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Null Subject Sentences in 'Because' Subordinate Clauses and L1 Transfer in English Writing by Korean Learners of English

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The null subject parameter holds significant implications for L1 transfer in language acquisition. English learners whose native language permits null subject sentences often exhibit a tendency to omit subjects in their English expressions (Tati, 2021). This research investigates whether Korean English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners demonstrate a similar inclination toward using null subject sentences in their English writing. This inquiry is particularly pertinent as Korean, akin to Italian, Spanish, and Portuguese, is characterized by subject-drop features. Moreover, the study endeavors to elucidate the impact of the topic-prominence feature in Korean on the writing proficiency of Korean learners of English. To achieve these objectives, a thorough analysis was conducted on 20 compositions written by advanced EFL learners enrolled in an all-English University Program in South Korea. The error analysis revealed that 16 students consistently made subject-omission errors, with a pronounced frequency in subordinate clauses introduced by 'because.' Intriguingly, these learners also employed fragment 'because'-clauses as a means to organize information in a topic-comment structure. This study contributes valuable insights into the manifestation of L1 transfer in the writing skills of Korean EFL learners and highlights the nuanced ways in which topic-prominence influences their English language performance.

[null subject sentences/topic-prominence feature/'because'-clauses/subject omission errors/topic comment structure]

I. INTRODUCTION

English language acquisition for learners whose native language differs significantly presents unique challenges, particularly in the realm of linguistic transference. EFL learners often grapple with the intricacies of reading, writing, speaking, and listening, navigating the subtle nuances between their native language and the target language. This paper delves into the complex interplay between English and Korean, shedding light on the challenges faced by advanced-level Korean EFL learners in terms of subject usage.

The linguistic landscape between English, a subject-prominent and nonsubject drop language, and Korean, a topic-prominent and subject-drop language, sets the stage for potential errors in the learners' performance in the target language. Numerous studies, including Tati (2021), have underscored the significance of the null subject parameter in contributing to subject-related errors. The presumption that native Korean speakers encounter challenges related to subject usage in their English proficiency forms the foundation for the present study.

In the realm of English language pedagogy, understanding the specific challenges faced by learners is crucial for effective teaching strategies. This study aims to explore whether advanced-level Korean EFL learners exhibit a proclivity for making subject-related errors, contributing valuable insights to the pedagogical approaches employed in English language education.

To achieve this goal, the paper unfolds in a structured manner. Section 2 provides a comprehensive overview of relevant theoretical backgrounds, including issues of language acquisition and the distinctions between subject-prominent and topic-prominent languages, as well as the subject-drop parameter. This theoretical foundation establishes the groundwork for understanding the intricacies of subject usage in language learning.

Section 3 details the methodology of the study, offering insights into the experiment's design and the research questions posed. Additionally, it provides a background on the participants, offering a nuanced understanding of the context in which the study unfolds. By exploring the experimental setup, educators and researchers gain valuable insights into the practical aspects of investigating subject-related errors.

In Section 4, the paper synthesizes the results obtained from the experiment and provides an interpretation of these findings. This section serves as a bridge between theoretical understanding and practical implications, offering a deeper understanding of the challenges faced by advanced-level Korean EFL learners.

Finally, Section 5 delves into the implications derived from the study, offering insights into how educators can adapt their pedagogical approaches to address subject-related challenges in English language learning.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Language Acquisition

Language acquisition, in its literal meaning, refers to the conscience or unconscious process of acquiring and learning a language. The study of language acquisition is considered "important for our understanding of man in general and of the intellectual development of the child in particular" (Villiers & Villiers, 1978, p. 49). Through successful language acquisition, one can obtain knowledge of not just language itself, but of its social, cultural, and historical aspects as well. Moreover, language acquisition allows one the ability to socialize and adapt to his surroundings and environment.

