



The use of result-linking adverbials in argumentative essays by Indonesian EFL students

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Understanding the use of result-linking adverbials in writing argumentative essays is crucial for both educators and EFL learners. However, EFL learners often struggle with the appropriate usage. Limited research has examined how Indonesian EFL learners employ these linking adverbials in argumentative writing. This study investigates the frequency, positional distribution, and functional usage of result-linking adverbials in argumentative essays written by Indonesian EFL Learners. It adopts a qualitative descriptive approach, analyzing 50 essays (each 200-300 words) from the ICNALE corpus, authored by Indonesian EFL students at the B1_1, B1_2, and B2 proficiency levels. The essays address two standardized topics: part-time job for college students and smoking bans in restaurants. The data were analyzed with respect to result-linking adverbial types (so, therefore, hence, thus, consequently, and as a result), frequency, syntactic position (initial, medial, and final), and functional roles (e.g., concluding and cause-and-effect relationships). The findings revealed a predominance of “so” primarily in sentence-initial position, indicating overreliance on the informal register. Most result-linking adverbials were placed in the sentence-initial position, whereas “thus” was predominantly found in the sentence-medial position. Indonesian EFL students tended to use result-linking adverbial to draw conclusions rather than to indicate consequences or express cause-and-effect relationships. Habit formation, first language interference, and instructional practices are identified as potential factors affecting their usage of result-linking adverbials in argumentative writing. The results underscore the need for targeted pedagogy that emphasizes register-appropriate use of linking adverbial and provides explicit instruction on their syntactic positioning.

Keywords: Result-Linking Adverbials, Argumentative Essays, Indonesian EFL Students

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INTRODUCTION

Linking adverbials, also known as adverbial conjunctions, play a crucial role in connecting ideas and clauses within or between sentences (Biber et al., 1999). They establish logical relationship between these ideas – such as cause and effect, contrast, addition, and sequence – thereby enhancing coherence and cohesion in writing (Liu, 2008). According to Gao (2016) adverbials serve as cohesive devices that convey the structure of an argument and influence the reader’s interpretation of a text. Halliday and Hasan (1976) also emphasized cohesion as a critical textual factor in effective writing. Linking adverbials are typically placed at the beginning or in the middle of a sentence and are separated by a comma or a semicolon, depending on the degree of separation required (Biber et al., 1999).

The term *linking adverbials* varies depending on the textbook reference consulted. [Háľková \(2005\)](#) noted that terminology related to linking devices differs significantly across sources and that there is a lack of consistency. She also pointed out that grammar books use a variety of terms, including “*logical connectors*,” “*connective adverbs*,” “*discourse makers*,” “*conjunctive expressions*,” among others. [Quirk et al. \(1985\)](#) use the term: “*conjunctive adjuncts*,” whereas, Liu (2008) and [Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman \(1999\)](#) refer to them as “*conjunctive adverbials*.” Although these terms are similar in meaning to some extent, the present study adopts the term *linking adverbials* (LAs), following [Biber et al. \(1999\)](#), who define them as devices that “make the semantic connection between spans of discourse of varying length” ([Biber et al., 1999](#)).

The researchers have two main reasons for this choice: first, the word *linking* is more straightforward and generally more familiar to readers than the term *conjunct*, as observed by [Biber et al. \(1999\)](#) and [Ha \(2016\)](#); and second, the term *adverbials* is preferred over *adverb* because it is more inclusive, encompassing multi-word linking devices, such as, *on the other hand*, *in contrast*, *as a result*, etc. ([Biber et al., 1999](#)).

[Biber et al. \(1999\)](#), whose classification is adopted in the practical part of this study, distinguish several general semantic categories, as shown in [Table 1](#): Linking Adverbials Categorization.

TABLE 1 | Linking Adverbials Categorization

No.	Categories	Definition	Examples
1.	Enumeration and addition	Enumeration refers to listing pieces of information. <i>Addition</i> involves linking themes of points to the discourse.	First, second, for a start, and to conclude equally, likewise, furthermore, moreover, and in addition
2.	Summation	Summation shows that a unit of discourse concludes or summarizes the preceding information.	Altogether, in sum, in short, to sum up, in conclusion
3.	Apposition	Apposition presents the second unit of discourse as a restatement or example of the first.	Namely, e.g., for example, for instance, etc.
4.	Result/inference	Result-linking adverbials indicate that the second unit of discourse is a result or consequence (either logical or practical) of the preceding discourse.	Then, as a result, so, thereby, therefore, in other words, thus,
5.	Contrast/concession	This category signals either a contrast between different discourse units or a concessive relationship, showing a distancing from the preceding idea.	However, yet, in fact, instead, of course, in contrast, etc.
6.	Transition	Transition markers indicate an interruption or shift from the preceding discourse, often moving to a tangential topic.	incidentally, now, and subsequently.

Distinguish linking adverbials (Las) from other conjunctions or linking words is a critical initial step in this study, as the research focuses solely on LAs. This task can be challenging because, as previously discussed, different scholars offer varying terminologies and classifications. In this study, it is necessary to clarify the distinction between LAs and conjunctions (both coordinators and subordinators). According to [Liu \(2008\)](#), the primary feature that differentiates LAs from conjunctions is that LAs connect a broader range of discourse semantically, whereas conjunctions typically operate at a smaller syntactic level, namely below the clause level. [Liu \(2008\)](#) also noted that in certain limited cases, it can be difficult to distinguish between LAs and conjunctions, particularly with items such as *so* and *yet*. [Biber et al. \(1999\)](#) also address this issue, stating that coordinators can sometimes be closely associated with LAs.

