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Functional Spectrum of a Discourse Marker *so* in Korean EFL Teacher Talk

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Lee, Jongmi. 2019. Functional spectrum of a discourse marker *so* in Korean EFL teacher talk. *Korean Journal of English Language and Linguistics* 19-3, 371-406. This study aims to explore diverse functions of a discourse marker *so* used by Korean teachers of English as a foreign language. In pursuing the purpose, it describes the recurring patterns of the ways the *so* is employed in teacher-led classroom discourse. For the data collection, naturally-occurring English classes taught by six Korean teachers of English were audio- and video-recorded. The recorded data were transcribed verbatim and meticulously analyzed within the framework of Conversation Analysis. The results yield four different types of functions that the discourse marker *so* performs: 1) showing response, 2) consequence, 3) topic-shift, and 4) elaboration. The multiple realizations imply that the Korean teachers of English use the discourse marker *so* with a wide range of functional spectrum. Based on the present results, further discussion will be provided.

Keywords: discourse marker *so*, Korean teachers of English, classroom discourse, conversation analysis, functional spectrum

1. Introduction

Discourse markers (henceforth, DMs) facilitate the hearer's interpretation of the utterance by both functioning as guides "in cognitive, expressive, social, and textual domain" (Maschler and Schiffrin 2015, p. 189) and constructing discourse coherence (Schiffrin 1987). In this respect, Carter and McCarthy (2006) argue that DMs play a significant role in spoken interaction.

Over the last two decades, DMs have been investigated under different labels such as discourse connectives (Blakemore 1987), discourse particles (Aijmer 2002), or pragmatic markers (Brinton 1996, Fraser 1999). Following Schiffrin (1987), the term, *discourse marker* is adopted for this study since it is considered to be not only "a purely functional term" but also "the most wide-spread" and "the most inclusive" one

(Fischer 2006, p. 5).

The multiplicity of terms mirrors diversified research approaches and conceptual distinctions chosen in the studies of DMs. A consequence of the different viewpoints is that there are significant disagreements as to which linguistic items must be considered DMs (Fischer 2006, Müller 2004). Notwithstanding the dissonance, the perspective that in spoken interaction DMs serve a number of discursive functions on different planes is widely acknowledged (Aijmer 2002, Fischer 2006, Schiffrn 1987). House (2013) asserts that the ability to employ differing functions of DMs can help interlocutors "to achieve a maximum of interactional functions with a minimum of linguistic and cognitive effort in a variety of different interactional positions" (p. 63).

In consideration of the significant role DMs play in everyday spoken discourse, a body of research has put its primary focus on the use of DMs by native speakers of a variety of languages (Schiffrin 1987). The use of DMs by non-native speakers has also begun to gain more attention "since researchers and educators have come to recognize the importance of the acquisition of communicative competence" (Liao 2009, p. 1314). Rongrong and Lixun (2015) explicate that there have been "empirical studies (usually corpus-driven) which analyze the non-native speakers' usage of DMs in a specific language context" (p. 67). Since DMs are highly context-dependent, their meanings can be diversely understood depending on the speaker's attitudes or the condition in which DMs are used (Aijmer 2002). It is therefore necessary to investigate and discuss the use of DMs reflecting speech context and speaker roles. However, the studies on DMs in non-native teacher talk for classroom interaction are still under-documented, though a number of researchers claim that DMs contribute to classroom discourse (Fung 2011, Othman 2010, Sinclair and Coulthard 1975). This is particularly true for English as a foreign language (henceforth, EFL) learning environments. In the EFL context, the opportunities for L2 learners to be exposed to natural spoken English outside the classroom are often significantly limited. Given that DMs are not a regular focus in the curriculum and not being explicitly taught in the classroom (Hellermann and Vergun 2007, Liao 2009, Müller, 2004), authentic teacher talk produced by second language (henceforth, L2) teachers who are in charge of L2 input can be the only target model for students. For this reason, an attempt is needed to elucidate the use of DMs by L2 teachers in the EFL language learning classroom.

In order to contribute to the area which have been little explored, the present study has investigated the DM *so* employed by non-native teachers of English in the Korean EFL classrooms. There are two reasons why *so* has been chosen for this study. First,

so is one of the most frequently found DMs in the current data. Its high frequency means that the teachers prefer to use the DM *so* in their classroom interaction. This finding is in agreement with the result presented by Fung and Carter (2007) that *so* is among the most frequently occurring words in Hong Kong pedagogical settings. Despite the typical high frequency in EFL classroom discourse, to my knowledge, there has been notably little research on the use and functions of the DM *so* uttered by non-native teachers of English. The teachers are an indispensable source of language input for students in the EFL context as pointed out above. In the same line, Nunan (1987) contends that the style of language used by teachers in the classroom context may exert a strong influence deeply on a student's ability to communicate in the real world. Thus, it seems necessary to carefully inspect the discourse marker functions of *so* in non-native EFL teacher talk. Second, according to Buysse (2012), earlier studies were mainly interested in prototypical instances of *so* as a marker of result or inference (Blakemore 1988, Fraser 1999, Halliday and Hasan 1976, Schiffrin 1987). In recent years, there have been research investigations on the functional diversity of the DM *so* in various speech context (Buysse 2012, Johnson 2002, Lam, 2009, Müller 2004, Rendle-Short 2003, Stygall 2001). While those studies rely on corpus data and reach beyond the existing scope of interest, they do not provide systematic and detailed accounts concerning the multi-functional use of *so* in a specific communication context. Therefore, a closer look at the DM *so* is required to uncover its functional spectrum in order to determine how the functions of *so* are conditioned by the situation and context.

This study employs Conversation Analysis (henceforth, CA) as a central methodology for analysis. A basic assumption of CA is that constitutive nature of social reality is incarnated in talk-in-interaction. It analyzes "the sequential structure of conversation to find the underlying discourse functions that participants establish" (González 2004 p. 10). The defining feature of CA that specifies in detail naturally occurring interactional practices can provide this study with a fine-grained machinery enabling to interpret and demonstrate the use and functions of *so*. Hence, it is hoped that the result of this investigation would allow for a better understanding of the varied functional use of the DM *so* as well as teacher discourse in the institutional EFL classroom context.

