

# A Corpus-Based Study on the Use of the Conjunctive Adverbial in EFL Learners' Academic Writing

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**Koh, Sungran (2021). A corpus-based study on the use of the conjunctive adverbial in EFL learners' academic writing.** *The Linguistic Association of Korea Journal*, 29(2), 163-184. The purpose of this study is to identify whether there are differences in the use of conjunctive adverbials (CAs) depending on language proficiency and interlanguage background among Korean EFL learners, native English experts (NEEs) and non-native English experts (NNEEs) and then to enhance the use of CAs in English writing. To do this, the EFL learners' corpora were collected twice, before class (BC) and after class (AC). They also wrote one page essays, which were subsequently collected and analyzed. For the experts' corpora, NNEE corpus and NEE corpus were retrieved and used in this study. The results first show that EFL learners' proficiency developed and they were able to use CAs in a more balanced and impartial way than before class. The next finding is that there was not much difference in NNEE and NEE use of CAs even though they have different interlanguage. NEEs prefer a sentence initial position more than NNEEs. NNEEs used only two CAs ('also' and 'therefore') in both initial and medial positions while NEEs used the highest frequent four CAs ('for example', 'however', 'therefore', 'thus') in both positions.

**Key Words:** conjunctive adverbial, EFL learners, English writing, interlanguage

## 1. Introduction

Conjunctive adverbials join sentence to sentence and paragraph to paragraph having the function of connectors and signal logical relations in a discourse. Conjunctive

adverbials enhance cohesion and coherence by connecting ideas correctly and help the reader better understand the text. Cohesion is a crucial principle for textuality. Serpil and Ceyhun (2017) mention, “The notion of cohesion is a semantic relation which encompasses the connections of meaning inside the text, and it defines the text” (p. 64). Thus, the ability to use conjunctive adverbials properly with respect of both form and meaning is a significant skill for EFL learners to have so as to be able to write academically. Even so, it is a difficult task for EFL learners in academic writing.

In English, there are three grammatical categories of English conjunctive adjuncts, of which two kinds of conjunctions such as coordinating conjunction (e.g. *for, and, nor, but, or, yet, and so*), subordinating conjunction (e.g. *after, although, as, because, before, if, etc.*) and conjunctive adverbials (e.g. *for example/instance, furthermore, in addition, etc.*) Yoon and Yoo (2011) mention, “Differentiating the grammatical category ‘conjunction’ from the category ‘adverb’ is of crucial importance in academic writing because not doing so can result in common writing mistakes such as sentence fragments and run-on sentences” (p. 227). The examples are as follows:

- (1) However, today’s students don’t want physical activities. *Because*, playgrounds are too old. (Sentence fragments)
- (2) Seoul has such a wonderful view to watch and feel, however, I think it would be better if one thing can change in my hometown. (Run-on sentences)

Many researchers have studied how conjunctive adverbials play an important role in better understanding in discourses, whether they have a critical correlation in academic writing proficiency for EFL learners, and how language is taught in the use of appropriate conjunctive adverbials.

Mauranen (1993) mentions that although conjunctive adverbials do not necessarily enhance a readability and coherence of texts, they have a rhetorical impact and make a difference regarding the effect of the text. On the contrary, Granger & Tyson (1996) state that there is no correlation between coherence and writing development. Chen (2006) argues that some conjunctive adverbials are overused or misused in EFL learners’ writing and Lei (2012) shows they are overused, underused, and misused in doctoral dissertations. Even so, the use of conjunctive adverbials is tricky and challenging in a discourse, particularly for EFL learners.

This study is primarily based on the use of conjunctive adverbials in written text by

Korean EFL learners, English native speaker experts, and nonnative speaker experts. Accordingly, underused, overused, and misused conjunctive adverbials are examined and listed depending on the English proficiency. The purpose of this study is to identify whether there are differences in the use of conjunctive adverbials depending on language proficiency and interlanguage background, and then to develop ability to use conjunctive adverbials in order to achieve better understanding of English writing without lots of errors and with natural flow of texts.