The following examples illustrate this point:

(A) A bus strike was on, so we had to go by taxi.

(B) He wanted to avoid the rush hour, so he took the early train.

(C) The mill could be sold off, so providing much-needed capital.

(D) This may make the task seem more accessible and so increase self-confidence.

According to the examples above, in sentences (A) and (B), “*so*” function as a linking adverbial because it connects two sentences and conveys a semantic cause-and-effect relationship. In other words, “*so*” serves as an indicator that marks the following clause as the result of the preceding one. In examples (C) and (D), however, “*so*” functions differently; it guides readers to perceive a causal relationship between the two clauses, but in these cases, “*so*” acts as a

coordinating conjunction connecting two clauses to indicate the consequence or result of the action.

Numerous corpus-based studies have examined the use of linking adverbials by non-native speakers ([Aziz & Nuri, 2021](#); [Hua, 2021](#); [Kao & Chen, 2021](#); [Nan, 2020](#); [Sungran Koh, 2021](#); [Wang, 2022](#); [Yanti & Basthomi, 2019](#)). The data for these studies were collected primarily in the form of essays. ([Aziz & Nuri, 2021](#); [Sungran Koh, 2021](#); [Wang, 2022](#); [Yanti & Basthomi, 2019](#)). For instance, research conducted by [Sungran Koh \(2021\)](#) compared the use of linking adverbials among native speakers, non-native English experts, and non-native Korean speakers. The study found that the English proficiency level of L2 learners significantly influenced their use of linking adverbials in writing. Notably, the study revealed that non-native English experts and native English speakers did not differ substantially in their use of linking adverbials, despite some minor interlanguage differences.

The researchers identified a study narrowly focused on conjunctive adverbials conducted by [Leedham and Cai \(2013\)](#). Their research examined the influence of textbooks on the selection of conjunctive adverbials (CAs) in academic writing. Based on the data analyzed, the study revealed Chinese students' preference for using certain conjunctive adverbials (specifically, nine CAs that emerged as keywords) and found that three of these were categorized as informal when used in academic writing. The study also highlighted a tendency among students to use "however" and "therefore" at the beginning of the sentence. Additionally, the researchers identified previous studies that discussed the positioning of conjunctive adverbials within sentences ([Janulienė & Dziedravičius, 2015](#); [Leedham & Cai, 2013](#); [Malichatun & Hardjanto, 2020](#); [Sungran Koh, 2021](#); [Yong-Yae Park, 2013](#)). Regarding syntactic patterns, [Phoocharoensil \(2017\)](#) identified several patterns of the use of *Las*, particularly concerning "so" and "therefore." "So" typically functions as a coordinating conjunction placed after a comma, while "therefore" predominantly follow two patterns, i.e., "therefore, S + V" and "therefore, S+V." Similarly, "thus," follows the patterns: "thus, S+V" and "thus, S+V."

The syntactic forms of result-linking adverbials can be categorized into single-word adverbs and prepositional phrases ([Phoocharoensil, 2017](#); [Yin, 2016](#)). Research by [Malichatun and Hardjanto \(2020\)](#) found that single-word forms dominate the use of conjunctive adverbials compared to phrase forms. According to [Halliday and Hasan \(1976\)](#), conjunctive adverbials can take three forms: adverbs, compound adverbs, and prepositional phrases. Similarly, [Leláková and Šavelová \(2020\)](#) noted that single adverbs are most commonly used in conversational and academic writing, whereas academic articles often favor the use of prepositional phrases as linking adverbials.

The results of the semantic classification of linking adverbials, based on the literature review, are varied. Some researchers have noted that the use of linking adverbials can be influenced by the type or genre of the text ([Biber et al., 1999](#)), whereas [Kao and Chen \(2021\)](#) argued that genre and

time do not significantly influence the distribution of CAs in texts. Research conducted by [Pipatanusorn and Wijitsopon \(2019\)](#) and [Malichatun and Hardjanto \(2020\)](#) found that the adversative category was the most frequently used, while the causal category was the least used in scientific articles. Conversely, [Yanti and Basthomi \(2019\)](#) found that causal categories often appeared in undergraduate students' articles. Based on their interview results, causal categories were preferred because they are perceived as simple and easy to use.

Similarly, other studies have revealed the result-linking adverbials are the most frequently employed in EFL students' academic essays, followed by additive and adversative categories ([Oktavianti & Sarage 2022](#)). [Feng and Choe \(2016\)](#) found that Chinese English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners tended to overuse causal and sequential linking adverbials in argumentative essays, often relying on a limited range of prefabricated pattern. On the other hand, research by [Aziz and Nuri \(2021\)](#) found that the sequential and additive CAs appeared most frequently in the essays of Iraqi students. Furthermore, [Hua \(2021\)](#) and [Kao and Chen \(2021\)](#) found that listing linking adverbials were most frequently used by Chinese EFL learners. Research conducted by [Nan \(2020\)](#), which adopted the theoretical framework of [Biber et al. \(1999\)](#), and supported by [Wang \(2022\)](#), also found that enumeration and additive linking adverbials commonly appeared in Chinese L2 writing.