2. Theoretical Background

2.1 Formal Features of Discourse Markers

DMs can be defined as "overt indicators of (or windows on) ongoing metalinguistic activity in the speaker's mind" (Aijmer 2013, p. 4). It means that by delivering information with the speakers' communicative intention, DMs provide contextual clues regarding how to interpret what is being uttered or when to take the speakership. In this way, DMs serve as "cues or guides to the hearer's interpretation" (Aijmer 1996, p. 210) in the evolving progress of the conversation.

A myriad of studies on DMs have been conducted in terms of scattered starting points since 1980s. Their views differ in the inventory of lexical items to be taken as DMs. For example, Schiffrin's pioneering work (1987) on DMs includes *oh*, *well*, *and*, *but*, *or*, *so*, *because*, *now*, *then*, *I mean*, and *y'know* (p. 3). However, Fraser (1990, p. 383) excludes *oh*, *because*, *I mean*, and *y'know*. His core list has *now*, *well*, *so*, *however*, and *then*. As such, deciding whether a lexical item should be regarded as a DM or not has been a difficult issue because of varying formulations.

DMs are grammatically independent (Liu 2013). Fraser (1988) states that "the absence of the discourse marker does not render a sentence ungrammatical and/or unintelligible" (p. 22). The statement is in accordance with Brinton's (1996) that DMs are "syntactically detachable elements from a sentence" (p. 34). The deficiency of sematic content is also taken to be "a diagnostic characteristic of discourse markers" (Jucker and Ziv 1998, p. 4). Östman (1982) claims that a DM "does not directly partake in the propositional content of an utterance" (p. 149). Yet, as pointed out by Müller (2004), the deficiency does not allude to "a complete absence of meaning" of DMs (p. 6). Blakemore (1987) insists that linguistic expressions can present two different types of encoded meanings. One is conceptual meaning which has information on the representation of language entities and the other is procedural meaning which provides a constraint on processing the conceptual information. In this vein, Huang (2014) argues that DMs are examples of linguistic expressions which encode procedural meaning. It implies that although DMs do not add semantic denotation to the truth condition of the propositions, they guide the procedural relation between two neighboring utterances and thus, help the hearer to grasp the speakers' communicative strategies on a moment-to-moment basis in the interaction. In sum, DMs are a pragmatic class of syntactically optional and non-truth-conditional connective

expressions.

The pragmatic meanings of DMs vary depending on the interactional and situational context in which they occur (Aijmer 2013, Lam 2009). The contextual dependency becomes distinct when the attempt to use the surrounding context is made for the purpose of inferring the pragmatic meaning of DMs. This account can be compatible with the multiple functions of DMs that associate with a large number of pragmatic values reflecting the social situation and the relationships of the interlocutors. Schiffrin (2006) maintains that the different functions of DMs are considerably similar to their pragmatic meanings in that both are embedded within context. The polyfunctional property constrained by contextual variables is regarded as one of the distinguished features of DMs (Brinton 1996, Müller 2004).

Aijmer (2002) explicitly claims that native speakers are able to employ a DM appropriately with a given situation and differently with intentions in situ. Due to limited opportunities to be exposed to impromptu oral speech of authentic environments, however, it does not seem to be easy for L2 learners to correctly interpret or use varied functions of a DM depending on social contexts. Therefore, studies with regard to the functional variability of DMs need to be conducted in order to fully capture the multi-functional nature of DMs across various contexts and thereby, provide pedagogical benefits for teaching and learning English. To date, most prior research on DMs has used data which come from native speakers and very little attention has been given to the use and functions of DMs in a non-native English speaking context (Müller 2004). The current study aims to take a closer look at the use and functions of the DM *so* employed in the EFL institutional context. By highlighting the subtle discourse-pragmatic aspects of the DM, it would contribute to expanding the scope of DM studies.

2.2 Discourse Marker *so*

Most prior literature of the DM *so* has centered around its use for expressing inferential or causal connections (Blakemore 1998, Fraser 1999, Schiffrin, 1987). Schiffrin (1987), for example, argues that *so* indicates result at the fact-based causal relation and inference at the knowledge-based causal relation, primarily functioning on the ideational structure. Within Fraser's (1999) grammatical-pragmatic perspective, *so* is categorized into inferential markers in that *so*-prefaced clause should be interpreted as a conclusion drawn from the preceding. Recently, there has been some recognition

that apart from its prototypical use, *so* may produce other kinds of discourse connection. Johnson (2002) explores the use of *so* for prefacing questions and shows that *so* is used as a topic developer or a topic sequencer prefacing questions in order to gain the participants' attention on the interview agenda. Bolden (2009 p. 974) examines *so* used for "prefacing sequence-initiating actions" in everyday talk such as the telephone or face-to-face interaction. According to her, *so* as a sequence initiator is found in the situations where the action on the speaker's agenda has been relevantly pending.

All the above-mentioned studies deal with the DM *so* used in native English talk. A disproportionately few number of studies have been conducted on the use of the DM *so* in non-native spoken discourse. The existing studies mainly combine a comprehensive overview of findings on the DM *so* with a corpus-driven approach. Based on the corpus data consisting of oral interviews performed in English by Germans and American native speakers, Müller[1] (2004) describes ten discourse marker functions of *so* which are used at the textual level and the interpersonal level. All the functions are found both in the native speaker data and in the non-native speaker data. It is also discovered that the non-native speakers use the DM *so* approximately twice as less as the native speakers. Lam[2] (2009) delineates seven functions of *so* in the Hong Kong corpus of spoken English that incorporates various texts. The finding from the study indicates that *so* is used more frequently in the monologic texts than in the dialogue texts. Yet, there is one problem remains to be explained in the study since the corpus is composed of the spoken English in Hong Kong without the distinction of native speakers from non-native speakers. This point is not considered in Lam's (2009) study. More recently, Buysse[3] (2012) analyzes the interview corpus of Belgian native speakers of Dutch and native speaker of English. Ten different functions of *so* are found in native and non-native speech alike. Of interest is that the

[1] Ten discourse marker functions of *so* described by Müller (2004) are marking result or consequence, main idea unit marker, summarizing/rewording/giving an example, sequential *so*, boundary marker, speech act marker-question or request, speech act marker-opinion, marking implied result, marker of a transition relevance place, and unclassified instances.

