

## A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF TYPES OF CONJUNCTIONS USED IN THE RESULTS AND DISCUSSION SECTION OF STUDENTS' RAS AND TEFLIN JAs PUBLISHED IN 2015

**Dian Rahayu Purba**

University of Bengkulu  
diraquent@gmail.com

**Safnil**

University of Bengkulu  
safnilarsyad@gmail.com

**Rosnasari Pulungan**

University of Bengkulu  
rose.pulungan@gmail.com

### ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research was to identify the types of conjunctions used in students' RAs (RAs) and TEFLIN journal articles (JAs). The design of this research was descriptive comparative method. The object of this study was 13 research articles written by S1 students of English Department of Education Faculty in University of Bengkulu graduated in 2015 and 2 TEFLIN journal articles which were published in 2015. The instrument used in this research was check-list and the data were collected by using documentation method. To analyze the data, the quantitative method, including statistical and descriptive analysis, was applied. The result of this research showed that the most common conjunction used in students' RAs was *and* (42.98%) with subordinating conjunctions (61.74%) as the, while the most common conjunction used in TEFLIN JAs was *that* (36.66%). In addition, the most frequent type of conjunctions used in students' RAs was coordinating conjunctions (56.11%), while the most frequent type of conjunctions used in TEFLIN JAs was subordinating conjunctions (61.74%). There was a significant difference between those two groups.

**Key words:** *Students' RAs, TEFLIN JAs, conjunctions*

### ABSTRAK

Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah mengidentifikasi tipe-tipe *conjunction* atau kata hubung dalam Bahasa Inggris yang digunakan dalam artikel hasil penelitian mahasiswa dan artikel jurnal TEFLIN. Rancangan penelitian ini ialah deskripsi perbandingan. Objek penelitian ialah 13 artikel hasil penelitian yang ditulis oleh mahasiswa-mahasiswa S1 Bahasa Inggris Fakultas Keguruan dan Ilmu Pendidikan Universitas Bengkulu yang tamat di tahun 2015 serta 2 artikel jurnal TEFLIN yg di publikasi tahun 2015. Instrumen yang digunakan ialah *check-list*. Data dikumpulkan dengan metode dokumentasi. Metode yang digunakan untuk menganalisis data ialah metode kuantitatif, termasuk analisis statistik dan deskripsi. Hasil dari penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa kata hubung yang

paling sering digunakan dalam artikel hasil penelitian mahasiswa adalah *and* (42.98%), sedangkan yang paling sering digunakan dalam artikel jurnal TEFLIN ialah *that* (36.66%). Tipe kata hubung yang paling sering muncul pada artikel hasil penelitian mahasiswa yaitu *coordinating conjunctions* (56.11%), sedangkan tipe kata hubung yang paling sering muncul dalam jurnal artikel TEFLIN adalah *subordinating conjunctions* (61.74%). Terdapat perbedaan yang signifikan di antara kedua kelompok objek penelitian.

**Kata kunci:** *artikel hasil penelitian mahasiswa, artikel jurnal TEFLIN, kata hubung*

## INTRODUCTION

The needs of mastering conjunction have been already realized by English learners and teachers. Thus, conjunctions are taught in English grammar classes at schools and universities. However, the result of that effort is also worth to be investigated to help teachers evaluate and improve the learning process of conjunctions. Therefore, students' understanding toward conjunction should be assessed objectively based on the product of their work.

One of the most popular works in college or university level is research article. A research article is an academic writing product that is written based on final research that should be done by students as a requirement to finish their bachelor degree. It summarizes and provides the key information of the whole research process and result which is reported in students' undergraduate thesis (also known as skripsi).

The researcher believes that the students' RAs is a good source of data which contains information of students' understanding toward conjunctions. The first reason is research articles are made based on the report which take serious effort and long process of writing, editing, revising, and publishing. The second reason is the studies which those researchers have written are based on scientific procedures and supervised by some professors or instructors to help strengthening their validity and reliability.

Last, research articles are one of the final projects done by students before they graduate. It means the whole skill, knowledge, theory, and concept that students gained in the study are applied in that work.

However, there have been many studies about the use of conjunctions. Some of them were compared the English native speakers and non-native speakers. Leung (2005), for example, has compared the use of three major conjunctions; *and*, *but*, and *or*, in the essay written by Chinese students and American students. In addition, Na (2011) also compared the texts produced by American and Korean students in computer-mediated communication. Some other studies compared two groups of English non-native speakers work. Adinlou and Reshadi (2014) also conducted research to compare electronic mails and paper-based letters. Despite all of those researches, the researcher has conducted a study which not only found out the types of conjunction in students' work, but also compared them with the other writing products in different level of grades. This research was conducted to compare conjunctions used by students and teachers or post-graduate students. As the result, this research can be used as the reference and source of information for the other researchers.