However, EFL learners often encounter difficulties in using linking adverbials. A common issue is the tendency to either overuse or underuse certain adverbials. The use of conjunctions has long been a source of difficulty for EFL learners, with the use of "besides" as a conjunction proving particularly troublesome ([Chen, 2006](#); [Yeung, 2009](#)). Regarding Asian learners of English, [Ha \(2016\)](#) investigated the use of conjunctive adverbials in Korean EFL students' writing and found that Korean EFL students tended to overuse additive and sequential conjunctive adverbials (CAs). Similarly, [Chen \(2006\)](#) compared 23 final papers written by Taiwanese EFL students to published papers in TESOL-related journals and found that, at the word level, students' writing exhibited a slight overuse of connectors. Furthermore, qualitative findings revealed that some learners misused particular CAs, such as *besides* and *hence* ([Yeung, 2009](#)).

The researchers also identified studies specifically discussing result-linking adverbials, notably those conducted by [Phoocharoensil \(2017\)](#) and [Dutra et al., \(2019\)](#). [Phoocharoensil \(2017\)](#) found that "thus" was the most frequently used result-linking adverbial in textbooks, followed by "therefore" and "hence", respectively, while "so" was the least frequent. In addition, over 90% of result-linking adverbials in academic written English were found to occur in the medial position. Similarly, studies by [Dutra et al. \(2019\)](#), [Nakayama \(2021\)](#), [Ryoo \(2007\)](#), and [Ahmad and Wey \(2020\)](#) revealed that "so" was the most commonly used result-linking adverbial in Brazilian EFL students' essays, followed by "therefore", "thus", "hence", and "as a result". [Ahmad and Wey \(2020\)](#) did not discuss why so frequently

appeared as a causal linking adverbial in Malaysian students' argumentative essays. Quantitative findings confirmed that EFL students tended to overuse "so" and underuse "therefore" compared to native corpora (Dutra et al., 2019; Ryoo, 2007). Brazilian students frequently used these linking adverbials in the initial position, whereas native speakers tended to use them in the medial position. Another notable finding revealed that Brazilian students employed result-linking adverbials to initiate topics, restate ideas, and mark conclusions, whereas in the native corpus, "so" was primarily used to express result and logical consequence (Dutra et al., 2019).

The proper use of linking adverbials is strongly associated with higher writing quality, especially in academic and professional contexts. When employed effectively, these adverbials contribute to the logical flow of ideas, enhance the persuasive of arguments, and enable readers to follow the writer's train of thought with ease. Conversely, the absence linking adverbials may result in fragmented, disjointed, or confusing writing, ultimately undermining communication effectiveness. Before undertaking the present study, the researchers conducted preliminary research and found that result-linking adverbials frequently appeared in the argumentative texts of Indonesian EFL students. According to Biber et al. (1999), result-linking adverbials such as "so," "thus," "therefore," "hence," "consequently," "as a result," "accordingly," "as a consequence," occur most frequently in academic writing and carry significant semantic value, particularly in cause-and-effect essays. These cohesive devices are essential for effectively connecting sentences or larger units of discourse. Thus, understanding the use of result-linking of adverbials in argumentative essays is crucial for both educators and EFL learners.

This observation motivated the researchers to investigate the use of result-linking adverbials in the argumentative texts produced by Indonesian EFL learners. Through a review of previous studies, the researchers identified a research gap: no specific study had yet examined the use of result-linking adverbials among Indonesian EFL learners using a corpus-based approach. To address this gap, the present study employed corpus data compiled by Ishikawa (2018). This corpus, developed initially by Ishikawa (2013), is part of the International Corpus Network of Asian Learners of English (ICNALE), which focuses on English learners from various Asian countries, including Indonesia. Importantly, ICNALE provides open access for researchers, facilitating comprehensive analyses.

Based on the background and the findings of prior research, the researchers formulated two research questions to guide the investigation.

1. What forms of result-linking adverbials are used by Indonesian EFL learners in writing argumentative texts?
2. How do Indonesian EFL learners use result-linking adverbials in argumentative texts?

METHODS

This study employed a qualitative descriptive analysis of students' argumentative essays, utilizing an Asian EFL learners' corpus that includes first- to fourth-year college students majoring in social sciences, humanities, sciences and technology, and life sciences. The corpus provides data from EFL students across various Asian countries, including Taiwan, China, Japan, Korea, Hong Kong, the Philippines, Thailand, Indonesia, Singapore, and Pakistan. This research specifically focused on analyzing the use of result-linking adverbials in argumentative texts written by Indonesian students. The ICNALE corpus provided 200 essays written by Indonesian students. For this study, 50 argumentative essays were selected for analysis. The sample consisted of essays written by students who had achieved B1_1 (Threshold; Lower), B1_2 (Threshold; Upper), or B2 (Vantage) levels based on the CEFR classification. According to the Council of Europe (2020), learners at the B level are capable of writing argumentative essays with logical connections. Each selected essay ranged from 200 to 300 words, focusing on two common topics ("part-time jobs for college students" and "smoking bans in restaurants"), contributing a total of 11,567 tokens. Learners were given 20 to 40 minutes to complete their essays using Microsoft Word. While the use of a spell checker was permitted, the use of external references was prohibited (Ishikawa, 2013).