This study seeks to address the following questions:

- a) What type of conjunctive adverbials do Korean EFL learners underuse, overuse, and misuse compared to English native speaker experts and nonnative speaker experts?
- b) Which positions were conjunctive adverbials put in Korean EFL learners', English native speaker experts' and nonnative speakers experts' texts? Do they have any differences?
- c) Whether the occurrence, frequency, and position of conjunctive adverbials is related to the writer's language proficiency or interlanguage background.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1. Categorization of Conjunctive Adverbials

In the previous research, Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman(1999) used 'conjunctive adverbials', but other researchers have used as different terms: 'linking adjuncts' (Carter & McCarthy, 2006), 'linking adverbial' (Biber, Conrad, & Leech, 2003), 'adverbial conjuncts' (Yeung, 2009), 'conjunctive adjuncts' (Halliday & Hasan, 1976; Gardezi & Nesi, 2009), sentence connectors (Swales & Feak, 2004), and 'conjunctive adverbials' (Chen, 2006). These terms are not the same, but the terms are basically cohesive devices which make clear the relationship between sentences and paragraphs, even larger parts of a text. This study uses the term 'conjunctive adverbials' by Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman (1999).

Conjunctive adverbials are classified by different types depending on different researchers. They are either one word item (e.g. firstly, hence, then) or more than one word compound (e.g. in conclusion, on the contrary). There are also prepositional phrases, finite and non-finite clauses (e.g. in other words, what is more, that is). Quirk et al. (1985) separate the conjunctive adverbials as follows. They refer to conjunctive adverbials as adverbial connectors as Table 1.

Table 1. Classification of Logical Connectors

Classification of Connectors	Logical Connectors
Listing	first, second, third, firstly, secondly, thirdly, in the first place, in the second place, first of all, second of all, for one thing, to begin with, finally, lastly, last of all, equally, likewise, similarly, further, furthermore, in addition, etc.
Summative	altogether, overall, then, therefore, thus, all in all, in conclusion, in sum, to sum up, etc.
Appositive	namely, thus, in other words, for example, for instance, that is to say, specifically, etc.
Resultative	accordingly, consequently, hence, so, therefore, thus, as a consequence, in consequence, as a result, etc.
Inferential	else, otherwise, then, in other words, in that case, etc.
Contrastive	in other words, on the other hand, conversely, instead, oppositely, on the contrary, in contrast, however, nevertheless, still, though, yet, beside, etc.
Transitional	incidentally, by the way, meanwhile, meantime, eventually, originally, subsequently, etc.

(Quirk et al., 1985, pp. 634-636)

Heino (2010) points out that Quirk et al.'s classification of connector has its strengths and weaknesses. For example, the connector '*thus*' has been listed under 'summative', 'appositional', and 'resultative' roles depending on the context. However, Biber, Johansson, Leech, Conrad, and Finegan (1999) have listed the connector '*thus*' under 'resultative' whereas Halliday and Hassan (1976) have listed the connector '*thus*' under 'casual'. As these connectors are linked to their preceding and following texts semantically, the type of definite classification may be tricky and confusing.

Biber et al. (2003) regard cohesion as a significant device to make the relationship between two units of discourse evident, and conjunctive adverbials have an interpersonal function to understand the writers' intention. They classify six types of conjunctive adverbials as shown in the following.

Table 2. Classification of Conjunctive Adverbials

Classification	Example
Enumeration and Addition	first(ly), second(ly), in addition, moreover, etc.
Summation	to summarize, in conclusion, to conclude, etc.
Apposition	namely, that is, in other words, etc.
Result/ Inference	hence, therefore, thus, so, etc.
Contrast/ Concession	however, in contrast, on the other hand, etc.
Transition	now, meanwhile, by the way, etc.

(Biber et al., 2003, p. 389)

Biber et al. (2003) mention four main characteristics of conjunctive adverbials as follows.

Semantic rules that refer to which group these adverbials belong, for example addition or contrast. Frequency of occurrence and possible co-occurrence, i.e. either with each other or with other linkers such as coordinators and subordinators. Forms in which they are used. It is considered as the different possible syntactic realizations of linking adverbials. Positions refer to where the linking adverbials appear in the clause, (initially, medially, or finally).

(Biber et al., 2003, pp. 358-360)

Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman (1999) adapted from Halliday and Hasan's (1976) classify conjunctive adverbials as a subcategorization of logical connector. They divide conjunctive adverbials into the four types such as additive, adversative, causal and sequential. It follows in Table 3.