[2] Lam (2009) lists seven functions of *so* including framing, linking, consequential, responsive, processing, turn managing, and unclassified instances.

[3] The discourse marker functions of *so* identified by Buysse's (2012) are as follows: indicating a result, drawing a conclusion, prompting, holding the floor, introducing a summary, introducing a section of the discourse, indicating a shift back to a higher unit of the discourse, introducing a new sequence, introducing elaboration, and marking self-correction.

Belgian EFL learners show a higher incidence rate than their English counterparts. The result stands in sharp opposition to that of Müller's (2004). To summarize, the prior corpus-based studies with foreign language learners demonstrate that *so* performs a multitude of functions in the learner practice. However, all the studies presented above are restricted to the elicited data from adult EFL learner-corpus and accordingly, have in common some limitations: First, they do not provide a detailed description of the differing functions of *so* relative to the situational context in which the functions are found. Second, the interview data cannot be regarded as naturally-occurring one since the method for collecting the data follows the experimental design.

There are few studies which have studied the DM *so* used by Korean EFL learners. Most of the studies have concentrated on specific domains of *so* with their own goals and perspectives: overuse of *so* (Ko 2013), *so* as pre-repair-initiator (Kim 2012), and varied discourse functions of *so* (Ahn 2015, Oh 2014). Among them, the studies conducted by Ahn (2015) and Oh (2014) are relevant to the present study. Using the findings of Müller's (2004) study as a baseline, Ahn (2015) examines and compares the production of *so* by Korean adult EFL learners and native speakers of English. In the study, it is indicated that the Korean speakers underuse the DM *so*, meanwhile, they employ the DM with more diverse functions, compared to native speakers. Oh (2014) analyzes monologic presentations and dialogic retelling activities by six adult EFL leaners at an advanced level of proficiency. Based on a functional category adapted from Buysse's (2012) and Lam's (2009) classifications, she offers eight functions of *so* which are frequently found in the spoken data. The relevant prior studies on the DM *so* concentrate on displaying the full range of functions achieved by the DM. However, since they both focus on the DM *so* in EFL learner corpus and do not make an attempt to examine the influence of a particular speech context on the usage of the DM *so*, how the use and functions of the DM *so* are related to the situation-specific contexts in which the *so* are employed still remains unanswered.

In a pedagogical setting, DMs have a crucial role since they can help teachers to structure their spoken discourse, enabling students successfully to interpret teachers' communicative intentions (De Fina 1997). In this line, Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) claim that DMs are indispensable in teacher talk for organizing discourse. Teacher talk is of great importance "not only for the organization of the classroom but also for the processes of the acquisition" (Nunan 1991, p. 189). The significance of teacher talk in the EFL context should be more seriously valued in that it can be probably the major source of the target language and provide learning opportunities for language learners

as mentioned before. Nevertheless, there is minimal research regarding the functional diversity of the DM deployed by non-native teachers in the EFL context. In order to fill the untouched gap, the present study explores how the DM *so* is used by Korean teachers of English in their real-time EFL class and attempts to provide the fine-grained analysis of the functional spectrum of the DM *so* by focusing on the relation between its use and the classroom context.

2.3 Conversation Analysis

CA is a unique research method of analyzing language and social interaction. As a subfield of sociology, it was started by Harvey Sacks, Emanuel Shegloff, and Gail Jefferson in the early 1960s (Wong and Waring 2010). Its key idea is that there is systematic structure and order at all points in conversational interaction (Seedhouse 2004). Following the idea, CA studies center on the organization and order of talk-in-interaction[4] (Psathas 1995). The notable point is that the organization and order is produced by the participants of situated interactions (Seedhouse 2004). From the CA perspective, language-in-use is the most significant data through which to unpack some foundational principles of how participants interact and jointly create sense-making practices for social action. For that reason, CA is interested in an emic reality to understand the insiders' views and requires naturally-occurring data rather than experimental or contrived one (Wong and Waring 2010).

When it comes to the analysis of talk-in-interaction, the principal task of CA is to "discover how participants understand and respond to one another in their turns at talk" (Hutchby and Wooffitt 1998, p. 14). A turn is the basic unit of analysis in CA. Each turn is composed of one or more turn-constructional units (henceforth, TCUs) (Sacks et al. 1974). The resources shaping TCUs are a word, a phrase, a clause or a sentence (Wong and Waring 2010). What matters of TCUs is that a TCU ends with a possible completion point of the turn-in-progress. This means that each TCU projects a transition relevant place at which a transition to a next speaker can legitimately occur. Another key unit in the analytic tradition is an adjacency pair, which is the minimal set of conversational turn-taking. It consists of two turns, which are "relatively ordered" (Schegloff 2007, p. 13). The former of the two turns is called as

[4] Talk-in-interaction is a more technical notion of conversation. The term is often used by CA researchers since CA studies deal with not only ordinary, mundane conversation but also particular, specific discourse in institutional settings.

a first pair part (henceforth, FPP) and the latter, a second pair part (henceforth, SPP). The adjacency pairs include a multitude of pair types such as greeting–greeting, question–answer, and offer–acceptance/ rejection and so on. On production of the FPP, therefore, the SPP comes from the same pair type and becomes "conditionally relevant" (Seedhouse 2004 p. 167). The adjacency relation between turns is central to the ways in which a speaker projects the relevant action to be accomplished by a next speaker and the next speaker displays his or her understanding to the just–prior turn. On this account, an adjacency pair is treated in CA as a basic building block for a sequence of conversation turns which action is enacted in a coherent manner. In all, CA studies commence the inquiry "with rigorous description and explication of moment–by–moment, turn–by–turn, sequence–by–sequence unfolding of talk" (Mori and Zuengler 2008, p. 16). By doing so, it provides the normative frames of reference which assist not only the interlocutors' but also the analysts' understanding of what kind of social action is attained.

According to ten Have (2007), "it (CA) works on detailed renderings of interactional activities, recordings, and detailed transcripts" (p. 9). The property makes it possible for the researchers in CA to both display the subtleties of actual interaction and illustrate contextual dimensions of language use. Further, the emphasis on the close observation of the specific behavior of interlocutors in interaction is what distinguishes CA from other qualitative approaches such as discourse analysis examining the structural features in the unit of discourse, or quantitative approaches using coding systems and statistical tools. Within the CA framework, this study seeks to investigate the deployment of the DM *so* with adherence to the sequential analysis of classroom discourse and teachers' orientation. Its main purpose is to unveil what functions the DM *so* used by non–native teachers may perform in the EFL language classrooms. CA would be a robust analytical instrument for identifying what the DM *so* does for real–time interactions between teachers and students in classrooms empirically as well as documenting how the DM *so* accomplish its functions rigorously with the social orders.