Data Collection

The learners' written essays were digitized and provided in text (.txt) file format. The corpus was accessible to the researchers after registration via Google Forms, through which they obtained a password to access the data. The researchers then downloaded the files from the website, acquiring a complete set of raw data, Excel mapping data, and text files grouped by country, proficiency level, and topic, table 2.

TABLE 2 | Summary of Current Learner Corpora

Selected essays	50
Word count	8.145
Token count	11.567

Data Analysis

In this research, the researchers employed AntConc (Anthony, 2024), a free concordance software, as a tool to analyze the usage of result-linking adverbials in Indonesian EFL learners' argumentative texts. AntConc version 4.3.1 (Anthony, 2024) was selected for its user-friendly interface and its capabilities for keyword searches and collocation analysis, which are essential for identifying and quantifying the use of linking adverbials. Based on classifications by Biber et al. (1999); Celce-Murcia & Larsen-Freeman, (1999); Liu (2008); and Quirk et al. (1985) the linking adverbials "so," "thus," "therefore," "consequently," "as a result," and "hence" are categorized as causal/result/resultative linking adverbials. These lists assisted the researchers in creating specific keywords

analysis using AntConc.

However, caution was necessary, as not all instances of “so” functioned as linking adverbials. Therefore, the Keywords in Context (KWIC) feature of AntConc was used to examine their usage closely. Instances such as “so far”, “so difficult”, “so that,” which function to connect phrases or clauses or modify adjectives, were excluded from the analysis.

The researchers also utilized AntConc’s collocation function to refine the analysis and examine the frequency and surrounding context of the linking adverbials. A collocation window of two words to the left and right of each keyword was set to observe adjacent words and better understand how result-linking adverbials were used. This method was particularly useful for assessing the contextual appropriateness of resultative adverbials within the texts.

The overall analysis was conducted qualitatively, focusing on the usage of result-linking adverbials. Examples from the texts were included to demonstrate their application, and the researchers assessed the appropriateness of their use in argumentative writing. The findings were

TABLE 3 | Overall Hit of Linking Adverbials Across Categories

No.	Categories	Occurrence	%	Examples
1.	Result/inference	55	35.03	So, therefore, hence, thus, consequently, as a result
2.	Addition	51	32.48	Also, moreover, furthermore, in addition
3.	Enumeration	31	10.75	Firstly, first, second, secondly, third, first of all, the last, lastly
4.	Apposition	12	7.64	For example, foe instance, in other words
5.	Summation	4	2.55	All in all, in conclusion, finally, generally
6.	Contrast	4	2.55	However, on the other hand, instead of, nevertheless
7.	Transition	0	0	So, therefore, hence, thus, consequently, as a result
Total		153	100	

Result/inference linking adverbials were found to be the most frequently used by Indonesian EFL learners in their argumentative writing, which was the primary focus of this study. Additionally, additive, enumeration, apposition, and summation linking adverbials were also identified in the learners’ texts, in descending order of frequency. However, this study did not find any instances of transition linking adverbials in the argumentative texts.

TABLE 4 | The occurrence of result-linking adverbials in Indonesian EFL learners’ argumentative texts

No.	Result-linking adverbials	Occurrence	%	Position
1.	So	45	82	Initial
2.	Therefore	4	7.2	Initial
3.	Thus	2	3.6	Medial
4.	Consequently	2	3.6	Initial
5.	Hence	1	1.8	Initial
6.	As a result	1	1.8	Initial
Total		55	100	

presented descriptively, supported by numerical data and selected sample texts to illustrate the effectiveness of cohesive devices. This approach aimed to provide a deeper understanding of how Indonesian EFL learners employ linking adverbials to enhance textual cohesion.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Biber et al. (1999) identified several categories of linking adverbials in both written and spoken English. However, this study found only six of these categories in argumentative texts of Indonesian EFL learners. Transition linking adverbials were not observed in the data. This absence may be attributed to a limited understanding of linking adverbials or transitional expressions, which learners might perceive as non-essential in argumentative writing. Table 3 presents the overall frequency of linking adverbials in the students’ argumentative texts for contextual comparison, while Table 4 details the frequency of result/inference linking adverbials used by Indonesian EFL learners.

We found that “so” was a commonly used result-linking adverbial in the argumentative texts written by Indonesian EFL learners. In most cases, learners used a single adverb rather than a phrase, with only one instance of a result-linking adverbial in phrasal form. This result supports previous studies (Leláková & Šavelová, 2020; Malictaun & Hardjanto, 2020), which indicate that EFL students tend to prefer single adverbs. In addition, the sentence-initial position was the most frequently used placement of linking adverbials in these texts. Only the adverbial “thus” appeared in a sentence-medial position.

So

In this research, linking adverbials “so” were found to have the highest frequency among result/inference markers, with 45 occurrences. All instances of “so” appeared at the beginning of sentences. Below are examples illustrating its use in students’ argumentative texts. According to Dutra et al. (2019), “so” serves multiple discourse functions: (1) expressing a result; (2) leading to a conclusion; (3) restating an idea or statement; and (4) introducing a topic.