Table 3. Taxonomy of Conjunctive Adverbials

Classification		Example
Additive	Emphatic	in addition, moreover, furthermore, besides, also
	Appositional	that is, in other words, for instance, for example, so to speak, that is to say
	Comparative	likewise, similarly
Adversative	Proper adversative	however, nevertheless, despite this, in contrast
	Contrastive	in fact, actually, however, on the other hand,
	Correction	instead, rather, on the contrary, at least
Casual	Dismissal	in any case, anyhow, at any rate
	General causal	therefore, consequently, for that reason, thus, as a result
	Causal conditional	then, in that case, otherwise
Sequential		then, next, first, second, last, finally, up to now, to sum up

(Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman, 1999, p. 530)

The present study will categorize conjunctive adverbials of the corpora according to Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman (1999) because there are many previous researches based on Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman (1999) adapted from Halliday and Hasan's (1976), and it is considered to be a reasonable method in terms of EFL learners' use of conjunctive adverbials.

## 2.2. Previous Studies on the Conjunctive Adverbial Use of EFL

Heino (2010) points out some reasons it is troublesome for EFL learners to use conjunctive adverbials. He mentions, "The use of connectors is connected with discourse type and register, which makes it more complicated for a learner to distinguish and learn to use the appropriate connectors used in different discourses" (p. 4). For instance, '*therefore, thus*' are used in the formal register while '*so*' is used in the informal register.

Also, conjunctive adverbials are not absolutely needed and then, there are differences between languages to use them correctly. EFL learners transfer from their mother tongue to a second language, and their first language could affect their second language formation. Tarone (2006) states that interlanguage is related to "A system overgeneralization of the target language rules, transfer of training, strategies of communication and strategies of learning" (p. 747).

There have been some comparative researches regarding conjunctive adverbials based on written texts of EFL learners and English native speakers. In the previous studies, it is reported that many EFL learners underuse, overuse, and misuse conjunctive adverbials in their academic writing. 'Underuse' and 'overuse' do not absolutely mean wrong usage of conjunctive adverbials whereas 'misuse' means incorrect usage of them.

Can (2011) compared Turkish EFL learners' essays and native American speakers' essays and found Turkish EFL learners overused conjunctive adverbials more than native English speakers, such as *also, furthermore, moreover, besides, for example* and *for instance*, which belong to the additive category; *on the other hand*, which belongs to the appositional part in the adversative category whereas Turkish EFL learners underused *however, yet* in the proper adversative subcategory of the adversative category.

Narita, Sato and Sugiura (2004) mention that Japanese EFL learners overused *for example, first, moreover, in addition* and *of course*, while they underused *then, yet* and *instead*. Wei-yu Chen (2006) states Chinese and Taiwanese learners overused conjunctive adverbials. Tapper (2005) also found that Swedish EFL learners overused adverbial

conjunctives in their essays more than native English speakers. Leedham and Cai (2013) examined Chinese EFL students and British ones, then found Chinese EFL students overuse *besides*, *on the other hand* compared to their British counterparts. On the other hand, Bolton, Nelson, and Hung (2002) showed that both EFL learners and English native learners tend to overuse conjunctive adverbials more than professional writers.

On the other hand, Altenberg and Tapper (1998) demonstrated that Swedish EFL learners underused conjunctive adverbials in their essays more than native English speakers. They claim, conjunctive adverbials "is closely connected to individual writers' style and compositional technique rather than mere EFL proficiency" (p.83). Heino (2010) also showed Swedish EFL learners underused conjunctive adverbials in their essays more than native English speakers and used much fewer kinds of conjunctive adverbials, mostly the same one. They usually turn to about ten conjunctive adverbials to a higher extent. Heino (2010) pointed out that contradictory findings among researchers result from native language transfer and strategies of learning

Lei (2012) found that EFL learners overused conjunctive adverbials in their overall writing, but adversative types, including *however*, were underused. Granger and Tyson (1996) examined French EFL learners and the result revealed that conjunctive adverbials like *however* and *therefore* were underused, while *moreover* and *for instance*, and *on the contrary* are overused. Ha (2016) and Park (2013) showed Korean English learners overused sequential and additive categories of adverbials.

Many studies show that many EFL learners misused conjunctive adverbials, and the misused ones have many differences depending on the subjects. Lei (2012) states Chinese doctoral students misused *besides* and *actually*. Park (2013) examined the Korean students' writing and it shows they misused adversative types such as *on the contrary*, *in contrast*, and *on the other hand*. Milton and Tsang (1993) examined Hong Kong students' writing and showed misuse of *therefore* and *moreover*. Granger and Tyson (1996) reported misuse of *moreover* in that it was used to add a point instead of adding a final argument. Overall, the finding indicated the most frequent misuse in additive types such as *besides* and *moreover*

In terms of position occurrence, conjunctive adverbials are placed in three main positions in a sentence: initial, medial, and final. Barber et al. (2003) mention that the initial position is the most common occurrence with academic writing and conversation whereas medial position is the most common in academic writing but rare in conversation. Leedham and Cai (2013) mention Chinese EFL learners tend to use conjunctive adverbials in the initial position of the sentences as well. Park (2013) showed

Korean EFL learners preferred to use sentence-initial adverbials, especially by the lowest-level learners.

