

# Coordination Conjunction Errors in Written English Made by First Year Students Majoring in English at a University in Dong Nai Province

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## ABSTRACT

This study focuses on the analysis of errors in the use of English coordinating conjunctions in written English made by the first-year students majoring in English at Dong Nai Technology University (DNTU) with an aim to recommend some selected implications for better teaching of English coordinating conjunctions in particular and writing in general. The analysis was based on the data collected from two tests: a multiple-choice test of using coordinating conjunctions and writing compositions on three topics given. The tests were provided by 50 first year English-major students at Dong Nai Technology University. The most frequently used coordinating conjunction in students' compositions was "And", and the greatest frequency of errors occurred in the uses of "And", too. The study also discussed some implications in teaching English coordinating conjunctions based on the findings.

**KEYWORDS:** *coordinating conjunction, errors, written English, Dong Nai Technology University*

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## INTRODUCTION

In the age of globalization, English has become an important means of communication for the exchange and cooperation among countries around the world. More and more people of all ages have learned English. That is the reason why English has become a core subject in all educational systems, from the primary schools to universities or institutes of higher education. Dong Nai Technology University (DNTU) is an example. In fact, DNTU highly appreciates English. English is an important subject for students in all specialties at DNTU. Especially, it also has a faculty of English for those who are interested in English.

To learn English well, students are supposed to be competent in four skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing. It is true that writing is a very important skill in learning English. According to White (1985), writing is used to examine a student's performance in English. In 2007, Rao stated that writing could help to motivate students' thinking, organize ideas, and develop their ability to summarize, analyze, and criticize as well as strengthening students' learning, thinking and reflecting on the English language. Writing is also considered the most difficult skill when mastering English. In order to write good paragraphs or essays, students need to have a wide range of vocabulary, and firmly grasp the grammatical structures. In addition, a

very necessary factor to be considered to write good paragraphs and essays is the unity and coherence, in which coordinating conjunctions are used with great frequency.

## Rationale of the study

In reality, at DNTU, the students' input quality is not high compared to the national average. Students often have difficulties using language, especially in writing. Writing is considered to be a difficult skill because exposing their ideas in written form is not very easy. They have to take a lot of aspects into consideration: grammar, vocabulary, unity and coherence, etc. Sometimes grammar is correct but the vocabulary is not appropriate. Sometimes, grammar and vocabulary are exactly used but there is a lack of cohesion. Especially for freshmen, expressing what they intend to write is actually hard work. They make a lot of errors in structures, vocabulary, using conjunctions, even coordinating conjunctions.

For the above-mentioned reasons, the author wants to conduct a research entitled "**Coordinating Conjunction Errors in Written English Made by First Year Students Majoring in English at a University in Dong Nai Province**" to investigate common coordinating conjunction errors in writings made by the first- year English-major students at DNTU, and find out some solutions to this problem.

## Research questions:

This study is implemented to answer the following research questions:

- What are common coordinating conjunction errors made by the first-year English-major students at DNTU?
- What are some solutions to help students minimize these errors?

## Scope of the study:

There are three kinds of conjunctions (coordinating conjunctions, correlative conjunctions and subordinating conjunctions), but this study will focus on coordinating conjunctions with common errors that students often make in their writings.

Coordinating conjunction errors will be studied on the writings of the first-year English-major students at DNTU.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Definition of coordinating conjunctions

The term "Coordinating conjunctions" was defined by many authors. Thomson and Martinet (1986, p. 288) define coordinating conjunctions as "words join pairs of nouns, adjectives, adverbs, verbs, phrases and clauses" while Richards *et al.* (1990, p. 77) define coordinating conjunctions as "co-ordinators such as *and*, *or*, *but*, that they join linguistic units which are equivalent or of the same rank". Besides, Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English (2001, p. 301) defines coordinating conjunction as "a word such as '*and*' or '*but*', which joins two clauses of the same type".