(1) "Part time jobs can be helpful for college students. It can give additional income, experiences and build our skills. So I think it is important to have part-time jobs." (PTJ_015_B1_2)

In Example (1), "so" is used to draw a conclusion based on the preceding ideas. It functions as a linking adverbial that connects the benefits of part-time jobs with the writer's assertion. As a discourse marker, "so" guides the reader through the flow of ideas and signals a transition to a conclusion or significant point.

(2) Because it is pretty difficult from me to manage my time, and actually I am easily tired. Despite, I didn't have any goals in my major (accounting) like getting a good Final Exam mark or etc. I just doing all of this as usual. Take a part job like this just spend my time and myself into risks. So I absolutely refuse about this. (PTJ_020_B1_2)

Data (2) illustrates the use of "so" as a linking adverbial following the writer's explanation of reasons for disagreeing with part-time employment. Both examples (1) and (2) demonstrate that Indonesian EFL learners tend to use "so" in the sentence-initial position to conclude or summarize the preceding statements. Notably, in this study, "so" was often written without appropriate punctuation such as a comma or semicolon. Specifically, we found 24 instances where "so" appeared at the beginning of a sentence without a following comma or semicolon.

(3) In the part time job, the workers may not be late to come to their job. (3a) So, it forces the students as the workers to be on time in their job. Not only that, it also can develop the student's knowledge skill. The students can develop their knowledge when they are having a part time job. (3b) So, after getting lesson from the college, the students directly can apply it in their job. Furthermore, the students can use their time well, they can avoid from wasting the time, such as playing, shopping, and many others. And their time just for useful activity. (3c) So, having a part time job for the college students is very useful and important. And all the students in the college should provide their time for having a part time job. (PTJ_002_B1_1)

Revealed that "so" appeared three times within a single text. This repetitive use rendered the text somewhat ineffective, as each sentence appeared to function as a conclusion, diminishing the overall coherence. In this context, "so" served a resultative function in each instance. In Data (3a), "so" introduces a statement that expresses a consequence of the preceding idea – namely, that because students have part-time jobs, they are compelled to be punctual – thereby establishing a clear cause-and-effect relationship. In Data (3b), "so" is used to summarize or conclude the previous points, suggesting that the arguments related to discipline, time management, and the application of knowledge collectively support the view that part-time jobs are beneficial for students. In Data (3c), "so" connects the idea of academic learning with the practical application of that knowledge in the workplace, reinforcing the argument in favor of part-time employment. While using "so" to conclude individual points may be appropriate in

isolation, its excessive repetition within a short span can negatively impact the overall cohesion and coherence of the text.

(4) Working part-time doesn't mean we have to work while we are studying. We can work part-time when it's holiday. (4a) So, we don't waste our time with lazing around, not knowing what to do. With working part-time, we can get some activity to do and also, we can get money to lessen the burden on parents. Working part-time also will give us experience. However, later we will be looking for job to fulfill our needs. We can write our part-time job in our CV. (4b) So, it's important for us as a college student to have a part-time job. Although, we can't fulfill all of our need, we can learn to be independent. (PTJ_034_B1_2)

Data (4) demonstrates the use of "so" to introduce statements that directly result from the preceding information. In Data (4a), "so" suggests that because part-time work provides structure and activity, it prevents individuals from wasting time idly. The implication is that engaging in part-time employment leads to a more productive use of time. In Data (4b), "so" emphasizes the importance of having a part-time job, based on the previously discussed benefits. Here, "so" contributes to maintaining a logical flow within the argument, linking points such as avoiding idleness, gaining experience, and easing the financial burden on parents, all of which support the concluding statement. In this data set, "so" functions effectively as a linking adverbial that conveys resultative relationships between ideas. It articulates the consequences of part-time work, emphasizes its importance, and contributes to the coherence of the overall argument.

This research also found that "so" frequently collocated with subjects, including pronouns and gerunds. In addition, we observed that it often co-occurred with modal verbs following the subject. The presence of modal verbs after "so" is commonly associated with the specific function and meaning "so" conveys in argumentative contexts. context.

(5) "College students need more money if they need it, because sometimes that the college student's money that given from their parent are not enough to solve it. So, they will search a part-time job." (PTJ_001_B1_1)

When the modal verb "will" follow "so" in a sentence, it typically conveys a sense of future intention, prediction, or inevitability based on the preceding context. Data (5) shows that the use of "will" after "so" often indicates a decision or intention to take action in the future, as a direct result of the information provided before "so".

(6) Why part-time job? Because their study time can't be compromised with the regular job and they will need a part-time job that has unusual work time. So they can combine their studying with working in a part-time job. (PTJ_001_B1_1).

The use of "so" can imply a condition that leads to a logical conclusion, while the modal verb that follows often expresses the outcome of that condition. In Data (6), for example, "can" conveys the ability to balance studying and working, based on the preceding statements about the advantages of part-time jobs.

(7) You just spending your life, your money, and the important thing is you will spend much money for medicine if it going worse. So you should think twice for decide to stop smoking. Because we had dreams for our life. (SMK_020_B1_2).

Data (7) illustrates the use of “so” followed by the modal verb “should,” which indicates a recommendation or piece of advice grounded in the preceding discussion about the benefits of part-time employment.

