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The Use of Linking Adverbials by Korean EFL College Students in English Writing

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This study examines how 113 Korean EFL college students use linking adverbials and which semantic category they prefer in their English writing. Moreover, the factors affecting on their use will be searched for by examining their English proficiency and comparing Korean EFL students' use of linking adverbials with that of other EFL learners of different L1. The data is analyzed based on proficiency levels and compared with the Korean system. The results of this study are as follows: Korean EFL learners prefer the *resultive* semantic category the most and use linking adverbials in the order of *enumerative, additive, and contrastive* categories. The main affecting factors are syntactic functions, their English proficiency, and L1 transfer. Differences and similarities between English natives and EFL learners also appear in the results. While English natives prefer the *additive* category, the Korean EFL students prefer the *resultive* category. Similarly, the other EFL learners show the preference of using linking adverbials, like Korean students. As in previous studies, this study found that EFL learners, including Korean EFL learners, overuse linking adverbials and *so* among them is ranked at the top of the list they prefer. Based on these results, this study discusses educational implications.

[linking adverbials/EFL learners/learner corpus/English proficiency/L1 transfer]

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I. INTRODUCTION

"Linking sentences into paragraphs and paragraphs into academic essays can be a daunting task" for ESL college students with limited experience and familiarity with English writing (Graham, 2014, p.1). To connect semantic coherence and cohesion[1] in their writing, the students use conjunctions or linking adverbials[2] which are "text devices that explicitly mark the relation between adjacent text units" (Murray, 1997, p. 227). In particular, "adverbials are morphologically and syntactically the most diverse grammatical structures in English" (Celce-Murcia & Larsen-Freeman, 1999, p. 491). The usage of these linking adverbials is different from conjunctions and makes semantic connections between spans of varying discourse more flexible than that of conjunctions (Biber et al., 2021). Also, "linking adverbials have more peripheral relationships with the rest of the clause" than other typical adverbials and serve a connective function (Biber et al., 2021, p. 756). Thus, unlike conjunctions, linking adverbials may impose many difficulties in their writing on ESL or EFL learners (Appel & Szeib, 2018; Bae, 2024; Hinkel, 2003; Liu, 2013; Oktavianti & Sarage, 2022).

For these reasons, "the use of linking adverbials has received considerable attention due to the important role these items play in structuring text" (Appel & Szeib, 2018, p.115). Many researchers have mainly focused on the comparison between native and non-native writers' production relating to misuse, underuse, overuse, and some production tendencies related to the writers' first language (Ha, 2014; Liu, 2013).[3] While they have put much effort into identifying the universal features of L2 English writing, there has been a lack of attention to the cause of whether ESL or EFL learners overuse or underuse specific linking adverbials.

Therefore, this study is to examine previous research reporting the tendencies of linking adverbials EFL learners overused and is to present noticeable features by comparing with the findings of this study on using linking adverbials in Korean EFL college students' writing. Furthermore, this study will focus particularly on *so*, which is overused excessively in EFL

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[1] Coherence and cohesion are related to how a text is framed. They can be distinguished according to whether the text is made logically or in a semantic context. When ideas flow logically, they have coherence. When the ideas are united grammatically and lexically, they will be able to be accepted as cohesive. They need conjunctions or linking adverbials, to make them cohesive.

[2] Linking adverbials are labeled in a wide range (e.g. discourse markers, connectives, logical connectors, conjunctive adverbials, connective adverbs). In this study, linking adverbials were used to cover a range of single and multiword lexical items that link semantically between texts.

[3] 'Writing proficiency indicates learners' ability to express their ideas effectively through written forms' (Han, 2024, p.1). In this regard, English writing is naturally difficult for EFL learners, and furthermore, it is natural that 'the linguistic differences in English essays produced by EFL learners from EFL learners are influenced by cultural and linguistic backgrounds' (Chung & Jeon, 2025, p.173).

learners' writing, and has been reported in previous research (Bae, 2024; Ha, 204; Hinkel, 2003; Liu, 2013; Lui, 2008; Oktavianti & Sarage, 2022). 'According to the data, Korean EFL learners overuse *so*, it is used three times as often as *and*, which is a conjunction, and the learners use it so very often that it seems to be a conversational filler' (Suh, 2009, p.140). Therefore, by comparing the findings in previous research, this study is to indicate the causes of overusing the linking adverbial, *so*.