In short, coordinating conjunctions are connecting words that join two similarly constructed words, phrases or clauses in a sentence.

English coordinating conjunctions known as "FANBOYS" includes **but**, **or**, **so**, **and**, **yet**, **for**, **nor**. Following are some examples using coordinating conjunctions:

- I like fish, **but** my children like meat. (showing contrast)
- Would you prefer milk tea **or** orange juice? (before an alternative)
- I didn't sleep last night, **so** I'm very sleepy now.
- I am married, **and** I have two daughters. (additive idea)
- It's raining heavily outside, **yet** he still wants to go out with his friends. (emphasizing contrast)
- Her mother must be very angry, **for** she doesn't say anything. (explaining the reason)
- Mary didn't stay at home, **nor** did she go to school. (for two non-contrasting grammatically negative items (not + not)).

### Functions of coordinating conjunctions

#### ➤ And

- To suggest that one idea is chronologically sequential to another:  
Mary wrote Daisy a letter and waited for her response.
- To suggest that one idea is the result of another:  
The children heard their mother's footsteps *and* pretended to sleep.
- To suggest that one idea is in contrast to another (frequently replaced by *but* in this usage):  
Jenny is academically brilliant *and* Tom is creative in his thinking.
- To suggest an element of surprise (sometimes replaced by *yet* in this usage):  
Mumbai is a rich city *and* suffers from many symptoms

of urban blight.

- To suggest that one clause is dependent upon another, conditionally:  
Do exercise regularly *and* you'll soon find yourself healthy and fit.
- To suggest a kind of 'comment' on the first clause:  
Peter failed his driving test — *and* that surprised no one who knew him.

#### ➤ But

- To suggest a contrast that is unexpected in the light of the first clause:  
"We lost our way home, *but* we still managed to find the way finally."
- To suggest in an affirmative sense what the first part of the sentence implied in a negative way (sometimes replaced by *on the contrary*):  
"Ben never invested foolishly, *but* used the services of a wise investment counsellor."
- To connect two ideas with the meaning of 'with the exception of':  
"Everybody *but* Cindy came to the party last night."

#### ➤ Or

- To suggest that only one option can be achieved:  
"You can study hard for this exam *or* you will fail."
- To interpret/refine what is said before (usually the first clause):  
"NCM College is the premier all-women's college in the country, *or* so it seems to most NCM College alumnae."
- To suggest a restatement or 'correction' of the first part of the sentence:  
"There are no high buildings in these old villages, *or* so the guide tells us."

#### ➤ Nor

The conjunction *nor* is not used as often as the other conjunctions. Its most common use is in the correlative pair, *neither...nor*:  
"He is *neither* brave *nor* intelligent."  
"That is *neither* what I have said *nor* what I have meant."

- It can be used with other negative expressions:  
"They didn't take a map *nor* did they ask the local people."

#### ➤ For

The word *for* is generally used as a preposition, but its use as a coordinating conjunction is also common.

"They shouted loudly, *for* they saw a snake on the road."

As far as possible do not begin a sentence with *for*. *For* has serious sequential implications hence, you will have to look carefully at the sentences beginning with *for*. In this respect, it is different from the use of *because* and *since* at the beginning of sentences.

#### ➤ So

Be careful of the conjunction *so*. Sometimes, it can connect two independent clauses along with a comma, but sometimes it can't. For instance, in this sentence,

"Nam is not the only artist in his family, *so* are his brother, sister, and his Uncle Toan."

where the word *so* means 'as well' or 'in addition'. However, a semicolon between the two independent clauses would be

smoother.

In the following sentence, where *so* is acting like 'therefore', the conjunction and the comma are adequate: "*Daisy has always been nervous in large gatherings, so it is no surprise that she avoids crowds.*"

#### ➤ Yet

The word *yet* functions sometimes as an adverb and has several meanings: in addition ("yet another cause of trouble" or "a simple yet noble woman"), even ("yet more expensive"), still ("he is yet a novice"), eventually ("they may yet win"), and so soon as now ("he's not here yet").