According to Arikunto (2013), a comparative study needs standardized thing that can be the comparison to the thing being researched. In this case, the researcher chose

TEFLIN JAs as the standardized articles to be compared. That was because TEFLIN journal articles has been published regularly in printed and online form and has been checked and edited by profesional editors in that institution. Consequently, the researcher assumed that the use of conjunctions in TEFLIN journal articles is more various and frequent than in students' journal articles. Based on all explanation above, the researcher has already conducted a research entitle "A Comparative Study of Types of Conjunctions Used in the Results and Discussion Section of Students' Research Articles and TEFLIN Journal Articles".

## **METHOD**

The design of this research is descriptive comparative and quantitative analysis method. The object of this research is 13 research articles written by S1 students of English Department of Education Faculty in University of Bengkulu graduated in 2015 and 2 TEFLIN JAs which were published in 2015 in TEFLIN website (see: [www.journal.teflin.org](http://www.journal.teflin.org)). In other words, there are 15 articles that become the object of this research. Those research objects were taken proportionally from the population (20% of population). Here, the population of the study is 75 articles which consist of 63 students' RAs and 12 TEFLIN JAs.

This research used check-list as the instrument. To collect the data, the researcher used the documentation method. The researcher read the sample first. Then, researcher identified all the conjunctions by circling each conjunction and underlining the parts of sentence being connected by that conjunction. The researcher labeled the conjunction with number every time it appeared and used them as the data of this research. The data then were put on a table which has a column for each type of conjunctions. The researcher also used

different color for different conjunction to help counting the data accurately. Next, the data were categorized based on their type (coordinating, correlative, and subordinating conjunctions) by putting a thick in the suitable column. Finally, all data were put on the checklist tables to find out the frequency of occurrence of each conjunction in every sample.

After collecting the data, the researcher analyzed the data by using statistical and descriptive analysis. First, the data was put into percentage. Next, the researcher put the percentage of each type of conjunction from all articles in a table. The researcher then described the types of conjunctions used in students' RAs and TEFLIN JAs based on the percentages shown in the table. In addition, the researcher also identified the differences and similarities between the two groups of data by comparing their conjunctions' percentages.

Furthermore, to see if there is any significant difference between students' RA's and TEFLIN JAs, the following steps were done. First, the mean of each conjunction from 13 students' RAs were counted to be used as the mean of first data group. The researcher also did the same step toward 2 TEFLIN JAs as the second data group. Second, those means were computed and processed by using a computer application: SPSS Statistics 17.0 to conduct the t-test. Third, the result of t-test was examined to get conclusion. When  $t\text{-count} < t\text{-table} > t\text{-count}$ , there is any significant difference between students' RA's and TEFLIN JAs. However, when  $t\text{-count} = t\text{-table}$ , the difference is not statistically significant.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Results**

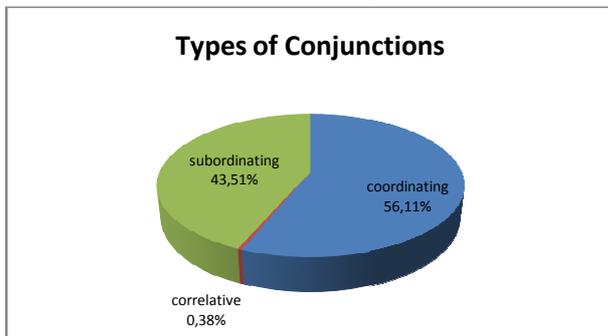
In this research, there are 26 kinds of conjunction appeared of 43 kinds of conjunction listed in chapter two of this

report. It means that 60.47% of kinds of listed conjunctions were used by object of this study. The conjunctions found in the study were *and, or, but, nor, yet, so, both ... and, not only ... but also, whether ... or, after, although, as, because, before, even though, if, since, so that, that, when, whenever, where, whereas, while, as high as, and whether.*

**Conjunctions in Students’ Research Articles**

The first group of data of this study is conjunctions found in 13 research articles written by students of English program in University of Bengkulu. There are 24 types of conjunctions used in the first group of data. Those conjunctions consist of six conjunctions from coordinating type (*and, or, but, nor, yet, and so*), three conjunctions from correlative type (*both ... and, not only ... but also, and whether ... or*), and 15 conjunctions from subordinating type (*after, although, as, because, before, even though, if, since, so that, that, when, where, whereas, while, and as high as*).