CA has now become increasingly accepted as an influential research methodology into second language use and acquisition (Kasper 2009, Markee and Seo 2009). Despite its growing importance, the application of CA to the classroom context is still in its infancy. No prior study has examined the functional use of the DM *so* in the language classroom using this framework. It is therefore hoped that the current study can provide a clear picture with regard to the situated functions of the *so* used by

Korean EFL teachers with higher resolution than those of most prior studies on the DM, thereby contributing to CA-informed language classroom research.

3. Method

3.1 Participants

CA studies strive for the use of audio- or video-recorded episodes of naturally-occurring interaction as their baseline data. Following the CA research paradigm, the data for this research come from the six video-recorded lessons at secondary public schools located in Seoul, Korea. The lessons were given by six different Korean teachers of English, all of whom are focal participants for the current study. All the six teachers have over ten years of teaching experience at school and continue their efforts for professional development. At the time of collecting data, they all were taking an official training program for in-service English teachers in order to acquire a TEE (Teaching English in English) certificate for their career advancement. To qualify for the program, they all met a list of admission requirements and scored over 80 out of 100 from the English oral communicative test conducted by three native English speaking interviewers. Given the oral proficiency assessment rubric of the training program to select trainee teachers, it is estimated that the six teachers are advanced-level speakers of English.

Most of the focal lessons lasted averagely 45minutes and were taught in English. The classes included diverse language activities, ranging from grammar or reading to conversation exercise. Each class was made up of approximately 30 to 35 students with varied proficiency levels. The participating teachers mentioned that in the traditional model of teacher-fronted instruction, they directly guided the classroom activities, introduced concepts, and got answers from students through elicitation. Accordingly, it was expected that the prevalence of teacher talk over student talk would be observed. This study primarily analyze the six teachers' naturally-occurring speech during their English-medium lessons, which would explicitly display the teachers' typical use of the DM *so*.

Further information is provided in Table 1[5]. Korean pseudonyms have been employed

[5] The data presented in this article is indebted to the study concerning the DM *okay*

to avoid any revelation of the participating teachers' identity.

Table 1. Description of Participants and Data

Teacher's Names	Gender	Age	Affiliation	Record Length	Students Profile (Grade, Gender)
Yoon	Male	43	Middle School	45 Minutes	3rd, Males only
Lee	Female	37	Middle School	45 Minutes	2nd, Males & Females
Kim	Female	36	Middle School	45 Minutes	3rd, Males & Females
Choi	Female	40	Middle School	45 Minutes	3rd, Males & Females
Park	Female	38	Middle School	45 Minutes	3rd, Males & Females
Cho	Female	37	Middle School	45 Minutes	3rd, Females

3.2 Data Collection

To minimize any effect of their awareness of the study and obtain their most authentic speech, the six teachers were not informed that their natural use of DMs was the research target. Therefore, they would not produce more or fewer DM *so* intentionally. As the presence of the researcher could possibly make the participating teachers and students feel uncomfortable and behave differently from their usual ways, all the classes were performed without the researcher's involvement. Before the classes began, two cameras were set up at the back of the classroom and recorded all the teachers' talk with accompanying their verbal and nonverbal behaviors. Through the video-recording process, students' corresponding reactions to the teachers' talk were captured. The reactions would be viewed as a demonstration of the students' understanding toward the particular functions of the DM *so* employed by the teachers.

3.3 Data Analysis

CA-based studies generally involve three interrelated stages: 1) collecting naturally occurring spoken data by means of audio- or video- recordings of episodes, 2) transcribing the recorded data in a verbatim protocol, and 3) analyzing the transcribed data. The current study follows these stages.

previously carried by the researcher. This table has been extracted from the prior study since the participants are practically the same.

After obtaining the recorded data, the initial transcription was done by a low degree of elaboration with a view to gaining a quick access to interactional episodes of interest in written form and decide whether the selected *so* has the status of a DM in the utterance where it occurs. For the identification process, Fuller's (2003) two criteria for DMs was adopted: One is that "if the DM is removed from the utterance, the semantic relationship between the elements they connect remains the same" and the other, "without the DM, the grammaticality of the utterance must still be intact" (p. 186).

The analytic procedure of data for this study was divided into three sub-steps. As the first step, a freeware multi-purpose toolkit named AntConc (Anthony 2014) was run on the transcribed data. The analysis presented six most frequently used DMs[6], yielding a total of 24287 tokens. Plus, it proved that there were considerable differences in the frequency of the six DMs[7]. Due to the observed differences in frequency among the DMs, the statistical significance of the DM *so* could be gauged. When the frequency counts between teachers and students of employing the DM *so* was compared, utterances from the teachers turned out to be the main source of the DM[8] under scrutiny.

The second step was to proceed with reading through the transcripts meticulously and, if necessary, viewing video-recorded data. While undergoing the process, the specific and recurrent functions of the DM *so* in the participating teachers' speech data were found. For distinguishing varied functions of the DM *so*, "the core functional paradigm of DMs in pedagogic discourse based on the multi-categorical model" developed by Fung and Carter (2007, p. 418) was adopted. Since the core functional paradigm[9] rests on the basis of pedagogic corpora, a British pedagogical sub-corpus (460,055 words in size) in CANCODE[10] and a Hong Kong ESL corpus (Lam and Wong 1996), it provides conceptual and felicitous descriptors to differentiate functional

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[6] The six DMs counted are *okay*, *and*, *so*, *yes*, *oh*, and *right*.

[7] The DM *so* represented 263 occurrences as the third frequent item following the DM *okay* with 612 occurrences and the DM and with 335 occurrences. The fourth frequent item was the DM *yes* with 158 occurrences. The DM *oh* and *right* showed 122 and 121 occurrences respectively.

[8] There occurs only one incidence of the DM *so* in the students' spoken data from six classes.