It also functions as a coordinating conjunction meaning something like 'nevertheless' or 'but'. The word *yet* seems to carry an element of distinctiveness that the conjunction *but* cannot fully communicate.

*"Dung plays football well, yet this favourite sport is volleyball."*

*"They complained loudly about the pool, yet they continued to go swimming every day."*

*"The visitors complained yet continued to play baseball every day."*

(Notice the use of the *comma* in the first two sentences and its disappearance in the third.)

*Yet* is sometimes combined with other conjunctions, *but* or *and*. It would not be unusual to see *and yet* in sentences like the ones above. This usage is correct.

#### Writing

What is writing? There is no specific definition of writing because different writers define writing in different ways. According to Flower (1981, p. 16), "Writing is simply the act of expressing what you think or saying what you mean", while Brannon *et al.* (1982, p. 2) consider writing as "a creative art, not as an assembly line operation of locking words together into sentences and bolting sentences together into paragraphs in accordance with a predefined plan". In addition, Taylor (1984, p. 4) states that "The act of writing, upon examination, turns out to be a complex process wherein writers use language as a tool to discover and clarifying meaning on experience in order to say exactly what they mean". Writing means much more than simply producing words and sentences. It is the process of forming ideas, using words and sentences to express those ideas through grammatical structures and cohesive devices.

Writing is an important skill in learning a language. Together with speaking, writing becomes a powerful means of communication, which can express people's thoughts, ideas and feelings. Writing is also considered to be the most difficult to achieve, not only in academic writing but also in real life.

In short, writing is a complex skill in acquiring as well as learning a language, especially in learning a second language. It is a complex process of producing words and sentences with the help of grammatical structures and cohesive devices to express people's thoughts, ideas and feelings.

#### Errors in language learning

"To err is human". This saying shows that it is difficult for everyone, whoever is, to avoid making errors. It can be understood that making errors is the most natural thing in the world. Learning a second language is not an exception, especially when writing is more difficult to achieve than any

other skills. However, how is error defined? Different linguists present different norms of error.

Corder (1974) states that "Errors are typically produced by people who do not yet fully command some institutionalized language system". While George (1972) reviews errors as an unwanted form, especially, a form which a particular course designer or teacher does not want, Chaudron (1986) defines errors as linguistic forms of content that differed from native speaker norms or facts and any other behaviour signaled by the teacher as needing improvement. Whereas Johanson (1975) supposes that if native-speakers hesitate about the acceptability of a word or construction it should not be considered an error. Richards and Schmidt (2002, p. 184) present a clearer definition that "Error is the use of a linguistic item (e.g. a word, a grammatical item, a speech act. etc) in a way which a fluent or native speaker of the language regards as showing faulty or incomplete learning".

#### METHODOLOGY

##### Setting of the study

The study was conducted at Dong Nai Technology University. An academic year at DNTU is divided into three semesters. This study was carried out in the second term of the students' first year, which is from the beginning of December to the middle of January. The tests were asked to be done by the students after their studying 6 lectures of writing 1 and the compositions are done after 12 lectures.

##### Research design

In order to complete this study, the main research methods employed are:

- Statistical methods are used to find out and classify the students' errors.
- Descriptive methods are used to describe the actual errors committed by the students.

##### Participants

The subjects of this study were 50 freshmen of the FFL, DNTU. They all have had 7 years of English education through secondary schooling. The backgrounds of the students are considered to be relatively uniform in which they all share the same native language, Vietnamese. However, their English levels are mixed.

The students chosen to take part in the study are the ones who have full attendance in English writing lessons. The students who are absent for even a lesson are not eligible to take part in the study. They are believed not to be suitable to be the informants of the study because they may cause factors that mislead us to false identification of the error causes and provide unreliable and untrue data for the analysis.