The placement of “so” at the beginning of a sentence, functioning as a result-linking adverbial, serves several important rhetorical functions in academic writing. First, it emphasizes the forthcoming conclusion or result, signaling to the reader that what follows is a direct outcome of the previous information. Second, beginning a sentence with “so” contributes to the clarity of the logical flow, clearly indicating a consequential relationship between ideas. Third, it often functions to summarize or encapsulate prior points, thereby reinforcing the main argument or conclusion.

Therefore

In this study, “therefore” appeared only four times across 50 argumentative texts, with two occurrences found in texts written at the B2 proficiency level. One instance of “therefore” occurred at the beginning of a sentence without a following comma. In all cases, “therefore” was positioned either before the subject or at the very beginning of the sentence, preceding any obligatory syntactic elements. No instances of “therefore” were found in sentence-medial or sentence-final positions in this dataset.

(8) When teenagers were high school students, they have less responsibility, less self-dependency, and they are still living in their comfort zone. Therefore, as soon as they step into college life, they have stepped into adulthood as well. (PTJ_178_B2).

In Data (8), “therefore” functions to signal a logical conclusion derived from the preceding statements. The writer describes a scenario in which high school students experience limited responsibility and remain within their comfort zones. The transition to college is then presented as a significant shift, requiring increased maturity and independence. In this context, “therefore” effectively indicates that the challenges of adapting to college life result directly from the lack of responsibility and self-reliance developed during high school. As a formal linking adverbial, “therefore” is appropriately used in this context, aligning with the academic tone typical of argumentative or analytical writing. In this example, “therefore” is placed in the sentence-initial position, preceding the adverb and subject.

(9) In cigarette smoke can cause heart disease, stroke and so forth. Therefore, we recommend active smokers to reduce smoking in their consumption. because cigarettes are very harmful passive smokers who get swept up in the cigarette. (SMK_014_B1_1)

The linking adverbial “therefore” signals a logical conclusion drawn from the preceding statements. In this case, the writer outlines the negative health effects of

cigarette smoke and recommends that active smokers reduce their consumption. In Data (9), “therefore” effectively indicates that the recommendation is a direct consequence of the health risks associated with smoking. While “therefore” is a formal linking adverbial appropriate for academic writing, its use in this instance is somewhat inconsistent with the more informal tone of the surrounding text. Expressions such as “and so forth” and “be fined” contribute to a casual tone that may not align with the conventions of formal argumentative writing. In terms of syntactic placement, “therefore” appears immediately before the subject, which is typical in formal writing. Its use here establishes a clear causal relationship between the health risks of cigarette smoke and the suggested course of action. From a pragmatic perspective, “therefore” not only conveys logical consequence but also implies a sense of obligation or necessity. The student is not merely offering a suggestion but rather asserting that reducing cigarette consumption is a necessary response to the identified health concerns.

Consequently

The adverbial “consequently” occurred only two times in this study, both times in sentence- initial positions, followed by comma and the structure Subject + modal Verb.

(10) The first reason is because it can break focus of students in studying. The second reason it is so difficult to balance both of them - studying and working. Consequently, one of them will become victim. (PTJ_004_B1_1)

In this example, the writer describes the challenges students face in balancing academic responsibilities and part-time employment, and then concludes that one of the two will inevitably be compromised. In Data (10), “consequently” effectively marks a causal relationship, indicating that the struggle to balance studying and working leads to a negative outcome. Its use enhances the logical flow and clarity of the argument by explicitly linking the causes and effects. Furthermore, “consequently” implies a sense of inevitability or necessity. The writer does not merely suggest a potential outcome but asserts that one of the two – studying or working – will be adversely affected. This modal certainty underscores the writer’s conviction and strengthens the argumentative stance. Despite the minor grammatical issues in the surrounding sentences, the placement and function of “consequently” demonstrate an awareness of formal academic discourse markers.

(11) As a college student, I don’t agree if college students have a part time job. Especially if the students who cannot manage their time well. because it only can break focus of their self in studying. Moreover, it is so difficult to balance both studying and working. Consequently, one of their choices will become victim. So, the students cannot study as well as usual. (PTJ_004_B1_1)

This idea builds upon the previous point, as the author continues to discuss students’ difficulties in managing their time, which results in an imbalance between academic and work responsibilities. If this idea is presented only once in a text, the use of “consequently” is appropriate. However, in

Data (11), “*consequently*” is used twice in reference to the same topic or as a repetition of the earlier point. This repetition may negatively impact the text’s cohesion and coherence by creating redundancy and disrupting the logical flow of the argument.

Thus

In this research, “*thus*” was found in two sentences, both occurring mid-sentence.

(12) Unlike students who work while in college. many work part-time for the student if the student is fond of the job. In working part-time, students also taught to work together within the existing work in the office, thus educating a student to become a good worker, because of course very different from the work. (PTJ_014_B1_1)

In Data (12), the term “*thus*” signals a cause-and-effect relationship. It implies that engaging in part-time work contributes to students becoming competent workers. “*Thus*” functions as a logical connector between the activity of working part-time and the resulting personal and professional development. The implication is that through collaboration in a real work environment, students gain valuable experience that supports their growth as effective employees. Although the placement of “*thus*” is grammatically acceptable, the original sentence structure lacks clarity and requires revision. For example, the phrase “*students also taught*” is likely missing the auxiliary verb “*are*” (i.e., “*students are also taught*”). Additionally, the clause “*because, of course, very different from the work*” is incomplete and ambiguous. A clearer construction would be: “*thus educating them to become good workers, which is very different from other types of learning experiences.*”

(13) As is the case with a full-time job, when another position opens up in a company, current employees may be encouraged to apply, thus moving up through the ranks. (PTJ_198_B1_2).