In other words, the theory of "Language Acquisition provides a new window into the rich structure of the human language faculty and explains how it develops in interaction with its environment and the rest of human cognition" (Lidz & Perkins, 2018, p. 1). Nevertheless, while language acquisition of the first language is the most basic and innate cognitive ability humans attain naturally, the learning of a second language is different. Unlike the natural acquisition of the mother tongue, being able to acquire and skillfully learn a new language requires much effort and intense dedication. However, the reward that language learning provides is nonetheless incredibly beneficial and sufficient. It expands the perspective of the learner and allows more in-depth knowledge of the world that the language gives way to.

Learning and adapting to a new language comes with many obstacles and barriers that the learner must be willing to overcome. There exists a great set of rules that the language provides in which the learner must acquire a knowledge of. This goes for any language, and it is not limited to the learning of English. The set of rules that follow with English must be absorbed by the learner to an extent that he "[develops his] own grammar or phonological rule system…as an active contributor who adopts strategies, forms hypotheses, and searches for evidence to confirm or deny them" (Villiers & Villiers, 1978, p. 230). Furthermore, when a learner has a complete and absolute understanding of his first language, the learning of a new language, or in other words, the second language acquisition can be conducted much effectively and efficiently.

Moreover, a thorough understanding of one's first language enhances the effectiveness and efficiency of learning a new language, or second language acquisition. In this context, it is crucial to consider that "the type of grammatical elements omitted and the scoring rule affect performance on cloze-type measure" (Tomiyana, 1980, p. 23).

2. English as a Subject-Prominent Language and Null-Subject Language

A subject-oriented language, or a subject-prominent language is a type of language in

which the "structure of sentences favors a description in which the grammatical relation subject-predicate plays a major role" (Li & Thompson, 1976, p. 460). Thus, it is the subject in the sentence structure that the overall context revolves around. The most representative example of a subject-oriented language is the English language. In the realm of subject-oriented language, topics may indeed exist, yet it is the subject that holds greater significance.

In comparison to the subject-oriented language, there exists a topic-oriented language as well. The topic-oriented language has a "basic structure of sentences [that] favors a description in which the grammatical relation topic-comment plays a major role" (Li & Thompson, 1976, p. 472). Two common representatives of this type of language are the Korean and Japanese languages. In topic-oriented language such as these, it is not uncommon to see a sentence without a subject and subjectless sentences.

The term null-subject language refers to certain languages that "have a number of properties including (i) the ability to omit subject pronouns, (ii) the free inversion of subject and verb, (iii) the so-called that trace effects, that is, the extraction of a subject (leaving a trace) out of a clause that contains a complementizer" (Mayo, 1998, p. 54). Indeed, the null-subject language has been one of the most deliberately studied topics in the field of linguistics. In Whong's paper (2011), he addresses a widely acknowledged learnability challenge that underscores the intricacy and significance of L1 transfer effects. He observes that a significant example of this complexity emerges in the learnability problem linked to. Considering English's status as a non-null subject language, it limits sentence construction to the exclusive choice of sentences with explicit subjects (Whong, 2011).

In simple terms, the null-subject language is a language that can exclude subjects or reverse the normal word structure of the subject and verb. Thus, in a null-subject language, the subject does not play the major role. While the English language is not considered as an absolute null-subject language, there exists several phrases that may be categorized in the list of null-subjects. An example of this would be, "Don't say anything!", in which subject remains unidentifiable.

3. L1 and L2 Intra and Inter-language Transference Error

In the process of language acquisition, EFL learners or all second language acquisition learners to that matter, face the complication of an occurrence that is referred to as the intra-language transference error, or also known as the intra-lingual transference error. This occurrence shows the learner's "incorrect generalization of the rules within the target language" (Kaweera, 2013, p. 13). With an overgeneralization and imprecise learning of the target language, a linguistic error takes place. Having a slight contrast to the intra-language transference error, the inter-lingual transfer error is one that is caused by the interference of the learner's first language. It is caused not because of an occurrence in language transfer,

but because of a faulty "word translation strategy" (Kaweera, 2013, p. 14).