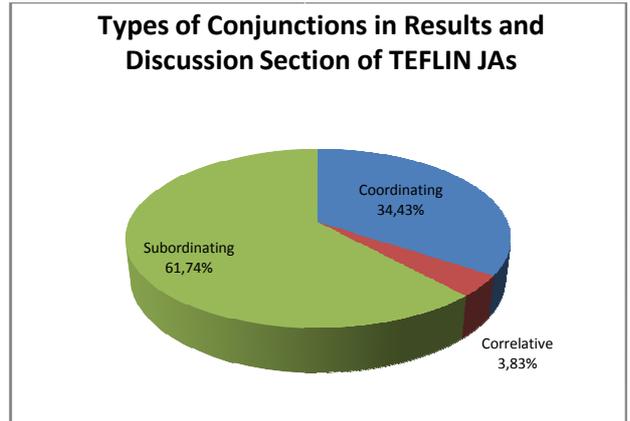
To make it clear, the mean of percentage of conjunctions used in this group is provided in the pie chart below.



**Figure 1. Types of Conjunctions in Students’ RAs**

**Conjunctions in Results and Discussion Section of TEFLIN Journal Articles**

The other group of data source in this research was conjunctions used in TEFLIN JAs. There were two journal articles taken as the samples of the second group of data. The percentage of coordinating, correlative, and subordinating conjunctions in this group of data can be seen in the chart below.



**Figure 2. Types of Conjunctions in Results and Discussion Section of TEFLIN JAs**

The dominant conjunction used in this group of data is different from the dominant conjunction used in the previous group. In this group, more than 50% of data, which is 61.74%, were categorized as subordinating conjunctions. Furthermore, 34.43% of data from this group were classified into coordinating conjunctions. On the other hand, there was only 3.83% of data included into correlative conjunctions.

**Conjunctions in Students’ Research Articles and TEFLIN Journal Articles**

In this research, the mean of conjunction types were compared to find out which group that used conjunctions more frequent than the other groups. The result shows that in all types of conjunction (coordinating, correlative, and subordinating), TEFLIN JAs has higher mean than the Students’ RAs. In other words, TEFLIN JAs used conjunctions more frequent than students’ RAs (see the table below).

**Table 1. Use of Conjunctions**

Conjunction Types	Students' RAs (n=13)			TEFLIN JAs (n=2)		
	Mean	Standard deviation	Percentage (%)	Mean	Standard deviation	Percentage (%)
Coordinating	4.01	7.33	56.11	5.75	10.79	34.33
Correlative	0.77	0.00	0.38	1.33	2.31	3.83
Subordinating	1.11	2.79	43.51	3.62	8.40	61.74
All Conjunctions	<b>1.67</b>	<b>4.19</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>3.85</b>	<b>8.40</b>	<b>100</b>

The comparison results of students' RAs and TEFLIN JAs are also provided descriptively. There are some similarities and differences between Students' Research articles and TEFLIN Journal Articles in term of conjunctions.

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Conjunction Types	Students' RAs (n=13)			TEFLIN JAs (n=2)		
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<b>Total</b>	<b>1.67</b>	<b>4.19</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>3.85</b>	<b>8.40</b>	<b>100</b>

The comparison results of students' RAs and TEFLIN JAs are also provided descriptively. There are some similarities and differences between Students' Research articles and TEFLIN Journal Articles in term of conjunctions. To compare conjunctions used in both groups of data, the table is presented below.

**Table 3. Conjunctions in Results and Discussion Section of Students' RAs and TEFLIN JAs**

Conjunctions	Percentage	
	Students' RAs	TEFLIN JAs
And	42.98%	27.78%
Or	8.69%	3.38%
But	1.64%	3.26%
Nor	0.1%	0
Yet	0.21%	0
So	2.49%	0
<b>Coordinating Conjunctions</b>	<b>56.11%</b>	<b>34.43%</b>
Both ... and	0.08%	3.83%
Not only ... but also	0.09%	0
Whether ... or	0.21%	0
<b>Correlative Conjunctions</b>	<b>0.38%</b>	<b>3.83%</b>
After	0.96%	0.9%
Although	0.1%	1.8%
As	2.02%	4.72%
Because	7.45%	2.81%
Before	0.61%	0
Even though	0.26%	0
If	1.87%	0.9%
Since	0.32%	2.25%
So that	0.48%	1.91%
That	25.9%	36.66%
When	1.79%	6.52%
Whenever	0	1.35%
Where	0.55%	0.45%
Whereas	0.31%	0
While	0.79%	1.01%
As high as	0.1%	0
Whether	0	0.45%
<b>Subordinating Conjunctions</b>	<b>43.51%</b>	<b>61.74%</b>