### 3. Methodology

The corpora of this study are largely divided into two parts: One is Korean EFL learners' corpora and the other is English expert corpora. The EFL learners were majoring in English Literature and Linguistics and were taking writing class for freshman in university in Seoul, Korea, and their English proficiency ranged from 500 to 800 for TOEIC scores. They were taking academic English writing class, and students who were absent or did not submit their essay were excluded from the study. For this study, the participants were assigned to write an essay within a maximum of one page before class. After classes on academic English writing including conjunctive adverbials persisted for 12 weeks, they summited another one page essay. Before class, they wrote their one page essay including 4,770 words, and after 12 weeks' class, they also wrote a one page essay which had 9,622 words, then, their essays were collected and analyzed.

For the experts' corpora, two articles are retrieved from the distinguished journal, *The Society for Teaching English through Media*. One was by non-native English expert (NNEE) corpus including 9,318 words, and the other one was by native English expert (NEE) corpus including 9,958 words, both of which belong to the academic genre. After the collection of articles, all tables, figures, and references were deleted from the texts to analyze. Table 1 shows the overall information of both the learners' corpus and the experts' corpus used in this study.

Table 4. Data Corpora

	Learners' Corpus		Experts' Corpus	
	Before Class (BC)	After Class (AC)	Non-native English expert (NNEE)	Native English expert (NEE)
Number of characters (without spaces)	23,354	42,950	41,867	52,925
Number of words	4,792	9,814	8,418	10,200
Number of sentences	316	660	433	452



As shown in the table above, the EFL learners before class have a much smaller number of words and sentences compared to those of after class because of their basic knowledge and abilities. When it comes to experts' corpus, the article of NNEE also has a bit smaller number words and sentences than NEE. However, it is not considered as the gap of their English ability because the differences would happen depending on the subject and content of the article.

As a first step to analyze the corpus, the number and token of words were identified in each corpora using TextAnalyzer Tool, software utility which enables us to find the most frequent words sentences and also counts number of words, sentences and so on. The frequency of occurrence of CAs in each group was calculated and reported. In some cases, since some words fell into wrong classifications, the word classifications were double checked.

## 4. Result and Discussion

### 4.1. Learners' and Experts' Overall Frequency

As mentioned earlier, this study followed the usage of Celce-Murica and Larsen-Freeman's study (1999) adapted from Halliday and Hasan's (1976), so the corpora was analyzed based on the four logical functions: additive, adversative, causal, and sequential.

According to table 5, this finding demonstrates that EFL learners increase the number of the words and sentences in their English writing after class. Before class, they used less words and sentences and further, less CAs than after class, which demonstrates the improvement of their English writing ability. This implies that the more they practice

Table 5. The Number of Learners' Corpus

	BC	AC	Ratio
Number of characters (without spaces)	23,354	42,950	1.84
Number of words	4,792	9,814	2.05
Number of sentences	316	660	2.09
M			1.99
SD			0.11

English writing, the better and longer they are able to write English. As they do not have much English writing experience, they are unable to create longer and better English sentences.

As shown in table 6, EFL learners developed on average more than twice after class and especially in sequential CAs, they used more than three times as those before class. They did not have basic knowledge of how to write an essay or use CAs in the beginning of the writing class. The class was an introduction to academic writing and EFL learners were guided to the well-organized writing process and well-developed paragraphs and essays.

Table 6. Classification of Learners' Corpus

Classification	BC	AC	Ratio
addictive	6	16	2.67
adversative	17	40	2.35
causal	10	13	1.30
sequential	10	30	3.00
M			2.33
SD			0.64

The highest frequency is observed in the adversative type in both BC and AC as shown in table 6. CA frequency of casual and sequential types are the same. The least was the addictive type in BC while CA frequency is decreased in the order of sequential, addictive, and casual in AC. The frequency ratio in sequential type to list and enumerate learners' opinion increased the most as shown in table 6. Before class, they did not use the sequential type CA though they needed to use the sequential CA because they did not know how and where they should use the CAs.