This assertion adds weight to the notion that the learner establishes their own second language system based on the foundation of their first language (Rong, 2019). Whether due to the lack of knowledge of the second language or because of an error within the learner's first language interference, errors regarding the use of a newly learned language often occurs among EFL and SLA (second language acquisition) learners.

As mentioned before in the previous paragraphs, language transference is a common phenomenon that happens to most, if not all, L2 learners. The study of language transference has been largely focused on by many scholars as it takes up a central role in the process of second language acquisition.

Some scholars describe language transference as a psycholinguistic process wherein second language learners engage their previous knowledge to develop or utilize their interlanguage (Faerch & Kasper, 1987). Simply put, it involves L2 learners transferring elements of their native language onto the speech patterns of the target language (Gass, 1979). The phenomenon described commonly occurs when second language (L2) learners try to comprehend both the language and culture as utilized by native speakers (Gass & Selinker, 1992).

Hence, language transference represents a practice employed by learners acquiring their second language (L2) to enhance their comprehension and learning of the target language. However, numerous learners of a second language are susceptible to errors arising from flawed language transference. The confusion that arises during the transfer of the two languages or a mere lack of comprehension of the second language can result in various grammatical mistakes. Additionally, since each language, regardless of the similarities in sentence structures and grammatical rules, is inherently distinct, the transference of language can amplify the number of errors made by learners of a second language. This underscores the assertion that educators must be vigilant in identifying the errors made by their students in the language transference process.

In the context of modern English, Banks (2008) conducted research suggesting that children facing challenges in higher language capacities should engage actively in reading and writing in their native language. It is crucial for them to have opportunities for extensive discussions on intellectual matters, reading and discussing newspapers and magazines, while reducing or eliminating non-verbal activities such as watching television and playing computer games. Furthermore, foreign language (FL) teachers are advised to motivate these students to actively write in the FL, while minimizing the use of FL videos or internet-based grammar and vocabulary practices.

Within the realm of language transfer errors, scholars have previously suggested two methods for comprehending their types. One approach involves actively engaging with errors, documenting them, and organizing them in a manner specifically tailored for learners

(Gass & Selinker, 1992). This method underscores the importance of error analysis as an instructive tool for learners, providing valuable insights into the nuances of language transfer in the context of foreign language acquisition (Gass & Selinker, 1992). The first approach involves actively listening to errors, documenting them, and organizing them in a manner specifically tailored for learners (Gass & Selinker, 1992). The second method entails an examination of the phonological structures of both languages, identifying points of concordance and discordance, and anticipating errors based on discrepancies (Gass & Selinker, 1992). Through an analysis founded on the interplay between the two languages and a comparison of their foundational elements in sentence structures, a more comprehensive understanding can be achieved.

III. METHODOLOGY

1. Research Questions

In order to see how L1 transfer affects the participants' English writing, the current study was specifically designed to answer the following two research questions:

1) Do L1 Korean learners of L2 English show a similar tendency to use null-subject sentences in their English compositions?
2) How does the L1 Korean's "topic prominence" affect English writing performance by Korean learners of L2 English?

2. Participants

A collection of 50 advanced Korean EFL learners studying in a second-year all English program at a local university of Korea participated in the present study. The class essays selected were for a required credit course whose purpose was to develop students' writing and discipline ability in English focusing on all aspects of English writing including content knowledge, grammar, context and syntax.

These students were given an assignment to write a 4-6 pages English essay on a particular subject in order to help fulfill the requirement for course credit. Out of this group, a corpus of 20 papers was randomly selected as indicated in Table 1 below. The summation of the selected participants for this study comprises a total of 20 individuals, with a gender distribution of 12 females and 8 males. These participants are specifically enrolled in the University All-English Social Science Degree program, denoting their academic affiliation with the Social Science Degree curriculum. It is noteworthy that the term "University All-

English Social Science Degree" in the context of the accompanying table pertains to students pursuing a course of study within the field of Social Science, wherein all instructional lectures are conducted exclusively by native English-speaking professors. This academic setting is situated within an international university based in Songdo, Korea, reflecting a distinctive educational environment designed to facilitate English language proficiency and foster a globalized learning experience. Furthermore, as a prerequisite for admission into this program, participants have demonstrated a commendable level of English proficiency, as evidenced by their attainment of a minimum TOEFL score of 80. This comprehensive overview of the selected participants provides a nuanced understanding of the academic and linguistic context within which the research is conducted, shedding light on the unique characteristics of the study population and the distinctive academic setting in which their English language education unfolds.