The first difference can be seen in the highest percentage of the dominant conjunction. The table shows that the most dominant conjunction used by students is *and* while the most dominantly used conjunction in TEFLIN JAs is *that*.

The second difference is found in the type of conjunctions. The most frequent type of conjunctions in Students' RAs is

coordinating conjunctions (56.11%) and the second one is subordinating conjunctions (43.51%). On the contrary, TEFLIN JAs mostly use subordinating type of conjunctions (61.74%) and put coordinating type in the second place (34.43%) of most dominant conjunctions.

The third difference between the two articles group can be seen from conjunctions used themselves. Some conjunctions used in students' RAs are not used in TEFLIN JAs, and vice versa. The table shows that conjunction *nor, yet, so, not only ... but also, whether ... or, before, even though, whereas, and as high as* are used in students' RAs but are not used in TEFLIN JAs. On the other hand, conjunction *whenever* and *whether* can be found in TEFLIN JAs but not in students' RAs.

Despite all the differences, there are also some similarities which can be found between students' RAs and TEFLIN JAs. The first similarity can be seen in the smallest percentage of conjunction type used. Both students' RAs and TEFLIN JAs have correlative type as the least used conjunction. It is proved by the low frequency percentage of correlative conjunctions occurred in students' RAs and TEFLIN JAs which are 0.38% and 3.83%.

Another thing which is similar between students' RAs and TEFLIN JAs is conjunction items that they use and they do not use. There are 14 conjunction items which are used both in students' RAs and TEFLIN JAs. Those 14 conjunction items are *and, or, but, both ... and, after, although, as, because, if, since, so that, that, when, and where*. In addition, there are 17 conjunction items which are used neither in students' RAs nor in TEFLIN JAs. They are *for, either ... or, as ... so, neither nor, as far as, as if, as long as, as soon as, as though, considering that, in order that, provided that, though, till, unless, until, and wherever*.

Furthermore, both groups of data have same highest conjunction item for all three types of conjunctions. In coordinating type, both students' RAs and TEFLIN JAs have *and* as the most used conjunction. In correlative type, both students' RAs and TEFLIN JAs have *both ... and* as the most used conjunction. In the same time, conjunction *that* is the most used in subordinating type of both groups of data.

Finally, this study also found out if there is any significance of difference between conjunctions used in students' RAs and TEFLIN JAs. Therefore, t-test was already conducted in order to see if there was any significant statistical difference of conjunction usage between those two groups. The result is provided below.

**Table 4. Paired Samples Test between Students' RAs and TEFLIN JAs**

	Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean difference	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
				Lower	Upper			
Pair 1 Students' RAs - TEFLIN JAs	-2.183	4.9476	.9703	-4.1818	-.18506	-2.25	25	.033

The table above shows that the t-count is -2.250 while the t-table is 2.060. It means  $t\text{-count} < t\text{-table}$  which indicates the hypothesis  $H_0$  is rejected and  $H_1$  is accepted. In other words, there is a significant difference between conjunctions used in students' RAs and TEFLIN JAs.

### Discussion

In this study, the amounts of samples from two groups of data are different. There are 13 students' RAs and two TEFLIN JAs. This difference can be a consideration in taking judgment towards this research results. However, the researcher believes that this difference of sample numbers will not significantly influence the result of the

research because the samples are proportionally taken to represent the population.

It is already explained in the previous section that students' RAs had dominant coordinating conjunctions while TEFLIN JAs had dominant subordinating conjunctions. The use of this type of conjunction cannot be separated from the types of sentences. Coordinating conjunctions are used in simple or compound sentences while subordinating conjunctions are used in complex sentences.

Neither simple nor compound sentence have subordinate clause. While a simple sentence has only one main clause, a compound sentence may have two or more main clauses (Aaron, 2001). Since coordinating conjunction is the most common conjunction found in students' RAs, it can be said that students have more tendencies to use simple or compound sentences than complex sentences in their research articles.