In Data (13), the adverb “*thus*” indicates a causal or consequential relationship between two ideas. In this context, it suggests that encouraging current employees to apply for an open position leads to their upward career mobility. “*Thus*” creates a logical connection between the encouragement to apply and the resulting career progression. It signals to the reader that what follows is a consequence derived from the preceding statement, thereby enhancing the coherence of the argument. It implies that such encouragement directly contributes to employees’ advancement within the organization. The placement of “*thus*” in the sentence is appropriate; it appears after the main clause (“*current employees may be encouraged to apply*”) and before the resulting clause (“*moving up through the ranks*”), which emphasizes the cause-and-effect relationship.

Hence

In this research, “*hence*” appears only once in the data, and it occurs at the beginning of the sentence, followed by the structure Subject + Modal Verb.

(14) Part time job give the students a lot of benefits, for example they become aware that when they get graduated,

they will work like they work on part time job. Hence, they will accustom with it and do not get shocked how hard the world of work is. (PTJ_035_B1_2)

In this context, “*hence*” indicates a logical consequence of the preceding statement. It links the idea that part-time jobs provide students with relevant experience to the conclusion that this experience facilitates their adaptation to the workforce. “*Hence*” effectively signals that the ability to adjust to the demands of professional life is a direct result of the experience gained through part-time employment. The placement of “*hence*” is appropriate, as it follows a discussion of the benefits of part-time jobs and introduces a consequential statement. However, the original sentence structure could be revised for improved clarity and fluency. Furthermore, the use of “*hence*” emphasizes that the writer considers the outcome—adaptation to the workforce—not only likely but also a significant advantage of engaging in part-time work during one’s studies.

As a result

In this study, the phrase “*as a result*” is identified as a result-linking adverbial, and it occurs once in the 50 argumentative texts analyzed. It is placed at the beginning of the sentence, preceding the subject.

(15) Many years ago, people were allowed to smoke everywhere. As a result, an entire generation of elderly are experienced lung, throat, mouth, and stomach cancers that were never experienced in history before cigarettes became popular. (SMK_004_B1_1)

The phrase “*as a result*” indicates a causal relationship between the two clauses. In this context, it connects the historical prevalence of smoking with the health consequences faced by an entire generation of elderly people who suffer from various cancers. “*As a result*” explicitly signals a cause-and-effect relationship, implying that the widespread acceptance of smoking directly led to the increase in cancer cases among the elderly. According to Pipatamusorn & Wijitsopon (2019), “*as a result*” often appears at the beginning of sentences in academic writing, where it marks the development of cause-and-effect information and serves as a sentence-theme marker to highlight results. This linking adverbial helps readers understand that the two ideas are not merely related, but causally linked.

Result-linking adverbials are instrumental in establishing cause-and-effect relationships between ideas. In argumentative writing, where the objective is to persuade the reader of a particular viewpoint, these adverbials effectively connect arguments and support claims, thus enhancing the clarity of the reasoning. In this research, result-linking adverbials were the most frequent in the argumentative texts written by Indonesian EFL learners. This finding aligns with previous studies, which also found that resultative or causal-linking adverbials are prevalent in EFL students’ academic essays, followed by additive and adversative adverbials (Oktavianti & Sarage, 2022). Similarly, Feng & Choe (2016) observed that Chinese EFL learners tend to overuse causal and sequential linking adverbials in argumentative essays,

often relying on a limited number of prefabricated patterns.

In detail, the result-linking adverbial “so” is the most frequently used by Indonesian EFL learners in writing argumentative texts. This finding aligns with that of Japanese EFL learners, who also overuse linking adverbials like “so” in their writing at a statistically significant level compared to native speakers (Ahmad & Wey (2020); Nakayama, 2021). The overuse and inappropriate use of the connective “so” by Korean EFL students in essay writing may be attributed to their unawareness of stylistic differences between spoken and written English, as well as the influence of EFL teaching materials (Ryoo, 2007). However, according to Biber et al. (1999), linking adverbials such as “so” are commonly used in conversational contexts by native speakers. Regarding the data collection process, Ishikawa (2013) noted that participants were given only 20–40 minutes to write the argumentative text. This time constraint may have influenced the students’ writing style, as they tended to write whatever ideas came to mind related to the topic. Additionally, students often ignored punctuation, likely because they were thinking in a manner similar to how they would speak. As a result, their writings had a more informal, speech-like quality. This finding supports Ryoo’s (2007) conclusions.

In this research, the researchers also observed instances of linking adverbial structures following modal verbs. Modal verbs combined with linking adverbials convey recommendations or obligations arising from the situations they describe. This combination strengthens argumentative writing by presenting evidence or reasoning, which in turn creates suggestions, actions, or consequences, allowing students to construct more persuasive arguments. Dutra et al. (2019) mention that the result-linking adverbial “thus,” when followed by a phrase, signals evidence in support of a previous statement. For example, “*Thus, it can reasonably explain why religion is losing its power to answer...*” (Dutra et al., 2019). Furthermore, the combination of “so” followed by “will” can express a logical consequence or lead to a conclusion, thereby restating an idea. However, there is no clear indication of a consistent use of modal verbs after linking adverbials, as this depends on the style and message the students intend to convey in their text.