TABLE 1
Summary of Selected Participants

	Description
Total Number	20
Gender	12 Females and 8 males
Enrolled in	University All-English Social Science Degree
English Proficiency	Minimum TOEFL Score of 80

3. Procedure

In pursuit of elucidating the research inquiries posited earlier, a meticulously designed experimental procedure was implemented. Initially, a cohort comprising 50 Korean college students, all participants in an exclusively English-taught University Program, were individually tasked with composing an article on a subject relevant to their coursework. This initial step served as the foundation for a comprehensive exploration into the linguistic competencies and tendencies of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners within the specified academic context. Subsequently, from the pool of 50 articles generated by the participating students, a subset consisting of 20 papers was purposively selected through a randomized sampling method for a detailed error analysis. This strategic selection aimed to capture a representative cross-section of the participants' writing, ensuring a nuanced examination of language errors prevalent in their compositions.

As highlighted earlier, linguistic errors in the written expressions of EFL learners often emanate from both the tendency to overgeneralize the features of the target language and a less-than-optimal grasp of grammatical nuances. In recognition of this multifaceted nature of linguistic challenges, a discerning analysis was deemed imperative to discern the most recurrent errors. Consequently, the error analysis undertaken in this study homed in on a

specific subset of linguistic discrepancies, namely subject-omission errors, particularly within subordinate clauses initiated by the conjunction ‘because’. This deliberate focus aimed to unravel intricacies within the participants’ written discourse, shedding light on a specific category of errors that could be indicative of broader linguistic patterns and challenges faced by EFL learners in similar academic settings.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Results

Table 2 summarizes what this study has done through the error analysis.

TABLE 2
Summary of Results

Description	Number
Total Number of Paper Analyzed	20
Total Pages	85
Use of Because	115/53
Paper with Subject-Omission Errors	16
Number of Mistakes	42

Table 2 clearly shows that vast majority of the advanced EFL Learners, 16 students, had subject errors in their written work. An additional finding shows that subject-omission errors were predominantly made in sentences with subordinate clauses starting with ‘because’.

The number of tokens of ‘because’ is also worth special attention: The participants used ‘because’ 5 to 6 times per paper. Considering the average length of papers (2 to 3 pages), this many uses in a short paper can be referred to as an “overuse” of ‘because’. Moreover, almost half (53 times) of their uses of ‘because’-clause are “fragments”. Here, “fragment” uses of ‘because’-clauses are used without their main clauses. Furthermore, 42 minor mistakes such as plural marker ‘s’ omission as in ‘two city’ were also found across the 20 papers.

2. Discussion

As previously discussed, the observed subject errors and the misapplication of “because” may be attributed to overgeneralization in the target language. This overgeneralization appears to stem from a combination of factors, including a lack of awareness regarding rule restrictions, incomplete application of grammatical rules, and interference arising from negative transfer from the participants’ first language (L1), Korean native transfer.

To delve into more specific details, the overgeneralization in the target language involves a tendency among the participants to extend rules beyond their appropriate context. For instance, in attempting to construct sentences with "because," some participants may have applied a rule too broadly, leading to subject errors. This could be a manifestation of a misunderstanding of the nuanced use of "because" and the specific rules governing its usage in English.

Furthermore, the ignorance of rule restrictions points to a potential gap in the participants' knowledge regarding the constraints on certain grammatical structures. For example, a lack of awareness of English not being a null-subject language might have contributed to subject omission errors in the "because"-subordinate clauses.