On the other hand, TEFLIN JAs had subordinating type as the most used conjunctions. This type of conjunctions connects complex sentences. A complex sentence has one main clause and one or more subordinate clause (Glencoe/McGraw-Hill, 1996). In other words, the authors of TEFLIN JAs used more complex sentences than simple or compound sentences in their journal articles.

The corpus of this study The finding of this study revealed that TEFLIN JAs had subordinating conjunctions as the most dominantly used conjunction is different from the one done by Na (2011) and Aidinlou and Reshadi (2014) who found that coordinating conjunctions is the most dominantly used conjunctions in all groups of their data: electronic mails versus paper based letters and CMC texts produced by American versus Korean writers. However, the result which showed that students' RAs used coordinating conjunctions dominantly is similar with all

those previous studies. This is probably because both students' RAs and all samples used in previous studies are made by students while TEFLIN JAs are made by teachers at school and university level.

Teachers in either school or university have more experiences in academic writing than undergraduate students. The teachers have finished their bachelor or even master degree, and in each degree they took, writing a research report is a requirement for their graduation. On the other hand, most students of undergraduate students write their undergraduate thesis (*skripsi*) as their first experience in producing academic article. As the result, teachers are trained to produce coherence writing, which includes conjunctions as one of the indicators.

The next finding in this research shows that *and* is the conjunction item which is used dominantly in students' RAs, while conjunction *that* is in the second position. The proof of the using *and* dominantly in students' RAs can be seen in the example from one of the samples below.

"... This chapter presents the data description of each cycle, the findings, **and** the discussion of data collected through observation checklist **and** field notes, students' reading test, **and** interview..."

In that example, it can be seen that the student use conjunction *and* three times in one sentence.

In contrary, TEFLIN JAs has *that* as the most dominant conjunction, while *and* is in the second position. The proof of the using *that* dominantly can be seen in the example from one of the samples of TEFLIN JAs below.

"Lecturer C also noticed **that** he code-switched quite a number of times in **that** particular lesson. However, the main reason **that** he code-switched from English to Malay was because he had forgotten the term in English..."

The example above shows that one of the writer of TEFLIN JAs use conjunction *that* three times in two sentences.

Halliday and Hasan (1976) argue that conjunction *and* is classified into an additive conjunction which function is adding the idea. It means, this finding indicates that in elaborating the ideas of their sentences, students prefer to add information. On the other hand, conjunction *that* plays important role in explaining and specifying the previous idea in the sentence which means, in elaborating their ideas, the TEFLIN writers prefer specifying and giving detail information about what they write.

The dominant use of subordinating conjunctions in TEFLIN JAs is probably caused by the limitation of words. The number of references in TEFLIN JAs is greater than the one in students' RAs. It means, TEFLIN JAs writers have more information that they need to share to readers. However, there is limitation of words in submitting TEFLIN JAs. There is an editor who makes sure this requirement is fulfilled. This factor may encourage TEFLIN JAs to use subordinating conjunctions more than students. Subordinating conjunctions make it is possible for TEFLIN JAs writers to shorten the sentences while conveying more information.

In contrary, students have neither editor nor limitation of words in writing their research articles. The references that they use are also not as many as the references that TEFLIN JAs writers use. Consequently, students do not feel that they have an urgency to make their sentence composition more effective and shorter. Thus, students use coordinating conjunctions more than other types of conjunctions in their writing.

## CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

### Conclusion

The result of this study shows that the dominant type of conjunctions used in students' RAs is coordinating conjunction with *and* as the item that has highest frequency of occurrence, while the dominant conjunction type of conjunctions used in TEFLIN JAs is subordinating conjunction with *that* as the item that has highest frequency of occurrence. It is also found that there is a significant difference between conjunctions used in students' RAs and TEFLIN JAs.

### Suggestion

Based on the study conducted by the researcher, there are some points which are recommended for teachers, learners, and future researcher. First, the researcher encourages the teachers to emphasize not only the accuracy, but also the alternative or options of conjunctions that students can use in their writing. On the other hand, students should try to use various conjunctions or more subordinating conjunctions in doing their paper. Students have to avoid redundancy, write more effectively, and read more references to enrich their undergraduate thesis.

Next, it is recommended for future researcher to pay attention in the number of samples. While this study used 13:2 ratio samples for two groups which were analyzed, the other researchers can find the ideal number (1:1) to minimize the bias in the research. Furthermore, there are some other researches that can be conducted based on the result of this study. The future researchers can investigate about the correlation between the use of conjunctions and the school level of learners.

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