##### Instruments of data collection

The present analysis of coordinating conjunction errors consists of two separate parts. First, a multiple-choice test is in the written form in different language context to provoke errors in using the seven coordinating conjunctions. The twenty sentence test was designed with three sentences to use each word "and", "or", "but", "so", "for", "yet", and two sentences to use "nor". This task was aimed at checking if students are able to distinguish the coordinating conjunctions (for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so) in different contexts. Second, a traditional type of error analysis was used to give an overall view of the coordinating conjunction errors found in students' compositions. It is plausible that student writing analysis is a persuasive and reliable method



of study since every clear clue is present in the paper. The participants were asked to write three paragraphs (80-100 words) on three topics.

Task 1: Write a paragraph of about the importance of English.

Task 2: Write a paragraph about your close friends.

Task 3: Write a paragraph about your hobbies.

The topics given are quite familiar in order to eliminate such factors as a lack of general knowledge and insufficient English skills regarding expression.

### Data analysis procedure

First of all, 50 multiple-choice tests collected from the participants were read and graded to determine exactly how many correct and incorrect answers in each test as well as in total, and how many tests are above five points and how many tests are under five points. The result of 50 multiple-choice tests was also used to calculate the total number of correct and incorrect answers for each of the seven coordinating conjunctions to find out the most common errors. Next, the students' compositions on each topic were carefully read and counted to determine how many coordinating conjunctions were used in all of them on each topic, how many of them were wrong, how they were wrong, and which coordinating conjunction was most often used incorrectly.

The table shows the number of correct and incorrect answers out of the total number. The number of incorrect answers is slightly higher than the number of correct answers.

Looking at both table 1 and table 2, although the number of incorrect answers in all students' tests is slightly higher than the number of correct answers, the number of the tests below five points is much higher than the number of the tests above or equal to five points. This is due to the fact that some non-pass students' number of correct answers are appropriate to ten (that is 8 or 9 correct answers). The second reason is that the pass students' number of correct answers is inversely proportional to the non-pass students' number of correct answers. The more correct answers the pass students got, the less correct answers the non-pass students got.

	For		And		Nor		But		Or		Yet		So	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Correct answers	44	29.3	54	36	35	35	103	69	61	40.7	75	50	121	80.7
Incorrect answers	106	70.7	96	64	65	65	47	31	89	59.3	75	50	29	19.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 3: Number of correct and incorrect answers of each of coordinating conjunctions**

The table shows the number of correct and incorrect answers out of the total number for each of the seven coordinating conjunctions. As can be seen from the table, the number of incorrect answers for "For" is the highest (70.7%) whereas the smallest number of incorrect answers is for "So" (19.3%). The second word that students got the less incorrect answers with is "But" (31%). "Yet" is the coordinating conjunction with which the students got an equal rate on the correct and incorrect answers (50% for each). A little bit higher than this number is the percentage of incorrect answers that students got with "Or". The percentage of students' incorrect answers for "And" and "Nor" is approximately equal (64% and 65% respectively).

In short, multiple-choice test aims to create situations for the students to use coordinating conjunctions in contexts. The students' performance on the multiple-choice tests was quite poor. 38% of the students passed the test and 62 % of the students didn't pass it. It was obvious that the percentage of the students passed the test was much lower than the percentage of the students who didn't pass it. Besides, as can

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

### Results and analysis from students' multiple-choice tests

The students' performance on multiple-choice tests was presented in the following tables.

No. of sts	Pass		Non-pass	
	No.	%	No.	%
50	19	38	31	62

**Table 1: Non-pass and pass students in multiple-choice tests**

The multiple-choice test was designed with twenty sentences. Each sentence has a blank that students have to choose a suitable coordinating conjunction to fill in. Each correct answer will give them half a point. A paper was considered "pass" if it got 5 points or above. As a result, there were 19 pass papers, accounting for 38%, and 31 non-pass papers, accounting for 62%.