The incomplete application of rules further exacerbates the issue, suggesting that while participants may have some knowledge of the rules, they may struggle with consistently applying them in varied contexts. The incomplete application of rules further exacerbates the issue, suggesting that while participants may have some knowledge of the rules, they may struggle with consistently applying them in varied structures.

The interference resulting from L1 negative transfer is another influential factor. In the case of Korean, being a null-subject language, the participants might transfer this feature into English construction, where subjects are obligatory. This transfer of L1 characteristics, combined with the aforementioned factors, contributes to the observed subject errors and misuse of "because."

During the study, it became evident that the 16 students who exhibited an overuse of the subordinating conjunction "because" also demonstrated additional errors. To illustrate, the following section provides representative examples of subject omission errors found in the "because"-subordinate clauses across these 16 papers.

(1) *a*. "Since I was young, I have watched a lot of news. *Because greatly influenced by their surroundings and parents they grow up*."
Intended Reading: "Because **they were** greatly influenced by their surroundings and parents, they grew up."

b. "I agree on the theory. *Because give negative or sorrowful impact each other*.
Intended Reading: "I agree on the theory because **it** gives negative or sorrowful impact to each other."

c. "That organization just want them to believe in Islam. *Because do what Allah made them*."
Intended Reading: "That organization just want them to believe in Islam because **they** do what Allah made them to do."

An example (1*a*) represents unpacking subject-omission errors in terms of analysis and theological considers. The first excerpt, "Because greatly influenced by their surroundings and parents they grow up," exhibits a subject-omission error, where the intended subject is implicitly recoverable from the main clause. In linguistic terms, this type of error aligns with characteristics observed in subject-drop languages like Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, and notably, Korean. The linguistic theory underpinning subject-drop languages posits that subjects, when omitted, can still be readily inferred from the context or main clauses. In this instance, the subject-omission errors identified in the 16 papers, including the example above, can be attributed to the negative transfer from the participants' first language (L1), Korean.

The second example of (1*b*) represents addressing subject-omission errors within theoretical frameworks. The sentence "Because give negative or sorrowful impact each other" reflects another subject-omission error, where the subject is implicit in the main clause. The theoretical lens through which we interpret this phenomenon involves delving into the syntactic characteristics of Korean, which, like Japanese, is a topic-prominent language. In topic-prominent languages, the structure allows for a more flexible positioning of subjects within sentences. That is, the observed subject-omission errors can be understood as a manifestation of L1 (Korean) negative transfer, where the syntactic patterns of the native language influence the construction of sentences in the target language.

The final example, "Because do what Allah made them," unveils a subject-omission error in the context of L1 (Korean) negative transfer. This is particularly noteworthy when considering Korean's status as a subject-drop language. The syntactic patterns ingrained in the Korean language, where subjects can be omitted without sacrificing clarity, seem to influence the participants' English writing. This is an instance where the theoretical insights from linguistics, specifically the study of subject-drop languages, provide a robust framework for understanding and explaining the recurring subject-omission errors identified in the study.

The subject-omission errors in all the 16 papers are of the same type: the omitted subjects were easily recoverable from the main clauses. This is one of the typical characteristics of subject-drop languages such as Italian, Spanish, Portuguese. Korean is, of course, one of such languages. In this sense, subject-omission errors found in this study can be ascribed to L1 (Korean) negative transfer.

The following examples show another effect of negative transfer of L1 Korean, which is a topic prominent language similar to Japanese.

(2) *a.* "Ethnicity can be decided only by racial distinctiveness, biological or physical features. <u>*Because of subjective criteria*</u>. Finally, they feel special themselves."

b. "I agree on author's theory that they conform to the same rules, which are unphysical traits and think this is interesting to me. *Because, at first, seems same interests*.

c. *Because of terror in World Trade Center with leading an airplane. It is the biggest tragedy that people still mourn. It also relates to trauma."*

The common property of the deviant uses of 'because'-clauses given in (2) is that they lack their main clauses. We can explain these misused 'because' subordinate clauses as follows: the participants, who misused 'because' subordinate clauses, employed 'because'-subordinate clauses as a topic, and the ensuing sentences as comments. In other words, they implemented the topic-comment information structure by placing a 'because'-clause before a clause explicating the reason. Such deviant uses of island 'because'-clauses result from the effect of L1 Korean's "topic prominence." In Kim (2022), I observed similar errors made by Korean learners of English. In the study, they tended to use 'there'-existential constructions as the participants of the current study did with clauses that start with 'because'.