Next, according to NNS and NS experts' corpus, they do now show much difference in using CAs as shown table 7. Their SD (0.09) is lower than that (0.11) of EFL learners, which means they do not show a large gap between NNS and NS. Although both groups have different language backgrounds, they show similar results in using CAs. This fact implies the competence in the use of CAs is able to improve and develop through appropriate teaching.

In addition, experts' corpus shows that both NNS and NS used CA type with no significant differences, as shown in Table 8. Considering the CAs' type, the same result

Table 7. The Number of Experts' Corpus

	NNS	NS	Ratio
Number of characters (without spaces)	41,867	52,925	1.26
Number of words	8,418	10,200	1.21
Number of sentences	433	452	1.04
M			1.17
SD			0.09

Table 8. Classification of Experts' Corpus

	NNS	NS	Ratio
addictive	31	26	0.84
adversative	10	15	1.50
causal	11	17	1.55
sequential	19	13	0.68
M			1.14
SD			0.38

was found: The most frequent CA is additive type to express the order of information and join items together in both NNS and NS.

Compared learners' corpus with experts' corpus, learners' uses of CAs have more gaps among CAs. Learners' ratio mean is 2.33 while experts' ratio mean is 1.14. Learners heavily resort to adversative type to express differences or alternatives between information whereas experts do not lean to one side excessively.

## 4.2. The Frequency of Individual CAs

### 4.2.1. Overuse and Underuse of CAs

The finding shows that the use of EFL learners' CAs is biased on three ones before class: 'however', 'then' and 'finally'. They overused 'however' as 34.88%, 'then' as 23.25%, and 'finally' as 16.27%. However, they were able to use CAs in a more balanced aspect after class. Their frequency of 'however' after class lowered as 15.15%, a half compared to 34.88% in the before class. Table 9 shows that their distribution of CAs is more balanced and impartial after class.

Table 9. Learners' Corpus

	BC	%	AC	%
1	however (adversative)	34.88	however (adversative)	15.15
2	then (casual)	23.25	on the other hand (adversative)	8.33
3	finally (sequential)	16.27	also (additive)	6.06
4	nevertheless (adversative)	4.65	in contrast (adversative)	6.06
5	besides (additive)	4.65	to sum up (sequential)	5.30
6	also (additive)	4.65	first (sequential)	4.54
7	next (sequential)	4.65	finally (sequential)	4.54
8	first (sequential)	2.32	second (sequential)	3.78
9	for example (additive)	2.32	for example (additive)	3.03
10	in addition (additive)	2.32	third (sequential)	3.03

In view of Celce-Murica and Larsen-Freeman's study (1999), they underused causal CAs both before class and after class. In AC, casual type was not used at all as shown in Figure 1. Also, in both cases, they used adversative type 'however' the most frequently.

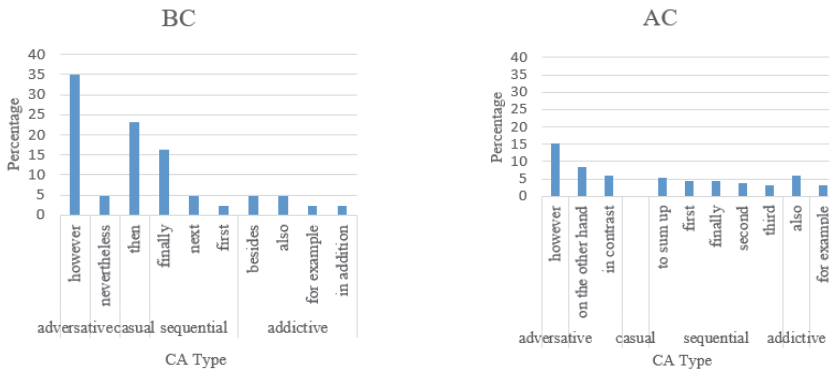


Figure 1. Comparison of BC With AC

Next, let's compare the experts' corpus: Non-native English expert and native English expert. Overall, their uses of CAs are distributed in an impartial way, not a biased way on one type even though the NNS' 'however' frequency is low when compared to NS'

unlike the use of the EFL learner's 'however'.