As can be seen from the table, the number of non-pass students is much higher than the number of pass students. (62% in comparison with 38%).

No. of sentences	Correct answers		Incorrect answers	
	No.	%	No.	%
1000	493	49.3	507	50.7

**Table 2: Number of correct and incorrect answers in multiple-choice tests**

be seen from table 2 on page 31 the number of incorrect answers in all of the students' tests was higher than the number of correct answers (50.7% and 49.3% respectively). When considering the data of the students' performance on each coordinating conjunction, the number of incorrect answers in most coordinating conjunctions was higher than the number of correct answers (except for "But", "So, and "Yet"). However, the objective disadvantage of this test was that some students may not have understood the meaning of some vocabulary; therefore, the result of this test wasn't really reliable.

### Results and analysis from students' compositions

In order to study the common coordinating conjunction errors in written English made by the first- year English major students at DNTU, the researcher collected 50 students' writings on each of the three topics. After that, the researcher found out the errors and calculated the frequency of each coordinating conjunction.

On topic 1, the students were asked to write a paragraph of about 100 words about the importance of English. The

number of conjunctions used in 50 students' compositions is illustrated in the following table.

Coordinating conj.	Correct	Incorrect	Total
And	94	54	148
So	21	22	43
Or	13	12	25
But	14	10	24
For	3	2	5
Nor	2	3	5
Yet	0	0	0
<b>Total totals</b>	<b>147</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>250</b>

**Table 4: Number of coordinating conjunctions used in compositions on topic 1**

As can be seen from the table, the total number of coordinating conjunctions used in the compositions on topic 1 was 250. "And" was the most frequently used one with the frequency of appearance of 148 times, making up more than half of the total number while "Yet" wasn't used in any compositions. The second most frequently used word was "So", which was used 43 times. "Or" and "But" were used approximately equally (25 and 24 times respectively). "Nor" and "For" were sometimes used in the students' compositions. (Each of the words appeared 5 times in their compositions). The total number of correct uses was a little higher than the students' errors in their compositions. There were 147 correct uses whereas there were 103 errors in the uses. In term of each coordinating conjunction, the number of words used correctly was equivalent to the number of words used incorrectly (except for "And", with 94 times of correct uses and 54 times of errors).

On topic 2, the students were asked to write a paragraph of about 100 words about his/ her close friends. The following table presents the number of coordinating conjunctions used in the students' compositions on topic 2.

Coordinating conj.	Correct	Incorrect	Total
And	147	45	192
But	17	18	35
So	16	9	25
Or	16	5	21
For	2	1	3
Nor	0	0	0
Yet	0	0	0
<b>Total totals</b>	<b>198</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>276</b>

**Table 5: Number of coordinating conjunctions used in compositions on topic 2**

The table reveals that "And" was also the most frequently used coordinating conjunction with 192 times whereas "Nor" and "Yet" weren't used in any compositions of the students on this topic. On this topic, the number of correct uses of "And" was much more than the number of its errors. (147 and 45 respectively). The second most frequently used coordinating conjunction was "But" with 35 times of appearance. Although it appeared 35 times, it was used incorrectly 18 times, making up more than half of the total number.

"So" and "Or" were sometimes used in the students' compositions (25 times for "So" and 21 times for "Or"). While the number of errors in using "So" was half of the total number, the number of errors in using "Or" was one third.

"For" was rarely used in students' compositions. It only appeared 3 times, including 1 error and two correct uses.

On topic 3, the students were asked to write a paragraph of about 100 words about his/ her hobbies. The number of coordinating conjunctions used in students' compositions is shown in the following table.