In this procedure, this study will be developed under the framework of the semantic roles classified by Quirk et al. (1985), which can explain the usage of EFL learners' adverbials appropriately due to including diverse examples in 7 sections.

To achieve the goals of this study, we will seek answers to the following research questions:

1. Which semantic category of linking adverbials do Korean EFL college students prefer in their writing?
2. What are the influencing factors in overusing some specific linking adverbials?
3. What are the similarities and differences in using specific linking adverbials between Korean EFL college students and other EFL learners of differing L1 in their writing?

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Linking Adverbials

Most students consider writing, especially in a foreign language, difficult (Asrobi & Prasetyaningrum, 2017). It may originate from textual cohesion in their writing. "Textual cohesion can be achieved through a variety of implicit and explicit measures (e.g., demonstratives, transition words)" (Appel & Szeib, 2018, p. 116) and can be one measure to help make text cohesive. They function in sentences as follows: "to add circumstantial information about the proposition in the clause, to express speaker/writer stance towards the clause, or to link the clause (or some part of it) to some other unit of discourse" (Biber et al., 2021, p.754). Among adverbials with three major functions, linking adverbials are one measure which must play a role as explicit markers of semantic relationships within text. As they explicitly signal such connections, it has been stated that "linking adverbials are important devices for creating textual cohesion, alongside coordinators and subordinators" (Biber et al., 2021, p. 867). Thus, linking adverbials can be defined as semantic markers for connecting diverse different relationships logically.

Biber et al. (2021) distinguishes linking adverbials as semantic markers into six semantic categories: *enumeration* and *addition, summation, apposition, result/inference, contrast/concession*, and *transition*. Quirk et al. (1985) also classifies them into seven

semantic categories in more detail: *listing, summative, appositional, resultive, inferential, contrastive*, and *transitional*. Quirk et al. (1985) subcategorizes each category more specifically than other researchers. These descriptions show certainly that linking adverbials are the informative devices when it comes to textual cohesion.

In addition, linking adverbials are positioned flexibly in sentences, unlike coordinators and subordinators whose position is fixed at the clause boundary. "They appear in sentence initial position, within sentences, at the beginning of clauses, or separated from the part of a text with bracketed commas before and after" (Appel & Szeib, 2018, p. 116). Moreover, there is not any impact on grammaticality, unlike coordinators or subordinators when they are removed, because they function only as sematic markers for cohesion. Thus, they primarily play a role for textual cohesion by explicitly revealing the connections between texts.

Interestingly, some research on L1 and L2 writing shows inconsistent findings regarding the use of linking adverbials. "As syntactic complexity develops, it seems likely that L1 writers begin to use elements of the subsentence to implicitly connect ideas. This increased interclausal and interphrasal embedding diminishes the need for explicit connections" (Crossley et al., 2011, p.303). As a result of this, L1 writers rely on explicit cohesive devices less than implicit links or syntactic complexity (Crossley et al., 2011).

Thus, the cohesive devices such as linking adverbials are closely related "with higher ratings of L2 writing quality" (Appel & Szeib, 2018, p. 116). For example, it is found in some research that L2 writers tend to misuse and overuse linking adverbials to apply explicit logicality to their writing (Crewe, 1990). Crossely et al. (2011) also suggested that this can be an indicator showing the features of lower-level writing. Given this research, it can be posited that the use of linking adverbials may reveal the differences in how to structure their ideas according to L1 and the difficulty ESL or EFL learners may encounter in using them appropriately and effectively.

2. The Use of Linking Adverbials by ESL or EFL Learners

There have been numerous studies on the use of linking adverbials by ESL or EFL learners. Some studies have examined how the ESL or EFL learners of differing L1 make use of linking adverbials in their English writing by comparing with natives of English. Others have shown interest in the preferences, overuse, misuse, or underuse of the learners in using linking adverbials (Anping, 2002; Aziz & Nuri, 2021; Bae, 2024; Ganger & Tyson, 1996; Liu, 2013; Lui, 2008; Oktavianti & Sarage, 2022).

Anping (2002) compared to English-speaking natives and Chinese-speaking learners regarding *so* as the discourse maker (p. 67). She researched the problem in overusing *so* in Chinese EFL learners' written English based on the corpora with spoken and written data.