[9] In the paradigm, the British data from CANCODE plays "a more central role", with the Hong Kong data handled as "more exploratory and indicative" (Fung and Carter 2007, p. 417).

[10] CANCODE is the five-million-word spoken corpus developed by Nottingham University and Cambridge University Press (Adolphs and Carter 2013).

attributes of DMs for this classroom-based research. In the core functional paradigm, DMs used in pedagogic discourse are classified into each subset of the four primary functional categories. A brief overview of the classification scheme is as follows: 1) Interpersonal Category - marking shared knowledge, indicating attitudes, and showing responses, 2) Referential Category - cause, coordination, consequence, digression, and comparison, 3) Structural Category - opening and closing of topics, sequence, topic shift, and summarizing opinions, and 4) Cognitive Category - denoting thinking process, reformulation/self-correction, elaboration, hesitation, and assessment of the listener's knowledge about the utterances. Fung and Carter (2007) present the DM *so* in the two categories out of the four, the referential category and the structural category. More information as to the core functional paradigm is given in Appendix 1.

For the last step, sequences in which varied functions of DM *so* occurred were selected and analyzed within the CA framework. The extracted sequences are shown in the form of data excerpts in the following. For the purpose of offering a fine-grained description regarding how the DM *so* functions in a particular instance, the transcription convention developed by ten Have (2007; see the transcription convention exhibited in Appendix 2) is applied to the given excerpts. The participants' non-verbal conducts such as eye gaze, head nods, and facial expressions are included. It is because that they serve as a noticing device in distinguishing a functional use of the DM *so* from its other uses. Prosodic information of the DM *so* is added as it can provide significant information about the pragmatic meaning of *so* under analysis. The capital letter 'T' signifies a teacher and 'S' indicates a student in the data excerpts. Korean words are respelled in compliance with the Yale Romanization system along with their English equivalents juxtaposed in parenthesis.

4. Result and Discussion

The functional scope of the *so* embraces all the four above-mentioned functional categories, namely the interpersonal, the cognitive, the referential, and the cognitive. The findings prove that the discourse marker functions of *so* in Korean EFL pedagogical discourse are extended beyond Fund and Carter's (2007) suggestion that the DM *so* are subsumed under the two categories. In what follows, each section discusses a function accomplished by the DM *so,* situating *so* in the four categories respectively.

4.1 Interpersonal Category: Showing Response

In the language classroom, teachers are placed in the position of responding to student responses (Waring 2008). Responses from teachers have been referred to as teacher feedback. The feedback cannot be neutral due to its sequential placement immediately following student responses (Hellermann 2003). Previous studies point out that teacher feedback can be liking, accepting, rejecting, confirming, acknowledging, estimating, or commenting on the preceding student responses within the framework of IRF[11] structure (Nassaji and Wells 2000, Sinclair and Coulthard 1975).

The data of the current study manifests that by inhabiting the teacher feedback position of the three-part IRF structure, the DM *so* plays a role in implicitly confirming or acknowledging the adequacy of students' answers and introduces a question for a new IRF. Fung and Carter (2007) point out that DMs in the interpersonal category are used to indicate "shared knowledge", show "responses like agreement, confirmation, and acknowledgement", and express "the attitudes of the speaker and a stance towards propositional meanings" (p. 415). It is proposed in this section that this DM *so* should be included in the list for responsive markers since the *so* delivers teacher responses or reactions to the students' preceding production. Excerpt[12] (1) presented below provides a typical instance of the usage of the DM *so*.

Excerpt (1) [teacher Kim (14:15~17:30)]

01 T: okay, ((looking around the whole class)) first one. who is a volunteer?
02 Ss: ((students raise their hands))
03 T: (2.0) okay, ((making eye contact)) Dae-hwan, what's your answer?
04 S1: false=
05 T: =it is false, right↓. which part is false?
06 S1: (1.0) how to:: write a melody?=
07→ T: =((giving a quick nod of the head)) s::o↓what does the children, (.)
08 the child learn from Eun-ji?
09 S1: Korean alphabet?

[11] IRF is a three-letter abbreviation that represents a pattern of interaction between the teacher and the student: teacher initiation-student response-teacher feedback.

[12] For the identification of each excerpt, the last name of the teacher in question and the time reference (minutes and seconds) at which the relevant function of the DM *so* is observed in the lesson are provided.

10 T: it means how to?
11 S1: (.) uh...how to read? (2.0) how to read Korean alphabet?
12 T: how to re::ad, how to read Korean alphabet↓((smiley voice)) ok::ay?
13 S1: yeap.

In this excerpt (1), the class is reviewing the contents of a reading text. It shows that the interaction between a teacher and students is recurrently devoted to the IRF structure. Just prior to the given excerpt, the teacher issued the direction that for five minutes students should read the text silently and find answers to each question presented on the screen in the front of a classroom. In line 1, the teacher commences her turn with the attention-getting *okay* and asks students who would provide an answer for the first question. Then, a majority of students immediately react by raising their hands in order to show they want to answer. In the following turn, the teacher addresses S1, *Dae-hwan*, one of the students who raise their hands and asks him what his answer is. As soon as *Dae-hwan* generates his answer in line 4, the teacher provides the acknowledgement token, *right* with the fuller formulation of the preceding answer and restarts a new sequence by asking a further question as displayed in line 5. In the next turn, *Dae-hwan* presents his answer to the given question with the one-second pause. It is in line 7 where the teacher utters the DM *so* in her response turn and moves to a next question inviting a new IRF structure.

Seedhouse (2004) argues that "one key interactional property of L2 classroom interaction is that everything the learners say is potentially subject to evaluation by the teacher" (p. 106). Hence, it is significant to discuss how the DM *so* in line 7 can serve as the teacher positive feedback to student responses in the format of not offering explicit positive evaluation. According to Seedhouse (2004), since a positive evaluation from a teacher is given verbally or non-verbally in the L2 classroom, in which case no repair work is registered, the absence of verbally expressed evaluation can be understood as a positive evaluation. He adds that "if the learner production corresponds to that envisaged by the teacher, the subsequent teacher action may be a different prompt" (p. 106). Coming back to lines 7-8 of this data, a lack of repair and *so*-facing prompt for marking a new round of the IRF structure is observable. In this regard, it can be argued that by appearing in the feedback position shortly after the student's answer, the DM *so* signifies no additional account for repair work. That is, the DM implicitly indicates that the teacher confirms and approves the student's answer as a correct one and in the meantime, it signals by leading to a new question

that a new sequence is about to be made. This argument is evidenced by the teacher's non-verbal behavior followed by the DM *so* in line 7, *a quick nod of the head* which represents acceptance (Gumperz 1977).