Coordinating conj.	Correct	Incorrect	Total
And	112	41	153
Or	27	12	39
But	22	15	37
So	14	8	22
For	5	1	6
Nor	2	1	3
Yet	0	0	0
<b>Total totals</b>	<b>182</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>260</b>

**Table 6: Number of coordinating conjunctions used in compositions on topic 3**

As can be seen from the table, "And" was the most frequently used coordinating conjunctions with the appearance of 153 times, including 112 correct uses and 41 errors. "Or", "But", "So" were sometimes used in the students' compositions with the frequency of 39, 37 and 22 times respectively. "For" and "Nor" were rarely used by the students in their compositions with the frequency of only 6 and 3 times respectively. Like in the compositions on the above two topics, "Yet" wasn't used any time at all.

The following table is introduced in order to get a better overview of the number of coordinating conjunctions used in the students' compositions on three topics.

Coordinating conj.	Correct	Incorrect	Total
And	353	140	493
But	53	43	96
So	51	39	90
Or	56	29	85
For	10	4	14
Nor	4	4	8
Yet	0	0	0
<b>Total totals</b>	<b>527</b>	<b>259</b>	<b>786</b>

**Table 7: Number of coordinating conjunctions used in compositions on 3 topics**

According to the table, "And", "But", "So", "Or" were the most popular coordinating conjunctions used in the students' compositions while "Yet" was the only coordinating conjunction that was not used any time in any composition. It was obvious that "And" was the most frequently used coordinating conjunction of all. It appeared 493 times, accounting for more than half of the total number. "But", "So", "Or" were used with nearly equal frequency (96, 90 and 85 times respectively). "For" and "Nor" were sometimes used in the students' compositions. The total number of errors in using the seven coordinating conjunctions was about half of the total number of the correct uses, and it was the same for most words (except for "And" and "Nor"). While the number of errors in using "And" was less than half of the number of the correct uses, the number of errors in using "Nor" was equal to the number of the correct uses.

The coordinating conjunction errors made by the students in their compositions on three topics are shown in the following table. The problems are presented in increasing order of frequency.

Coordinating conj.	No.	%
Yet	0	0%
For	4	1.5%
Nor	4	1.5%
Or	29	11.2%
So	39	15.1%
But	43	16.6%
And	140	54.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>259</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 8: Students' coordinating conjunctions errors in compositions on 3 topics**

It was obvious that the more frequently a coordinating conjunction was used, the more errors the students made on it. "Yet" wasn't used in any students' compositions, so there were not any errors in it.

## CONCLUSION

The aim of this thesis is to improve the students' using coordinating conjunctions in particular and their writing skills in general by finding out the coordinating conjunctions errors in written English made by the first-year students majoring in English at DNTU and suggesting some solutions to help students minimize these errors. In order to collect the data from the first-year students who are studying English at DNTU, a multiple-choice test and three compositions on three topics were used.

The first research question was answered through data analysis revealing that the first-year English-major students at DNTU made a lot of errors in using coordinating conjunctions. The most frequent errors were made in the uses of "And". "But" had the second-highest number of errors. "So" and "Or", which had an approximately equal number of errors, ranked third and fourth. Few errors were found in the uses of "Nor" and "For". No errors were made in the uses of "Yet" resulting from its not being used.

In answering the second research question about how to minimize the students' coordinating conjunction errors, the author supplied some recommendations about the appropriate attitudes of teachers and students toward this matter, the necessity of giving more references on this issue, how to teach and study coordinating conjunctions effectively. These recommendations will be discussed further in the following section "Implications".

## Implication

This section is going to discuss the implications relating to students' coordinating conjunction errors in order to help students minimize these errors and improve their writing skills. Based on the result of error analysis on the use of coordinating conjunction in the first-year English major students' writing at DNTU, the researcher provides some following recommendations:

First of all, because students made a lot of errors in coordinating conjunctions, the teachers and the students should take this into consideration. The teacher should consider remedial teaching of coordinating conjunctions for the first-year English major students at DNTU. Students should understand that coordinating conjunctions are very important in writing. If students use coordinating conjunctions incorrectly in sentences, the meaning, the unit and the coherence of the text is not logical. On the other hand, the students should be confident in using coordinating conjunctions because making errors in using coordinating conjunction normally happen in the process of studying.