She focused on the connective function of *so* in a *resultive* semantic relation because Chinese EFL learners tend to use it just as an inter-sentential connector in their written corpus. Based on her finding, she concluded that *so* is overused "as a discourse marker than a syntactic conjunction" (p. 45), and the Chinese EFL learners might be influenced by insufficient awareness of the different styles between written and spoken English, the transfer of their L1, and EFL teaching settings.

Aziz and Nuri (2021) also claimed that linking adverbials are one type of device which can help link text and affect cohesion in writing. From this viewpoint, they investigated the use of linking adverbials by Iraqi Kurd EFL learners at the undergraduate level. They found that some linking adverbials are overused, underused, or misused along with the positions they are used in. The learners showed their preferences in using more *sequential* and *additive* linking adverbials than *adversative* and *causals*. In addition, it was found that they used a limited number of linking adverbials, particularly in the sentence initial position. They also presented the list of the top 10 linking adverbials used by Iraqi Kurd EFL learners, including *also, so, first, in conclusion, for example*, and the rest respectively. *So* is also ranked at the top of the list which they presented.

Similarly to the studies described so far, Bae (2024) also examined how Korean EFL learners use English-linking adverbials in college academic writing to find the influencing factors in their use. She found the tendency to overuse linking adverbials in a *resultive* semantic relation such as *so* or *thus*, like Chinese and Arabic EFL learners, as well as Ha's (2014) finding that Korean EFL learners overuse *so* in a colloquial setting. In addition to this tendency, they show the preference for linking adverbials in *contrastive* semantic relations, as in Chinese EFL students in Appel and Szeib's (2018) study. Consequently, she concluded that the results shown by Korean EFL learners might originate from the differences in English proficiency of Korean EFL learners and L1 transfer of Korean.

Ganger and Tyson (1996) focused on cohesion in written English discourse and researched connector usage by contrasting essay writing of French, Dutch, and Chinese EFL learners with that of English natives by using the ICLE (International Corpus of Learner English). They found that EFL learners overuse or underuse individual connectors (linking adverbials) aside from misusing them semantically, stylistically and syntactically. They suggested that "learners should not be presented with lists of 'interchangeable' connectors but instead taught the semantic, stylistic and syntactic behavior of individual connectors, using authentic texts" (p. 17). As they explained this, they mentioned L1 transfer as one of the factors causing difficulties at the discourse level. In addition to this, they presented the finding that the learners consistently overuse sentence initial connectors. Comparing, *however, indeed* and *so* which are used in the sentence initial position by native speakers of English, French, Dutch, and Chinese, they showed the result that Chinese, French, and German overuse compared to natives of English. French and Chinese EFL learners, in particular, overuse *so*

compared to others (English:14.1(14.2%); French: 53.4(68.6%); German: 17.7(41.6%); Chinese: 73.3(59.8%) – "based on 100,000 words per variety, expressed in raw figures and as percentages of total use of these connectors" (p.25)).

Lui (2008) also presented that even English natives use *so* in spoken English more than other registers ("Spoken English, Academic Writing, Fiction, News Writing, and Other Writings in the BNC") (p. 491). He supported Biber et al.'s (1999) finding "that certain LAs [4] are particularly common in academic writing, such as *however* and *moreover*, while a few appear extremely frequently in speaking, e.g., *so* and *then*" (p. 499). He showed the result that several items "such as *also* (1,235.65 tokens per million words), *however* (597.30), *so* (744.33), and the multi-meaning *then*" are in *causal/resultive* semantic relation (P.502). As a result, he presented *so*, which is overused in both the spoken and written registers.

Liu (2013) compared Chinese EFL learners' corpora with English natives' corpora concerning the use of linking adverbials in speaking and writing data. The study found that overall, Chinese EFL learners overuse linking adverbials in their speaking and writing, such as *so*, *in fact, then*, and *of course* which are more used than by natives. In particular, they show the tendency of using more linking adverbials in their speaking than in their writing on the contrary English natives. Based on these results, Liu (2013) presented that the multifold influencing factors on their use of linking adverbials might be L1 transfer, EFL teaching materials and method, semantic awareness, and others.