Excerpt (2) provides a similar yet somewhat different environment in which the implicit positive feedback signal, the DM *so* occurs in a cluster with teacher repetitions.

Excerpt (2) [teacher Yoon (08:10~10:20)]

01 T: look at the picture. ah (1.0) he is wearing sunglasses. the sunglasses
02 are special, not ordinary. what is special (.) for theses sunglasses?
03 Ss: ((silence))
04 T: actually (.) he can see something we cannot see. can you guess the
05 name of these sunglasses?
06 S1: (.) x-ray sunglasses.
07 T: yea::h, x-ray sunglasses. ((pointing out the pictures)) take a look at
08 this picture. there is a guy on the right, right? but he cannot see
09 this car. (1.0) can you guess the name of this car?
10 S2: (2.0) °in::invisible car°=
11→ T: =invi::sible car, invi::sible car↓, so (.) these devices, or these items
12 are called what? can you guess?
13 Ss: (1.0) gadget?
14 T: oka::y↓, gadget, everyone repeat after me, gadget.
15 Ss: gadget.

In lines 1-2 of Excerpt (2), the teacher asks students what is the special function of the sunglasses the man in the picture is wearing. However, they provide no answer as indicated by a silent gap in line 3. Afterwards, the teacher provides additional information and gives the question again asking the name of the sunglasses in lines 4-5. Upon the student's answer of line 6, the teacher presents the affirmative token, *yeah*, moves to a new question once again, and urges the relevant response from students in lines 7-9. In responding to the teacher's question, S2 provides his answer in the following turn, but with no strong certainty as to whether his answer is correct or not as displayed in a two-second pause and his small voice. In the next turn of the feedback move in lines 11-12, the teacher registers the student's answer by means of repetition, and with the DM *so*, moves to a new question. As in the case of

Excerpt (1), the DM *so* appears immediately after the student' response embodied within the teacher repetition and prefaces a next question. Presumably, serving as a signpost for no repair work, the DM *so* projects the teacher's action of providing a positive evaluation in combination with teacher repetition and leads to a new sequence. What is noticeable here is that the teacher's repetition is pronounced slowly as well as plainly and terminates with a falling intonation. Based on his study as to the prosody of repetition in the feedback slot, Hellermann (2003) contends that "a set of prosodic cues used with teacher repetition in the IRF exchange emerges to accompany a particular discourse function: giving a positive assessment of a student response" (p. 83). The prosodic cues of positive assessment examined by Hellermann (2003) are in the following: "(a) rhythmical placement in synch with student response, (b) falling pitch contour, (c) mid-level pitch, (4) longer duration than student responses" (p. 88). Hence, the prosodic features of the repetition, *invisible car, invisible car* in line 11 can be regarded as another signal of positive feedback from the teacher and simultaneously, their co-occurrence with the DM *so* supports that this *so* signifies teachers' positive response to the preceding student answers.

This section provides authentic instances in which teachers deploy the DM *so* immediately subsequent to student response in the feedback move of the IRF structure. With the DM *so*, teachers implicitly express confirmation or acknowledgement, and draw a new follow-up question. The finding demonstrates that the DM *so* can act as a response marker in classroom discourse, performing the interpersonal function. With regard to the positive assessments in the teacher feedback turn, Schegloff (2007) asserts that "they are specifically designed not to project any further talk within-sequence" (p. 118). In contrast to the remark, Waring (2008, p. 584) argues that "in classroom discourse, assessment in and of itself does not automatically engender sequence-closing". This study confirms Waring's (2008) argument in that it shows that the DM *so* can be both evaluation-relevant and continuative within a turn.

4.2 Referential Category: Consequence

This section discusses the DM *so* by which teachers signal a resultative or consequential relationship between two adjoining utterances. The DM *so* indicates that the following utterance is the consequence of what is ahead of it. Fung and Carter (2007) situate this type of *so* in the consequence domain of the referential category

and claim that the *so* acts as an indexical sign to express discoursal connectedness. In conformance with the statement, the present study noticed that teachers utter *so* with an attempt to help students understand semantic contexts of causality. The authentic examples below are provided to complement Fung and Carter's (2007) conceptual framework.

Excerpt (3) manifests the function of the DM *so* under discussion which is commonly found in the current data. In this example, the teacher is asking questions for comprehension check-up and students are answering to the questions.

Excerpt (3) [teacher Cho (17:20~18:40)]

01 T: ri::ght. and what, what happened at the concert?
02 Ss: (.) they fell down.
03 T: they fell down from↑(.) heatstroke↓((looking around the whole class))
04 everyone, from heatstroke.
05 Ss: from heatstroke
06 T: al::right, good job. they fell down from heatstroke,okay, (.) why? why?
07 Ss: (2.0)
08 S1: they had been (.) standing in line (.) for (.) nine hours?
09 T: they had been standing in line for ni::ne hours (.) in hot weather.
10 wh::y they came to the concert so early? why?
11 Ss: (3.0)
12→ T: becau::se they wanted to get a good seat, they came very early. so (.)
13 they had to stand in line for a lo::ng time. and they fell, fell down
14 from the heatstroke. and (2.0) let's read and talk about this. these are
15 what we are going to do. (.) let's read number one together. number
16 one↑
17 Ss: we can discuss about the report.

In line 1, the teacher asks students what happened at the concert. In responding the question, several students answer, *they fell down*. In the subsequent turn, the teacher registers the answer but with a modification of adding a little piece of information, *from heatstroke* and makes her students repeat it. After the student repetition, the teacher encourages her students by saying *alright*, *good job* and successively, asks them a next question as described in line 6. As the teacher does not nominate a next speaker here, the floor for the next turn is open to everyone in the class.