Table 10. The Distribution of Experts' Corpus

	NNS	79	%	NS	77	%
1	also (addictive)	14	17.72	for example (addictive)	16	20.77
2	for example (addictive)	8	10.12	however (adversative)	10	12.98
3	therefore (causal)	8	10.12	therefore (causal)	9	11.68
4	in addition (addictive)	6	7.59	thus (causal)	8	10.38
5	first (sequential)	6	7.59	on the other hand (adversative)	5	6.49
6	however (adversative)	4	5.06	furthermore (addictive)	5	6.49
7	consequently (causal)	3	3.79	finally (sequential)	4	5.19
8	next (sequential)	3	3.79	first (sequential)	3	3.89
9	on the other hand (adversative)	2	2.53	second (sequential)	3	3.89
10	second (sequential)	2	2.53	for instance (addictive)	3	3.89

In addition, as show in Figure 2, both NNS and NS used the same proportion of the four part CAs. It means that even though NNS do not have English as their native language, they are able to use CAs the same as English NS without any difference. Consequently, the result shows that non-native speakers acquire appropriate usage of CAs through English learning.

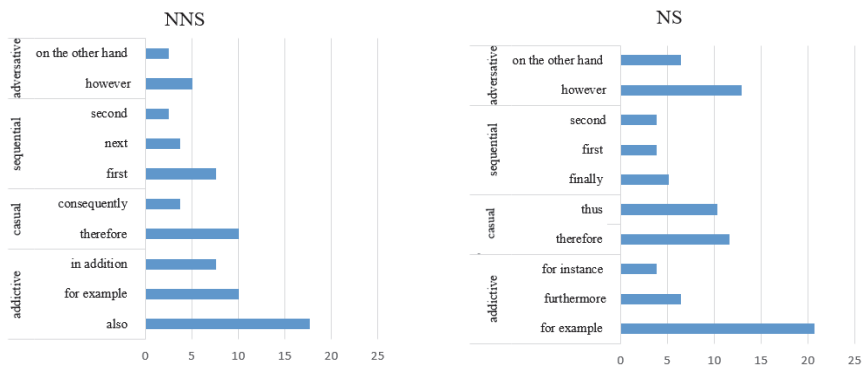


Figure 2. Comparison of NNS With NS

#### 4.2.2. EFL Learners' Misuse of CAs

EFL learners' most misused CAs are categorized into three as follows. As shown the Figure 3, 'so' is the most frequent misused CA. The three major reasons for the misused CAs is considered as unnecessary overuse in the initial position, the distinction between CAs and conjunction, and run-on-sentence.

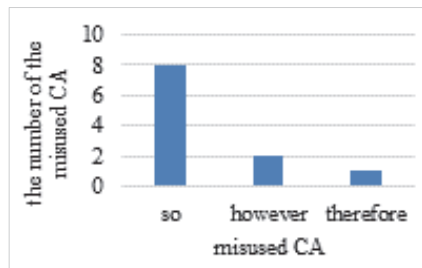


Figure 3. Misused CAs

First of all, Korean EFL learners' heavy use of CAs in the initial position is shown in the following examples. 'So' can be used either as an adverbial or conjunction, so it could lead to confusion.

- (1) The university students always move because each different class has its own classroom. **So**, There are various sizes of classrooms in university.
- (2) I think I understood the concept of goals when I was a middle school student. **so** I have concentrated on my goals since then.
- (3) Second, high school has a wide range of subjects like math, science, music, and physical education. However, university students take classes related to their major. **So** They study in detail subjects in one area.
- (4) High school students have their own classroom and a homeroom teacher; but, university students do not. **So**, High school students just stay in their classroom, and teachers come to them.
- (5) Some are hard to achieve from day to day. **So** I think that goals can be divided into three kinds.

The most interesting thing here is that as the overuse of CA 'so', it is the same case

with the conjunction '*and*' having the same meaning as follows.

- (6) I have to lose some weight to be healthy. **and** I have wanted to go to a water-park.  
 (7) I want to give them hope, positive energy, and good advice, so I will read many books and study many things to become a nicer teacher. **And** My final goal is to marry a man who I really love.

The reason there is heavy use of '*so*' and '*and*', having the same meaning, has to do with the EFL learners' interlanguage. Tapper (2005) states that overuse is a shared interlanguage characteristic. Tarone (2006) mentions that interlanguage is made reference to as characteristic of EFL learners who already have fixed their native language. Korean people frequently use Korean 'geuraeseo' having the same meaning as '*so*' to connect the following sentence. Kim and Rhee (2014) also demonstrate that Korean EFL learners overly rely on the word '*so*' because of their lack of register-awareness. Consequently, Korean EFL learners reflected by transferring into the second language, English, from the first language, Korean, and it leads to awkward and misused expressions in English.