The following examples show how Korean learners of English endeavored to organize the information into the grid of topic and comment as in Korean.

The examples presented in (2) showcase a distinctive manifestation of negative transfer from L1 Korean, a language known for its topic-prominent structure similar to Japanese. In these instances, the participants exhibit a particular pattern of utilizing 'because'-clauses that lack their corresponding main clauses, reflecting an influence of L1 transfer on English sentence construction.

The three instances, (2*a*), (2*b*), and (2*c*), share a common characteristic—the absence of main clauses following the 'because'-clauses. This deviant use of 'because'-subordinate clauses can be elucidated by viewing them as elements employed as topics, followed by subsequent sentences serving as comments. Essentially, participants misused 'because'-subordinate clauses by implementing a topic-comment information structure, positioning a 'because'-clause before a clause that explicates the reason. This unconventional usage, often referred to as island 'because'-clauses, can be attributed to the impact of L1 Korean's "topic prominence."

An insightful parallel can be drawn from a previous study by Kim (2022), where similar linguistic errors were observed among Korean learners of English. Notably, participants in both studies displayed a tendency to use 'there'-existential constructions, akin to the present study's participants, who initiated clauses with 'because'. This recurrence underscores the persistent influence of L1 transfer on English writing patterns among Korean learners.

(3) *a.* "There is a morphological rule that prefix re tends to combine with a transitive verb and the resulting word is also becomes a transitive verb. However, the word like

'reblacken' seems to be violated with this rule. For example, in the sentence 'The sky suddenly blackened.' the wore 'blacken' which combined with the prefix re requires an object."

b. There is a sentence ("John left the room quietly" that manner adverb 'quietly' modifies the dynamic verb 'left'). It has no semantic contrivance with the combination between adverb and dynamic verb."

To further illustrate this phenomenon, examples (3*a*) and (3*b*) provide additional instances where Korean learners attempted to organize information in a manner reflective of their native language's topic-comment structure. In (3*a*), there is an attempt to apply the topic-comment structure through the use of 'there'-existential constructions, highlighting the influence of L1 transfer. Similarly, (3*b*) demonstrates an endeavor to align English sentences with the topic-comment structure ingrained in Korean, particularly evident in the attempt to combine manner adverbs with dynamic verbs.

In Kim's (2022) study, the participants demonstrated the use of 'there'-existential constructions preceding sentences that offer additional information about the discourse referents described by the notional subjects in these constructions. Consequently, it becomes plausible to interpret the sentences following the 'there'-existential constructions as commentary. Therefore, it can be argued that the initial 'there'-existential constructions and the subsequent sentences collectively form topic-comment information structures, despite their independent sentential status. The utilization of 'because'-clauses by the participants in our study aligns with the patterns observed in Kim's participants. By examining these two types of errors exhibited by Korean learners of English, it is reasonable to assert that the topic prominence inherent in the Korean language exerts a strong influence. This influence unconsciously compels Korean learners to organize the information in their English sentences in a topic-comment manner.

Importantly, it should be noted that the instances of L1 negative transfer discussed above are closely linked to the fact that the 16 advanced EFL learners who erred in using the coordinating conjunction 'because' were primarily instructed by native Korean speakers of the English language during their primary and secondary education.

The implications of the current study's findings extend to English professors and educators working with Korean learners. Awareness of the potential linguistic errors that EFL learners might make is crucial for effective corrective action. Also, native Korean speakers teaching English must be attuned to the significance of subjects and strive to mitigate language transfer issues from their native language.