Oktavianti and Sarage (2022) examined linking adverbials which are plausible means for cohesiveness in Indonesian EFL students' academic essays. They employed the Louvain Corpus of Native English Essays as the control corpus. They found the characteristic that the frequency of using *causal resultative* linking adverbials outnumbers all other categories. Moreover, *causal resultative* linking adverbials (34.78%) are the most frequent type in their essays, and *so* among them is used the most, which is 246 tokens out of the 320 overall frequency tokens of the subtotal *causal resultative*.

As such, although the frequency appeared slightly different in previous studies, it could be seen that *so* is used excessively in the numerous studies concerning the linking adverbials used by ESL or EFL learners.

III. METHODOLOGY

Considering the problem associated with overusing specific linking adverbials in Korean EFL college students' writing, this study analyzed the written production of 113 students. To achieve the goal of this study, we will seek answers to the research questions.

[4] LAs stands for linking adverbials.

1. Participants

This study was conducted at a university in Kyunggido area of Korea with 113 EFL first year students who had no experience of learning English in English-speaking countries. They came from 3 classes of the general English writing course with majors of social science, art, and humanities. In the first class of the semester, their writings and the information about their language background were collected through a free-writing type activity in which their opinions on the same topic were written. All the language background information and the use of data were sampled under the participants' consent. They were grouped into two based on their English proficiency levels. Their levels were determined by two evaluators who are one English-speaking professor and one Korean English professor, according to the standard of CEFR (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages). The reliability of grading was tested, and the Cronbach's α coefficient of .944 appeared.

One of the groups was named group 1 (at intermediate level), including 36 participants (13 males; 23 females), and the other group, group 2 (at basic level), included 77 participants (37 males; 40 females). Their mean age was 20.19 years old in group 1 and 20.17 years old in group 2.

To confirm whether it is possible to compare the two groups, a homogeneity test was done first. Table 1 shows the result that the groups are homogeneous. There was not a significant difference between the language background information of the groups except for their English proficiency.

TABLE 1
Homogeneity Test between Two Groups (Independent t-test)

Categories	Group 1 (N = 36)		Group 2 (N = 77)		Cronbach's α	p	t
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*			
Age	20.19	1.238	20.17	1.342		.951	.097
English Proficiency	66.49	5.86	42.34	9.417	.944	.001***	16.69

*p < .05, **p < .01, ***p < .001

The two groups are significantly different in the category of English proficiency (p = .001; t = 16.69).

TABLE 2
Gender Differences between Two Groups (Independent t-test)

Group		Male	Female	*p*	*t*
1	*N*	13	23	.114	.305
	MS	66.88	66.26		
	SD	7.124	5.096		
2	*N*	37	40	.915	.494
	MS	42.89	41.83		
	SD	9.383	9.538		
TOTAL		Male	Female	*p*	*t*
	N	50	63	.231	-1.269

*$p < .05$ *; MS* = Mean Scores

As shown in Table 2, while the variables of age and gender within each group and between the two groups do not appear different statistically, the variable of English proficiency shows significant differences between the groups. Thus, it was decided that the two groups are appropriate for the comparison to find out the characteristics of how Korean EFL college students use linking adverbials.

2. Tools

This study focuses on how Korean EFL college students use linking adverbials and their preferences concerning overusing specific ones. To achieve this goal, the features in the use of linking adverbials were examined and, which were overused specifically, we made a learner corpus with the students' English writing and analyzed it. In this procedure, LancsBox[5] was used for analyzing the frequency of the tokens and the types of linking adverbials in their writing. Through SPSS 30, the data were analyzed with a focus on the targeted linking adverbials for the purpose of this study statistically.

3. Procedure and Data

This study was done in the College English 1 class during the spring semester of 2024. First, the language background information was surveyed with the questionnaire. Next, the participants were offered how to write an essay on the given topic regarding a social issue for thirty minutes. The task was managed as follows in Table 3.

[5] "LancsBox is a new Lancaster university corpus toolbox for the analysis of language data" (Lancaster University, 2025).