Secondly, EFL learners seem to not understand the difference between the CA and conjunction: '*however*' and '*but*'.

- (8) They have to attend art, P.E, and music, too, **however**, (→but) in university, students only need to attend their majoring subjects.

'*However*' is a conjunctive adverbial which is followed by a comma whereas '*but*' is a conjunction which combines two sentences. It is incorrect to start a sentence with '*but*', especially in academic writing. '*However*' cannot combine two sentences because it is an adverb. It is not easy for EFL learners to distinguish between conjunctions and conjunctive adverbials.

Next, EFL learners create run-on-sentences by using conjunctions in the initial position of the sentences as in the following examples.

- (9) Though each of them belongs to other categories, **but** I think all of them are definitely important ones.  
 (10) Because I have to prepare for summer, **so** I do not eat dinner ~~until~~ to achieve

success ~~of~~ on my diet.

- (11) Because I ~~think it should be a~~ developed the ~~management~~ habit from a nearly age, ~~so~~ I ~~am~~ walking or stretch for an hour ~~to stay my healthy~~.

There are also a few errors using 'therefore' as follows. Milton and Tsang (1993) mention NNS learners do not use 'therefore' to connect sentences logically, and this study seems to support their theory.

- (12) They have to study all the subjects, even if they do not have any interest in them. **therefore**, Because there are many subjects to study, they have to stay at school for fourteen hours.
- (13) I have liked singing since I was young. **Therefore**, All my life I have wanted to sing a song in the street.

Some EFL learners' errors in the use of CAs are examined in this study such as '*In On the other hand*', '*In the conclusion*', '*In To sum up*'.

### 4.3. Position of CAs

Previous studies have shown that the most frequent position of CAs is the initial position. Granger and Tyson (1996) argue that Chinese EFL learners used CAs in sentence initial positions more frequently. Biber et al. (1999) mention, " ... academic prose, the most common position for linking adverbials is initial. Medial positions account for the second highest proportion of occurrences; final positions are rare." (p. 890). This current result supports the previous studies shown in Table (11). The following table shows the position of the highest occurrence of ten CAs in the corpora.

The occurrence of most CAs are placed in the initial position. Korean EFL learners used CAs in syntactically initial positions in sentences. They prefer the sentence medial position as the second highest proportion and the final position never used in sentences. It is interesting to note that Korean EFL learners placed 'adversative' CAs in the sentence medial position: *however* and *on the other hand*. And then, 'addictive' CAs are put in the sentence medial position next frequently: *also* and *for example*. The rest of CAs other than *however*, *on the other hand*, *also*, and *for example* are strongly preferred in the initial position by the Korean EFL learners.

Next, when it comes to comparing expert NNS and NS, there were some differences



Table 11. EFL Learners' Occurrence Rank

Occurrence Rank	EFL Learners	initial(%)	medial(%)	final(%)
1	however (adversative)	28.12	23	0
2	finally (sequential)	100	0	0
3	on the other hand (adversative)	82.4	17.6	0
4	also (addictive)	78.8	21.2	0
5	then (sequential)	100	0	0
6	in contrast (adversative)	100	0	0
7	first (sequential)	100	0	0
8	to sum up (sequential)	100	0	0
9	for example (addictive)	66.7	33.4	0
10	second (sequential)	100	0	0

Table 12. The Position of Experts' Corpus

	Expert NNS	initial (%)	medial (%)	Expert NS	initial (%)	medial (%)
1	also (addictive)	35.3	64.7	for example (addictive)	94.4	5.56
2	for example (addictive)	100	0	however (adversative)	63.6	36.4
3	therefore (causal)	77.8	22.2	therefore (causal)	55.6	44.4
4	in addition (addictive)	100	0	thus (causal)	37.5	62.5
5	first (sequential)	100	0	on the other hand (adversative)	100	0

even though both expert NNS and NS have the same proportion of the CAs as mentioned before. The following table shows that expert NNS tend to have even stronger preferences for the sentence initial position than the expert NS. Only 'also' and 'therefore' are positioned in both initial and medial positions by expert NNS, with 'also' at the highest frequency whereas, the top frequent four CAs ('for example', 'however', 'therefore', 'thus') are placed in both the sentence initial position and the medial position.

