can be more productive by doing things quickly and getting more work done. Computers make things more efficient and often do things faster than humans. People have come to rely on computers because of these reasons.

People's lives have changed significantly since the invention of the calculator (the first computer). Many tasks have been made easier and are done more efficiently. Many people find knowledge of computer skills very helpful when looking for a job. People have come to depend on the function of a computer to help everyday life run smoothly.

Computers are indeed one of the greatest inventions of the 20th century. People have made computers part of everyday life. Computers do many useful and wonderful things, but people have often experienced the drawbacks of such a wonderful invention. When computers break down people are thrown back to the old way of life before computers. This is when it becomes evident that people are very dependent on computers when computers do break down. Many people will ask, "How did people live without the invention of the computer?"

## APPENDIX D

### THE QUESTIONNAIRE OF TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF DISCOURSE MARKERS IN EFL WRITING

Dear Colleague,

The statements in this questionnaire are pertaining to the use of discourse markers (henceforth DMs) and teaching of DMs in EFL writing. Please read each one and indicate to what extent you agree or disagree with each statement. There are no wrong responses to any of these statements. The contents of this questionnaire will be kept strictly confidential.

Thank you,

Mutlu ÇAM

Statements	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly agree
1. DMs can facilitate written communication.					
2. Knowledge of DMs helps processing information in writing.					
3. DMs can display a writer's style in writing.					
4. DMs are very useful devices for writers to guide readers to understand written texts.					
5. It is necessary to create and develop linguistic awareness of DMs and promote proficiency in the actual use of them in writing lessons.					
6. DMs help to orientate the readers to the overall idea structure and sequence in writing.					
7. It is realistic to require my students to use DMs like native speakers of English.					
8. DMs are redundant and sub-standard features in writing and there is not much teaching value.					
9. There is a need to highlight DMs as a fluency device in written language.					
10. Students should be helped to take advantage of DMs to improve their writing skills.					
11. Without DMs, a written text would become disjointed and incoherent.					
12. DMs are presented in most writing materials that I am using.					
13. It is too ambitious to expect students to learn to use DMs effectively in writing in Preparatory Year Program.					
14. DMs as an aspect of writing skill should be delayed until awareness of DMs as a reading skill or listening skill has been grasped.					
15. DMs are presented in most materials that I am using for different language skills apart from writing.					
16. Students should be taught to write like a native speaker in order to become competent writers.					

17. While teaching English, we should teach DMs not only in writing lessons, but also in other lessons.					
18. Without DMs, a written text would still become coherent and interpretable.					
19. The sequence of the writers' mental thoughts can be displayed clearly through DMs.					
20. Students can benefit in public examinations, especially in writing essays, if they know what DMs are and how they are used.					
21. It is justifiable to require my students to use DMs like native speakers of English.					
22. I always highlight DMs in writing lessons.					
23. I can still understand a written text using other linguistic clues rather than referring to the DMs.					
24. DMs help to signal relationships between ideas in a written text.					
25. Students should be taught how native English speakers use DMs and follow their way of using them.					
26. DMs are not only small words in writing. It is worth the time to teach them in writing courses.					
27. DMs as a linguistic device to develop writing skills should be integrated with other language skills in teaching English.					
28. While teaching English, we should prioritize teaching DMs mainly to develop writing skills.					
29. Students can comprehend written texts better if they know the functions DMs point to.					
30. DMs do not carry specific meaning there is not much teaching value.					

## APPENDIX E

### PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

Dear Colleague,

This study focuses on the discourse markers (henceforth DMs) in EFL writing from two perspectives; students' production and teachers' perceptions. Regarding the teachers' perceptions, I kindly ask you to read the information below to determine what are defined as DMs in this study.

Thank you,

Lec. Mutlu ÇAM

#### **What are discourse markers?**

A discourse marker is a lexical expression which signals the relation of contrast, implication, or elaboration between two *discourse segments*. *Discourse segment* is used as a cover term to refer to 'proposition', 'sentence', 'utterance' and 'message' (Fraser, 1998). Given the above definition, the DMs of English naturally fall into three functional classes:

**1- Contrastive markers** (CDMs), where a CDM signals a direct or indirect contrast between segment one and segment two (*but, alternatively, although, contrariwise, contrary to expectations, conversely, despite ( this/that ), even so, however, in spite of (this/that), in comparison ( with this / that ), in contrast ( to this/that ), instead ( of this / that ), nevertheless, nonetheless, ( this/that point ), notwithstanding, on the other hand, on the contrary, rather ( than this/that ), regardless ( of this/that ), still, though, whereas, yet ...*)

Sample Sentences\*:

- a) What you eat has a direct effect on your weight, **but** when you eat doesn't.
- b) Classical paintings rarely arouse strong feelings. Modern art, **however**, almost always starts a lively discussion.
- c) The early James Bond movies are full of fantastic inventions, **whereas** the latest movies are more realistic.

**2- Elaborative markers** (EDMs), where an EDM signals an elaboration in S2 to the information contained in segment one (*and, above all, after all, also, alternatively, analogously, besides, by the same token, correspondingly, equally, for example, for*

*instance, further ( more ) , in addition, in other words, in particular, likewise, more accurately, more importantly, more precisely, more to the point, moreover, on that basis, on top of it all, or, otherwise, rather, similarly ,...).*

Sample Sentences\*:

- a) Her childhood was tough, **and** she was very poor until she became a successful singer.
- b) My sister loses track of time when reading adventure novels. **Similarly**, I often forget to eat when I'm reading a good thriller.
- c) Johann Bach was the finest composer of the 18th century. **Likewise**, his son Carl also became a great composer.