TABLE 3
Procedure of Writing Task

sequence	procedure	content
1	Language Background Survey	Answer the questionnaire concerning language background (Name, age, gender, place of study for English, and period)
2	Instructions for writing	-write an essay withing 30 minutes -do not use dictionaries or translators -write an essay with the necessary elements for logical writing
3	Writing activity	-give a topic: "Many people use some form of public transportation to commute around the city. Which form of public transportation do you prefer, the subway or the bus? Give reasons, experiences, or examples to support your opinion." (Bae, 2024, p. 61) Instruction for writing: Read the question below. You have 30 minutes to plan, write, and revise your writing.
4	closing	-submit their completed writing after 30 minutes

This task was designed to induce the participants to work actively by giving them a topic which they are familiar with and might be able to use much vocabulary enough to write their ideas. They were required to submit their writing with no limit of length. While writing an essay, it was required not to use dictionaries and translators.

4. Analysis Tools

To prove the research questions, first, for grouping, the independent sample t-test was conducted with SPSS 30 and examined whether statistical significance appeared or not between the dependent variables (the frequency of tokens in each category which the learners of the two groups used).

Then, a learner corpus on a group basis was analyzed with LancsBox for the comparison of the frequency of words the participants used and the preferences of using linking adverbials. While analyzing the use of linking adverbials, the divisions of Quirk et al. (1985) in Table 4 were accepted.

TABLE 4
Semantic Divisions of Linking Adverbials (Quirk et al., 1985, pp. 634-640)

Divisions	Subdivisions		Examples
listing	enumerative		first, second…/firstly, secondly… first of all, next, finally…
	additive	equative	equally, likewise, …
		reinforcing	also, furthermore, in addition …

summative		then, therefore, thus, in conclusion, in sum, …
appositional		for example, for instance, that is, specially, …
resultive		consequently, of course, so, therefore, as a result, thus, …
inferential		in other words, in that case…
contrastive	reformulatory	better, alternatively, in other words, …
	replacive	again, better, on the other hand …
	antithetic	conversely, instead, in contrast, …
	concessive	anyway, however, after all, …
transitional	discoursal	incidentally, now, by the way, …
	temporal	meanwhile, meantime, subsequently …

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

1. Results

The following Table 5 shows the results of the use of linking adverbials by the students. The patterns of using linking adverbials by Korean EFL college students could be found.

TABLE 5
Results of the Use of LA in the Learner Corpus of Korean EFL College Students

Group	*N*	*N* (Linking Adverbials)	*Token*	*Type*	*STTR*
1	36	192(*LAN/MN*:5.3)	5,602	892	.159
2	77	205(*LAN/MN*:2.6)	5,458	865	.158
Total	113	397	11,060	1,306	.118

LAN = linking adverbial number/ *N* = Mean Number of LA per each participant

Group 1 used 5,602 tokens in total in their writing, while group 2 used 5,458 tokens. In using linking adverbials, group 1 (5.3 per person) used more linking adverbials than group 2 (2.6 per person). This result shows the features that the intermediate learners of English proficiency tried to use more linking adverbials than basic learners. Comparing the group differences based on STTR, there is not a big significant difference between groups. However, it could be confirmed that the learners at higher level must use more vocabulary.

The following Table 6 shows the linking adverbials which are preferred by these two groups.

TABLE 6
Top 10 Linking Adverbials in the Learner Corpus of Korean EFL College Students

Rank	Linking Adverbials	Group 1	Group 2	Total	*p*	*t*
1	So (resultive)	74	72	146	.017**	4.530
2	First (enumerative/sequential)	19	9	28	.001***	4.462
3	Second (enumerative/sequential)	18	10	28	.001***	3.984
4	Also (additive/reinforcing)	9	16	25	.325	.376
5	However (contrastive/concessive)	7	9	16	.038*	.900
6	For example (appositional)	7	8	15	.011*	1.199
7	For the reason (resultive)	7	7	14	.003**	1.388
8	Third (enumerative/sequential)	8	3	11	.001***	2.487
9	Finally (enumerative/sequential)	3	6	9	.845	.097
10	Therefore (resultive)	2	3	5	.431	.372

*$p < .05$, **$p < .01$, ***$p < .001$

As shown in Table 6, the students preferred semantic relations in the order of *resultive, enumerative, additive*, and *contrastive*. Reviewing respectively, *so, first, second, also,* and *however* were used more times than others. In addition, the intermediate group used the linking adverbials with the semantic relations of *resultive and enumerative* more than the basic group. These preferred results were significantly different between groups. In addition to the statistical significance, it was interesting that *so* was the most preferred by the Korean EFL students, as in the study of Liu (2013), which presented that although Chinese EFL learners showed some difference, they preferred *so* the most.