Furthermore, reducing errors influenced by the native language may be achieved by leveraging feedback from peers who share the same native language. According to Jung

(2023), his research identified the positive impact of peer review training in Korean EFL classrooms. This underscores the potential effectiveness of utilizing feedback from native-speaking peers to minimize language errors, as emphasized in Jung's study.

In conclusion, the findings of this study shed light on the nuances of English language instruction for Korean learners, emphasizing the need for heightened awareness among educators and a nuanced approach to teaching that considers the impact of L1 characteristics on L2 acquisition.

V. IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSION

The primary objective of this study was to examine how the features of L1 Korean influence the acquisition of L2 English by Korean learners. Specifically, our investigation focused on the impact of Korean's topic prominence and null subject features on the composition of English sentences by Korean learners. To this, the current study made an error analysis of 20 English essays written by advanced EFL Learners attending an all-English University Program in South Korea.

Through the research, this study gained the following three findings: First, out of the 20 subjects, 16 participants made subject related errors; second, these errors are most likely due to the overgeneralization in the target language, resulting from ignorance of rule restriction and incomplete application of rules and interference resulting from their negative L1 (Korean) transfer. Finally, the third findings additionally showed that the subjects at advanced levels of English who consistently made subject errors were mostly taught by native-Korean speakers of English in their primary and secondary schools. The experimental findings reveal a pronounced influence on Korean learners, leading to the misuse of 'because'-clauses without main clauses and frequent use of null-subject sentences. This study contends that these errors stem from the features of topic prominence and null subjects in Korean, indicating L1 negative transfer, resulting in the production of non-target-like sentences.

The process of acquiring a new language is inherently demanding, with EFL learners encountering various difficulties and barriers throughout their English learning journey, each of which is inevitable. Nevertheless, linguistic errors can serve as steppingstones to higher levels of English proficiency when properly identified and corrected. Mistakes provide learners with a better understanding of what is incorrect, enabling them to avoid similar errors in the future and fostering higher and more creative thinking.

However, it is crucial to understand the types of errors and their causes for them to serve as a valuable learning tool. Various types of errors exist in EFL learning, encompassing intra and inter-language transference errors, as well as basic errors like grammatical and syntactic

errors. This experiment revealed a high prevalence of subject errors among advanced Korean EFL learners, particularly in conjunction with the use of "because." Additionally, these learners exhibited a relatively low understanding of the word "because," often misusing and overusing it. Consequently, this study underscores the need for accurate and precise linguistic EFL learning, even at the collegiate levels.

Despite the implications for EFL learners and teachers mentioned above, this study has limitations in understanding and scope. The methodology employed a small sample of student papers, and the focus was solely on the "because" error, neglecting other grammatical errors. Although the study provides a robust account of subject errors among Korean learners, future research should explore concrete remedial measures for treating and correcting these errors in advanced EFL learners.

In conclusion, for advanced EFL learners, the proper use of subjects with "because" is crucial in written communication to convey sentence meaning accurately. It is hoped that this study, despite its modest scale, contributes to a deeper understanding of written communication errors. The findings of this study underscore the significance of EFL English educators' awareness regarding the specific language errors that may be prevalent among Korean English learners in their written compositions. In essence, the results suggest that an understanding of these linguistic challenges is crucial for effective English language instruction.

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APPENDIX

Error analysis Table for the use of "because" in English writing by Korean learners

Paper	Number of times "because" was used	Number of times the use of "because" was incorrect	Number of pages in the composition
1	7	2	5
2	4	1	3
3	8	4	5
4	5	1	3
5	6	3	4
6	4	2	7
7	6	4	5
8	18	7	4
9	14	5	3
10	7	3	4
11	6	1	4
12	1	0	5

13	1	1	5
14	7	4	3
15	7	2	5
16	1	0	5
17	2	0	4
18	6	1	4
19	2	0	2
20	3	1	5

Examples in: English

Applicable Language: English

Applicable Levels: Tertiary

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