- 3- Inferential markers** (IDMs), where an IDM signals that segment one provides a basis for inferring segment two (*so , all things considered, as a conclusion, as a consequence (of this/that ) , as a result ( of this/that ) , because (of this/that), consequently, for this/that reason, hence, it follows that, accordingly, in this/that/any case, on this/that condition, on these/those grounds, then, therefore, thus*).

Sample Sentences\*:

- a) Fruits and vegetables are often picked when they are freshest and then immediately frozen, **so** the nutrients are kept in the foods.
- b) In fact, one study showed that nearly 86% of Americans who voluntarily reduced their consumption felt happier afterwards. **Therefore**, by shopping and buying less, not only will you save money and have a less cluttered home, you'll also feel better overall.
- c) Unfortunately, much of the play that young children engage in today is not imaginative play and, **consequently**, it does not allow them to practice self-regulation.

\*Extracted from: Brooks, M. (2011). *Q Skills for Success: Reading and Writing 4: Student Book with Online Practice*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

## APPENDIX F

### SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1- How do you perceive the role of DMs in writing? How important are DMs in a written text? What potential and practical benefits do DMs provide for students when they are used in writing?
- 2- What do you think of the importance of the categories? If you are asked to number the categories of DMs in the order of importance, which category (IDM, EDM, or CDM) would be the first, second, and third? Why?
- 3- How do DMs affect the structure of a text / meaning of a text?  
Does the structure of a text/meaning of a text change significantly, if DMs are omitted? Or, will it be still possible to interpret the text if they are omitted? Can you say that the more DMs used in an essay, the easier it becomes to understand?
- 4- Have you ever noticed that your students overuse/underuse/misuse any specific DM? If yes, can you give an example?
- 5- What do you think of the relationship between the number of DMs used in an essay and the score obtained from that essay? How important is the use of DMs in writing while scoring an essay for you? Does the number of DMs used in an essay affect your score?
- 6- What is the most appropriate level to teach DMs? Why?
- 7- How do you teach/highlight DMs in your classrooms? Can you think of any useful activity for teaching of DMs in classrooms? Can you give an example?
- 8- In which type of essays do the students have difficulty in using DMs? Have you noticed any difference among genres?
- 9- How do TR students differ in the use of DMs from native speakers? Do you think they use it more/less frequently than native American/British university students? Why? Do they use them correctly? If there is, what can be the possible reasons behind the overuse/underuse of DMs for TR students compared to American/British students?
- 10- What do you think of representation of DMs in the existing writing curriculum? In relation to the objectives, exams, materials, teaching methods etc. is there enough emphasis on the use of DMs?

## APPENDIX G

### ARGUMENTATIVE ESSAY RUBRIC

<b>ORGANISATION &amp; CONTENT</b>	<b>Introduction</b>	<i>Hook</i>	1. Catch the attention of the reader via quotation /question/fact /surprising statistics / background information about the topic.	___ /1	
		<i>Construct an introduction</i>	2. Explain the controversial issue.	___ /1	
		<i>Thesis statement</i>	3. Write a thesis statement mentioning the opposite point of view and giving your argument.	___ /1	
	<b>Body Paragraphs</b>	<i>1st Body</i>		1. Start the paragraph with a counter argument.	___ /1
				2. Rebut the counter argument.	___ /1
				3. Provide own ideas and support these ideas with solid reasons and evidence.	___ /1
		<i>2nd Body</i>		1. Start the paragraph with a counter argument.	___ /1
				2. Rebut the counter argument.	___ /1
				3. Provide own ideas and support these ideas with solid reasons and evidence.	___ /1
		<i>3rd Body</i>		1. Start the paragraph with a counter argument.	___ /1
				2. Rebut the counter argument.	___ /1
				3. Provide own ideas and support these ideas with solid reasons and evidence.	___ /1
	<b>Conclusion</b>		1. Paraphrase the thesis statement.	___ /1	
			2. Summarize opposing views; remind the reader the main points.	___ /1	
			3. Leave the reader with the final thoughts on the topic.	___ /1	
<b>UNITY &amp; COHERENCE</b>		1. Use certain expressions and transition signals of contrast to introduce opposing points of view.	___ /1		
		2. Provide consistency and unity (0: fails to communicate any messages/ 1: presents information but not arranged coherently/2: logically organized information or ideas.)	___ /2		
<b>MECHANICS</b>		1. Use grammar correctly. (0: no correct sentence forms at all. / 1: a very limited range of structures with frequent errors. / 2: good grammar with few errors./ 3: a wide range of structures with minor errors.)	___ /3		
		2. Use vocabulary correctly. (0: only a limited range of words which are used repetitively or inappropriately / 1: adequate range of vocabulary. / 2: a wide range of vocabulary used fluently and precisely.)	___ /2		
		3. Use spelling, punctuation and capitalisation correctly. (0: a great number of spelling, punctuation and capitalisation mistakes / 1: several numbers of spelling, punctuation and capitalisation mistakes/ 2: no or a few numbers of spelling, punctuation and capitalisation mistakes.)	___ /2		
		<b>TOTAL</b>	___ / 25		