2. Discussions

From what has been found so far, the results provided the answers to the three research questions: which semantic category of linking adverbials 113 Korean EFL learners prefer in their writing, what the influencing factors are in overusing some specific linking adverbials, and what the similarities and differences are in using specific linking adverbials between the Korean EFL college students and other EFL learners of differing L1 in their writing.

1) The Preferred Semantic Categories by Korean EFL College Students

First, taking a look at how 113 Korean EFL college students of the two groups use linking adverbials, both groups of students frequently used the linking adverbials in semantic relations of *resultive, enumerative, additive*, and *contrastive*. Interestingly, both groups preferred *so* in the relation of *resultive* excessively. The basic group students used a linking adverbial in the *additive* category more than the intermediate group students. Although the

two groups showed significant differences in their preference for semantic categories, the similarity appeared in overusing *so* as in the study of Liu (2013) and Oktavianti and Sarage (2022).

All the things taken together, it could be posited that the Korean EFL learners have the tendency to overuse *so* in the semantic relation of *resultive* and the learners with low English proficiency prefer the adverbials of the *additive* category more. This phenomenon can be interpreted as the attempt of the EFL learners to transfer the semantic features of Korean (Kwon, 2013; Lee & Chae, 2015) in using English linking adverbials. The examples listed below illustrate these tendencies.

(1) So, whenever the bus was turning left and right, everyone in the bus bumped each other.
(2) For these reasons, therefore, I prefer the subway to go elsewhere.

(Bae, 2024, p. 67)

The above examples were exemplified from the students' writing. In example (1), *so* is used instead of *and* with a subordinator. Because *so* needs to make the texts cohesive, a sentence with the meaning of the result should follow it. *keuraeseo* (and) of Korean was interpreted as *so*. In a sentence of example (2), two linking adverbials were used successively. It means that Korean EFL learners overuse linking adverbials in the semantic relation of the same category. Therefore, it is certain that these features reflect the Korean semantic and syntactic natures of linking adverbials without awareness of English linking adverbials.

2) The Influencing Factors on the Use of Linking Adverbials by Korean EFL Students

Based on the results, several factors could be posited as causes of the use of linking adverbials by Korean EFL learners. First, the syntactic function can be one factor raising difficulty in using them, such as overuse, underuse, or misuse in their writing. This means that the EFL learners might have unawareness of the syntactic function in English. For this reason, they try to use the equivalents to the words of their L1 regardless of their syntactic functions. For example, while coordinators are mutually exclusive, linking adverbials may be preceded by coordinators, as in example (3). However, Korean EFL learners write two coordinators successively, as in the sentence of example (4).

(3) And nevertheless, they carved out a 5.7 percent share of the overall vote.
(4) *And but they carved out a 5.7 percent share of the overall vote.

(Biber et al., 2021, p. 82)

Next, based on the forementioned examples, it can be assumed clearly that English

proficiency might be another factor to make the EFL students overuse specific linking adverbials. The students with higher English proficiency used more linking adverbials statistically than the basic group with lower proficiency. Therefore, as the learners improve their English proficiency by being aware of the syntactic function, they might be able to overcome that difficulty such as overuse, etc.

As another factor, L1 transfer can be posited. While the linking adverbials are different syntactic elements from coordinators or subordinators in English sentences, Korean adverbials are also classified into two types, which are constituent adverbials and sentence adverbials (Kwon, 2013, p. 229) syntactically, but they function similarly. From this point, some specific adverbials such as *so* are overused regardless of functional differences. The Korean EFL students showed the tendency to use linking adverbials successively due to L1 transfer as well. A successive syntactic pattern of adverbials is very common in Korean. For this reason, the basic group students with lower English proficiency are likely to use linking adverbials of English corresponding to the equivalents of Korean successively. Thus, it can be assumed that this phenomenon might drive the EFL students to overuse, underuse, or misuse them.

3) The Similarities and Differences in Using Specific Linking Adverbials between the Korean EFL Students and Other EFL Learners of Differing L1 in Their Writing

In various respects, including the amount of data, diversity of topics, age, etc., there are some difficulties in generalizing the results of this study that we have done so far as the features of the use of linking adverbials by Korean EFL college students in common. To balance this point, the results of this study were compared with the results of other previous studies concerning the tendencies of other EFL learners' patterns of using linking adverbials in their writing.