Nonetheless, there is no response from students for two seconds as displayed in line 7. Line 8 shows that S1 generates his answer voluntarily. It is noteworthy that although it follows a two-second silent gap, the answer from S1 contains another utterance-internal pause and ends with the rising intonation contour. The prosodic features show that the student is not sure of the propriety of his answer. Soon after, in lines 9-10 the teacher suggests another way of answering with supplementary information and proceeds to another question. Yet, students fail to answer again as illustrated by a gap sign in line 11. It is lines 12-14 where by using the DM *so* the teacher explains that the following unit, *standing in line for a long time* is the result or consequence of the preceding unit, *they came very early*. The teacher seems to insert the DM *so* in an attempt to facilitate students' understanding of a consequential tie although the inter-clausal relation can be logically inferred by the resultative linking between the adjacent episodes even without *so*. In a word, the *so* performs a consequential function as a DM by making apparent a relation that is already furnished by its neighboring context.

One more example of consequence *so* is provided in the excerpt given below. At this moment, the class is learning vocabulary through proverbs.

Excerpt (4) [teacher Park (24:10~26:20)]

((The words, *deaf* and *blind* are presented on the screen.))

01 T: what does deaf mean?
02 S1: (.) cannot hear?
03 T: right, cannot hear. and what does blind mean?
04 Ss: cannot see=
05 T: =cannot see↓good. when you fall in love, you cannot see (1.0) any
06 thing good?
07 S2: (.) bad↓=
08→ T: =so love is?
09 Ss: blind.
10 T: yea::h, love is blind. good job. oka::y.

At the beginning of the excerpt above, the teacher asks her students the definition of *deaf*. S1 then gives an answer to the question. In the next turn, the teacher asks what *blind* means. As soon as her student presents its correct meaning, in lines 5-6 the teacher casts another question with a positive evaluation. The question is

presumed to be designed for students to intuitively think and make an answer. In responding to the teacher's question, S2 answers *bad* which the teacher is aiming to get. With the treatment of *so* of line 8, the teacher asks a question to receive an answer which enables to complete the target proverb and she embodies the consequential relation in connection with the preceding student answer. Here, the DM *so* makes explicit the resultative construction between separated yet semantically linked turns, serving as an indicator of consequence.

In this section, it is illustrated that teachers use the DM *so* for the sake of representing the consequential relation between successive events and mark the connectedness of the two propositional contents. The relation can be switched over to "a causal relation by using *because* instead of *so*" (Lam 2009, p. 362) while preserving meaning across a sequence of utterances. The interchangeability has been taken as a unique quality of consequence *so* (Lam 2009). According to Buysse (2012), this function of *so* has not been regarded as DMs in some studies (e.g. Stygall 2001, cited in Buysse 2012) since the resultative relation which the *so* represents is considered to pertain to not the pragmatic domain but the semantic domain. Meanwhile, a number of researchers classify *so* indicating result or consequence as DMs since it is both syntactically and semantically optional and does not create propositional meaning on its own (Fung and Carter 2007, Lam 2009, Müller 2004, Schiffrin 1987). The excerpts given above for this section demonstrate that in the real life classroom discourse teachers use *so* in order to make lucid the resultative relation that is already embedded in its nearby units, not making a semantic contribution and in turn, make it easier for their students to understand the teacher utterances. Consequently, this study is of importance since it provides empirical support to the claim that the function of *so* needs to be awarded DM status.

4.3 Structural Category: Topic Shifts

Fung and Carter (2007) claim that DMs in the structural category convey the information as to "how a sequence of verbal activities, the opening, closing, transition, and continuation of topics, are organized and managed" (p. 420). This section explores the DM *so* listed in this category, which is frequently exploited in order to signal the transition of a topic between successive utterances. The topic-shifting *so* is distinguished from the consequential *so* in that the former marks a new conversational move, not establishing any relation with the preceding topic, whereas the latter shows

a relation between the previous and the next topic. The data of this study confirms that teachers often employ the DM *so* with the intention of marking an information-stage transition or expressing a readiness for a new course of action between sequences. The following extract is an example of this type of *so*.

Excerpt (5) [teacher Choi (11:19~14:25)]

01 T: great. and finally number four.
02 Ss: ((some students claim their own group names in a loud voice.))
03 T: ((looking at a group of students)) Avengers↓ =
04 Ss: =searched, searched.
05 T: ((gazing at S1 in the group, *Avengers*)) Min-Jae, tell me the spelling.
06 S1: s.e.a.r.c.h.e.d.
07→ T: great, very good, (1.0) so,↓ ((looking at the whole class)) let's check
08 the answers together. needed, tried, had, searched. can you find uh (.)
09 common things among those four words? common things.
10 Ss: (.) e.d.
11 T: right. what do you call those e. d.?
12 Ss: (.) past words.
13 T: past? gwageo or gwageobunsa? (*past or past perfect*?)
14 Ss: gwageo. (*past*)
15→ T: (.) same form, but it's called gwageobunsa (*past participle*). (2.0) so,
16 today, we are going to study uh (.) hyeonjaewanlyo (*present perfect*).
17 we will go over what present perfect is. present perfect (.) in Korean
18 (.) what?
19 Ss: hyeonjaewanlyo (*present perfect*)

Prior to the excerpt above, each group in the class had been given a worksheet and asked to fill in the blank spaces in it with the past participle forms of English regular verbs presented. After the completion of the group task, the teacher began to check whether students have written answers correctly. In line 1 of the present excerpt (5), the teacher asks which group would give an answer for the last question, number four. The teacher's request is immediately followed by several students' volunteering, as described in line 2. As soon as *Avengers*, one of the student groups is selected by the teacher, the group members respond in chorus as shown in line 4. Then, the teacher addresses S1, *Min-Jae* and asks him to spell the target word. In line 6, *Min-Jae*