“So” is a relatively simple and familiar term for students at the B1 and B2 levels. It is often one of the first linking words taught in English language courses due to its straightforward meaning and frequent use in everyday conversation. Students may find “so” easier to understand to use compared to more complex linking adverbials such as “therefore,” “thus,” and “consequently” (Ryoo, 2007). This helps explain why these more sophisticated linking adverbials are less frequent in argumentative texts written by Indonesian EFL learners. Indonesian EFL students may have a limited vocabulary, which can restrict their ability to use more advanced linking words like “therefore,” “consequently,” “hence,” and “as a result.” Consequently, they tend to rely on simpler terms, with “so” being more familiar to them. Although they may be acquainted with some linking adverbials, they might not have been exposed

to a wide range of options or the nuances of their usage (Ryoo, 2007). This limited exposure may lead to a preference for simpler or more commonly used linking adverbials.

Regarding placement, result-linking adverbials were most frequently found at the beginning of sentences. These adverbials are commonly used to indicate a cause-and-effect relationship, which is a fundamental aspect of argumentative writing. In this research, Indonesian EFL students predominantly use them to introduce conclusions derived from previous statements or arguments, making them a natural choice for linking ideas in their texts. This pattern contrasts with native speakers’ use of linking adverbials to express cause-and-effect in their arguments (Dutra et al., 2019). The initial position of these adverbials suggests that the writer directly introduces a result or conclusion in the text (Biber et al., 1999; Dutra et al., 2019). This finding is consistent with the observations of Nakayama (2021) and Ryoo (2007). Placing result-linking adverbials at the beginning of a sentence draws the reader’s attention to the causal or resultative nature of the statement, thereby clarifying the connection between arguments. Beginning a sentence with a linking adverbial may also enhance the flow of the essay, providing a smooth transition from the previous sentence and helping maintain coherence in the argument, thus guiding the reader through the writer’s thought process.

A specific analysis conducted by Dutra et al. (2019) found that Brazilian university students use linking adverbials differently from English and British university students, particularly in terms of syntactic position and meaning. Their findings revealed that linking adverbials such as “so,” “therefore,” and “thus” were primarily used in the sentence-initial position, which aligns with the findings of Malichatun and Hardjanto (2020). In contrast, native university students predominantly used to link adverbials like “so,” “therefore,” and “thus” in the sentence-medial position (Dutra et al., 2019). Dutra et al. (2019) suggested that this difference could be attributed to teaching instruction and first language interference. It may also be influenced by the formation of writing habits (Nakayama, 2021; Ryoo, 2007). Students may develop such habits based on their learning experiences as they practice writing. If they find that beginning sentences with linking adverbials is an effective way to express their ideas, they may continue to do so out of habit. This could be explained by the lexical priming theory proposed by Hoey (2005), which suggests that every word has tendencies toward certain linguistic features, and repeated exposure to these features in different contexts leads individuals to acquire such tendencies. Hoey (2005) further explains that lexical priming also applies to sentence positions: “*every word is primed to occur in, or avoid, certain positions within the discourse: these are its textual colligations.*” It is possible that Indonesian EFL learners were primed to use linking adverbials in the sentence-initial position and avoid other sentence positions. This sentence-initial phenomenon is commonly observed in non-native written in non-native written English (Ryoo, 2007).

CONCLUSION

This study investigated the use of result-linking adverbials in Indonesian EFL learners' argumentative texts. The findings support previous studies by [Dutra et al. \(2019\)](#) and [Nakayama \(2021\)](#), which suggest that the result-linking adverbial "so" is used most frequently, while adverbials such as "hence," "consequently," "thus," "therefore," and "as a result" are less common. The data indicate that single adverbs are most frequently used by Indonesian EFL learners, aligning with the results of [Malichatun and Hardjanto \(2020\)](#). The qualitative analysis revealed that many of the result-linking adverbials, particularly "so," "therefore," "hence," and "consequently," function to lead to a conclusion in Indonesian EFL learners' argumentative texts. Only "thus" and "as a result" were identified as conveying a sense of cause and effect. These findings are consistent with previous research, which found that result-linking adverbials predominantly serve to lead to a conclusion in academic writing by EFL students ([Dutra et al., 2019](#)). In native English corpora, the linking adverbial "so" is used to express result and logical consequence ([Dutra et al., 2019](#)). Indonesian EFL learners tend to place linking adverbials in the sentence-initial position. However, given the small sample size, these results should be interpreted with caution. According to [Biber et al. \(1999\)](#), starting a sentence with "so" or using it to restate an idea is more common in spoken grammar than in academic written registers. The frequent use of "so" by Indonesian EFL learners may suggest that these learners are unaware of the register restrictions associated with these linking adverbials. These findings directly address the research questions by highlighting the overall usage of result-linking adverbials by Indonesian EFL students. The study implies the need for pedagogical approaches that explicitly teach register-appropriate linking adverbials, possibly incorporating corpus-based examples into curriculum design. Further research is needed in specific language learning contexts to better inform classroom priorities, syllabus development, and the design of teaching materials.

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