TABLE 7
Comparison of the Current Study and Other Previous Studies

Rank	Korean Learners (This Study)	Arabic Learners (Aziz & Nuri, 2021)	Chinese Learners (Liu, 2013)	Indonesian Learners (Oktavianti & Sarage, 2022)	LOCNESS (Liu, 2013)
1	so (resultive)	also (additive)	so (resultive)	so (reultive)	also (additive)
2	First (enumerative/ sequential)	so (resultive)	also (additive)	of course (additive)	even (summative)
3	Second (enumerative/ sequential)	First (enumerative/ sequential)	even (contrastive)	however (contrastive/ concessive)	then (contrastive)
4	Also (additive/	In conclusion	then	for example	so

	reinforcing)	(summative)	(summative)	(appositional)	(resultive)
5	However (contrastive/ concessive)	for example (appositional)	in fact (additive)	while (contrastive /concessive)	still (contrastive)

As shown in Table 7, it is certain that EFL learners prefer *so* in the semantic relation of resultive, unlike the pattern of English natives. The results of the English speakers' corpus were presented by Liu (2013), who analyzed LOCNESS. On the standard of LOCNESS, the top 5 linking adverbials were listed, which were used by EFL learners who are Korean, Arabic, Chinese, and Indonesian. Similarly to English speakers, Arabic EFL learners preferred the *additive* linking adverbials the most, and Chinese and Korean EFL learners used the *resultive* linking adverbials, *so*, more frequently than other EFL learners. In addition, although there are some or fewer differences in ranking and using specific words, it could be found that EFL learners prefer the linking adverbials in the semantic relations of *resultive* the most.

V. CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

This study investigated how Korean EFL college students use linking adverbials in their English writing and which semantic category of linking adverbials they prefer. In addition, the influencing factors on writing were examined according to the following research questions.

First, the preferred semantic category of linking adverbials was investigated. Based on the results of analyzing the learner corpus developed by the 113 Korean EFL college students' writing, they preferred the adverbials in the semantic relations of *resultive*. Interestingly, so was overused the most. The results showed that the group with higher English proficiency used linking adverbials more than the group with lower proficiency. Although a significant distinction appeared statistically between both groups, they preferred the *resultive* semantic category the most.

Next, according to the results of investigating the factors influencing the use of linking adverbials by Korean EFL students, several features were found from the results. The syntactic function of English can be one factor raising difficulty in using linking adverbials, such as overuse, underuse, or misuse in their writing. This means that the unawareness of the syntactic function in English might make it difficult for the EFL students to use them. For this reason, they showed the tendency to use the equivalent words of Korean regardless of their syntactic functions. Another factor can be their English proficiency. They showed the distinction of using linking adverbials between both groups. The group with higher

proficiency used more linking adverbials than the basic group. L1 transfer was also another factor which drove the Korean EFL students to overuse the *resultive* linking adverbial, *so*.

Findings of this study also presented some similarities and differences in using specific linking adverbials between the Korean EFL college students and other EFL learners of differing L1 in their writing. It was found that the preference of the Korean EFL students was different from English natives. While the English native preferred *additive* linking adverbials the most, the Korean EFL students preferred *so* in the semantic relation of *resultive*. However, the EFL learners who are Arabic, Chinese, and Indonesian showed the similarity to their preference which is related to the *resultive* linking adverbials. In particular, *so* was ranked at the top of the list. Although there were some or fewer differences in ranking and using specific words, it could be assumed that EFL learners prefer the linking adverbials in the semantic relations of *resultive* the most.

As seen in this study so far, it has been confirmed that the results shown by the Korean EFL college students are limited in the use of vocabulary and semantic domain of linking adverbials. Therefore, to balance this limitation, even if the portion of the linking adverbials is small within a sentence (Hinkel, 2003), an EFL setting for English education should be provided to learners to learn and acquire ways to distinguish and use linking adverbials appropriately in various semantic domains. In addition, it should be educated with an emphasis on improving their awareness of linking adverbials so that they can better understand how to use them by recognizing the differences between their L1 of Korean and English linking adverbials.

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Examples in: English
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