This result seems to have some implications. Irrespective of either NNS or NS, the uses of CAs are no different among them as shown in the earlier finding. However, the

result shows that English native speakers' intuition on the position of CAs is not acquired easily. Shaw (2009) argues that the disability of manipulation in the position of CAs means less skill. The data, however, shows that positioning of the CAs is not acquired through learning but is inborn. Expert NNS place the CAs in the initial position even more frequently than expert NS as shown in table 12. The distribution of expert NS' CAs is more widely dispersed while that of expert NNS CAs is conversed in some initial positions and a few medial positions are even void. In other words, in spite of expert NNS, it seems very difficult to develop enough proficiency to deal with CAs in diverse positions because they are not English native speakers.

## 5. Conclusion

The current study demonstrates in view of the two categories: EFL learners and English experts. The EFL learners' ability to choose appropriate CAs in academic writing have improved in English class through repetitive teaching and practice. As their skills to use proper CAs have improved, their writings have become well-organized and well-developed paragraphs and essays.

EFL learners used the adversative type the most frequently in both BC and AC. After class, the frequency ratio of the sequential type increased the most. It seems they were more easily able to understand and acquire how to use the sequential type. Also, as their proficiency developed, they were able to use CAs in a more balanced and impartial way than before class.

Next, the finding of this study shows that NNS and NS experts' corpus did not show much difference in using CAs even though they have different interlanguage. Furthermore, experts' finding shows that both NNS and NS used CA types with no significant differences. The implication is that the competence in use of CAs is able to improve and develop through proper learning and practice.

In terms of the CA types used, the learners' corpus had more gaps among CAs than the experts' corpus. EFL learners heavily used the adversative type to express differences or alternatives between information, whereas, experts do not heavily lean to one side. Regardless of the experts' interlanguage, experts used the CA types with a more balanced distribution. Both NNS and NS used the same occurrence in the four part CAs. It implies that although English for NNS does not their native language, they enable English CA to

use the same CAs as English NS without any difference. Therefore, this result shows that non-native speakers are able to acquire appropriate usage of CAs through English learning.

As for the position of CAs, EFL learners preferred CAs in the sentence initial position the most, and the second highest frequency is the medial position, and final position is not shown in this present study. However, the most remarkable thing in terms of the position of CAs is that there were some differences between NNS and NS experts. Although both NNS and NS experts have the same proportion in the use of the CAs, NNS experts prefer the sentence initial position more than the NS experts. NNS experts used only two CAs ('also' and 'therefore') in both the initial and medial positions while NS experts used the highest frequent four CAs ('for example', 'however', 'therefore', 'thus') in both positions.

This finding appears to have implications. The use of CAs for English experts regardless of NNS or NS shows no differences among them. However, this study shows that English native speakers have intuition on the position of CAs and seem to not be acquired easily through learning and practice but rather to be inborn.

In conclusion, the use of CAs was developed as the result of learning and practice and NNS experts used the CAs in the same proportion as NS experts. However, although interlanguage seems to not affect the acquisition of CAs, this study shows it has an impact on the detailed and subtle parts in academic English writing. As EFL learners overused *so* unnecessarily in the initial position as the effect of the Koreans' mother tongue, so NNS experts heavily preferred the initial position of CAs as second language learners.

It is suggested for more practical teaching that EFL learners should be taught in two more aspects: the variants of the positions and the usage of the , (comma) and ; (semicolon). First, EFL learners should be taught the variants of the positions as well as the rule of the CAs. For example, *however* in the medial position is to emphasize the subject in the sentence: *Our finding, however, differed from those of June* (*Our result is emphasized*). *Our finding differed, however, from those of June* (*Our finding differed is emphasized*). Next, they should be taught the usage of the , (comma) and ; (semicolon). For example, *Today was warm, however everyone wore long pants* is incorrect and should be *Today was warm; however, everyone wore long pants*. It should be taught that comma means just a pause not end of the clause. A ; (semicolon) or . (period) is appropriate as an explanation of punctuation usage. Koh (2014) mentions that helping EFL learners discover their

weaknesses and strengths and overcome difficulties during their second language learning is an important role as an educator. Therefore, this study might be a trigger for EFL learners to learn English writing.

The limitations of the current study is the size of the corpora. For future research, larger scale corpus-based studies on EFL learners' academic writings and NNS and NS experts' articles should be performed to have more comprehensive findings in the academic writing.

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