Secondly, the coordinating conjunctions were made due to the students' lack of knowledge, the teachers are recommended to give more explanations and reference materials about coordinating conjunctions to the students. The materials about coordinating conjunctions should be included as reference materials for students in Writing lessons. When teaching coordinating conjunction, the teachers should make sure that their students understand it. It can be done through routinely giving tasks, homework, and tests. The exercises should be designed with different kinds like multiple-choice test, gap-filling test and even writing composition. The teacher should teach the students to distinguish between conjunction *and* and *or*, *but* and *yet*, *so* and other similar conjunction, and so on. Besides, the teachers should give feedback from students' writing assignment relating to the use of coordinating conjunctions, so the students will know their errors on the uses of coordinating conjunctions. Without feedback from the teachers, the learners will never know if they have made errors in coordinating conjunctions.

Thirdly, with a view to assisting the students in refraining from the influence of their native language, the present analyst suggests that the coordinating conjunctions should be taught by comparing the English and Vietnamese means of distributing communicative dynamism over sentence elements. The teachers should give explanations about types of errors in coordinating conjunction and how to use each coordinating conjunction in the sentences. The teachers also should explain and give some examples to help students notice the similarities and differences between the use of coordinating conjunctions in English and in Vietnamese.

Last but not least, the teachers should consider the matter how much, when and how to correct errors. According to Choon (2003), Hendrickson (1984), and other researchers, correcting all the students' errors is fruitless for teachers. First, when students receive back a writing paper full of red pen corrections at every line, they feel discouraged and demotivated. Gradually they don't dare make mistakes and don't have any interest in writing. Second, it's time-consuming work for teachers to try to find out all of the mistakes in students' writing papers. It is therefore critical that teachers determine which errors to correct or ignore. The teachers also should give both negative and positive feedback not only to identify the students' weak points but also to praise their strong points in order not to break their self-esteem and motivation. The teachers can apply and combine different techniques of errors correction such as self-correction, pair-correction and teacher-student correction because each technique has its own benefits. While self-correction is a chance for them to learn from their mistakes, pair-correction helps them share and learn together, teacher-student correction helps the students have a deeper understanding of their errors and make out which knowledge areas they have to recall to in order to correct their errors.

It is hoped that the recommended implications might help the English coordinating conjunctions teaching be more effective at DNTU.

## Limitations and Suggestions for Further Study.

### Limitations:

This research has attained some significant success in investigating the common coordinating conjunctions errors made by the first-year English major students at DNTU. It is



hoped to minimize the students errors in this aspect and help to improve their writing skill. However, there are some unavoidable errors and shortcomings in the study due to the author's limitation of knowledge, research skill and shortage of time as well.

Firstly, the study was conducted with only a small number of the participants, 50 out of more than 300 English major freshmen at DNTU. Therefore, the findings of the study didn't reflect the actual quality of the majority. It would have been more reliable and generalized if the study had been conducted with more students.

Secondly, the study could not cover all aspects of errors due to the limit of time and the scope of the study. It merely investigated coordinating conjunction errors made by the first year students majoring in English at Dong Nai Technology University, but a deep analysis on the causes of students' coordinating conjunction hasn't been conducted.

In addition, some ambiguous and uncertain aspects were not judged by an English native speaker, so the reliability of the error analysis was not checked. Hopefully, all the limitations will be tolerated.

#### Suggestions for further study

As mentioned at the second limitation of the study, a deep analysis on the causes of students' coordinating conjunction hasn't been conducted in this study. Consequently, future research should be focused on this matter. Besides, there are 7 coordinating conjunctions, so future researchers can focus on only one of the words analysing errors and the causes of its errors.

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