produces an answer slowly yet clearly in a full voice. Based on the flow of the on-going classroom discourse, it is inferred that students understand the verb change depending on the tense in use. In line 7, the teacher affirms the student's prior answer via a cluster of responsive tokens, *great*, *very good* that denote correctness and utters *so* following the one-second pause. After that, she rounds off her instruction to move onto a next phase planned for raising students' awareness of the past participle that forms the present perfect tense. As such, the teacher employs the DM *so* as a contextualization cue, aiming at signal a shifting move at the boundary between two distinct phases. In the CA tradition, a pause refers to "a silence followed by more speech by the same speaker" (Heldner and Edlund 2010, p. 556) and it is considered as one of the prosodic indicators which occur in the topic-closing environment of a section of talk (Rendle-Short 2005). Correspondingly, the argument that the DM *so* in line 7 is a signpost to projecting a new move is further supported by the topic-closing implicative pause preceding the *so*. Another topic shift marked by the DM *so* can be seen in the rear part of this excerpt. In lines 8-9, the teacher inquires of students whether they recognize the common feature of the aforementioned four words. In the next turn, students answer readily. Yet, when the teacher registers another questions, she fails to obtain an expected answer as signified in the subsequent turns. At the arrowed turn in line 15, the teacher selects herself as a respondent, gives a relevant answer in Korean, and takes a two-second pause similarly to the case of line 7. Soon after, she employs the DM *so* and informs her students that they would learn the present perfect tense from then on. It is noticeable that immediately after the *so*, she utters *today*, a temporal expression which defines the time domain for a next move here. Therefore, it can be said that the DM *so* in line 15 functions as an interlink "marking the end of a topic and the beginning of another" (Fung and Carter 2007, p. 421). By employing the *so*, the teacher makes a transition from the subordinate unit of explanation to the main unit of the lesson.

Excerpt (6) shows a similar yet somewhat different example in which the DM *so* is uttered when the teacher proceeds to the main topic of a learning floor after a digression.

Excerpt (6) [teacher Yoon (8:10~13:58)]

((classroom noise))

01 T: okay, everyone.

02 ((classroom noise))

03 T: <u>everyone</u>. <u>look at me</u>. (.) let's hear from you now. let me ask some
04 of you. Ye-Joon, what's your wish? what do you want?
05 S1: (.) I want to have lots of money.
06 T: I want to have lots of money, I want to have lots of money, good job.
07 and (.) ((gazing at a student)) you, Han-Min, what do you want?=
08 S2: =I want to never die.
09 T: I want to?
10 S2: never die.
11 T: oh, I want not to die, live forever, great. everyone, I want to hope all
12→ of your wishes will come true. (3.0) alright, so, this time, look at the
13 picture. ((looking at the PPT slide on the screen)) look at the
14 sentences here. Jae-won, could you read the first sentence?
15 S3: If I were rich, I could buy a fancy car.

This excerpt is brought from a new round of a section of classroom discourse. As described right before the introductory *okay* in line 1, the classroom is filled with noises from students' behavior such as whispering or pulling up a chair. The teacher opens a sequence of talk with the *okay*-prefacing. However, as signified in the parenthesis of line 2, the opening fails to catch students' attention. In the following turn, the teacher addresses students in a full voice to their attention and calls S1 by name, *Ye-Joon*. Then, he asks what the student's wish is and gets an answer. In line 7, the teacher selects S2, *Han-Min* as a next respondent and recycles the question from his previous turn. Line 8 shows that S2 provides his answer rapidly as indicated by a latch sign. Given that classroom noise at the very beginning and S1's delayed response in the preceding turns, S2's prompt answer can be viewed as indicative of the classroom atmosphere being more attentive. In line 11, the teacher, with a noticing proposed by *oh*, registers the answer with a slight modification. Subsequently, he provides the whole class with the word of blessing and creates a three-second pause. It is interesting to note that shortly after the pause, the teacher gives a cluster of the tokens which is composed of *alright*, *so*, and *this time*, and provides directions for instruction-phase activities. To sum up, the teacher asks students for their wishes in order to mitigate their distraction and when he thinks he secures students' attention, he initiates the teacher-directed instruction preceded by a *so*-contained cluster. It means that the teacher uses *so* to signal a shift from a digression to the main thread of instruction phase. Turner (1999) argues that *alright* functions to accomplish a shift

in topic, activity, or phase. Thus, the token ahead of the DM *so* seems to serve as a pre-shift device exhibiting a change in the teacher's orientation. A deictic expression, *this time* also needs to be noted in that the function of deixis triggered by the expression is to establish a new attentional focus as well as emphasize what is going to be said (Becher 2010). Considering the immediate juxtaposition of *alright*, *so*, and *this time* in line 12, it becomes more apparent that the DM *so* in line 12 fulfills its role as a topic-shifting device.

In the examples of this section, the DM *so* is used to signpost a topical change at transitional juncture. With the *so*, teacher project the movement to begin a new topic or bring the focus back into what they intend to say, softening the abruptness of the topical switch. The finding is in accordance with Fung and Carter's (2007) claim that the DM *so* marks the closure of an on-going topic and the onset of a new one. A similar function of *so* is mentioned in Johnson's (2002) study. The study on the police interview investigates "the function of *so*-prefaced questions as topic developers or topic sequencers" (p. 103). Another similar instance is identified by Rendle-Short (2003), who points at the topic-shifting *so* used in computer science seminar. The *so* in her work "indicates some sort of digression from the main topic of talk" (p. 55), in opposition to the case of the excerpt (6) mentioned earlier. In the light of these considerations, the excerpts of this section assures methodological diversity in using a topic-shifting *so*.

4.4 Cognitive Category: Elaboration

Cognitive DMs are characterized by Fung and Carter (2007) as lexical units to both "provide information about the cognitive state of speakers" and "instruct the hearer to construct a mental representation of the discourse" (p. 415). Within the core functional paradigm by Fung and Carter (2007), the cognitive category is subdivided into five subcategories. This section explores elaboration, one of the five subcategories, where *like* and *I mean* are included. It is claimed that the elaborative DMs are deployed "to elaborate and modify the existing propositional meaning to make clear the intention of the speaker or to supplement the meanings" (Fung and Carter 2007, p. 424). The present study introduces elaborative instances of *so* which are recurrently found in teacher utterances mainly when new activities begin in different phases of the lesson. Teachers make their instruction easier to understand by offering the *so*-prefaced

clause for the statement postulated in the previous clause. Excerpt (7) depicts a clear example of the usage of the conceptually additive *so*.

Excerpt (7) [teacher Choi (23:10~24:20)]

01 T: okay, I'll (.) please, (.) show me I need volunteers for A and B. if
02 you are very good, I'll give you a star, (.) Jina, where is your partner?
03 S1: (S1 points at a student in front of her.)
04 T: okay, both of you stand up please. ((making eye contact with S1))
05 you ask her.
06 S1: ((looking at texts projected on the screen)) hm, where is Mongolia↑
07 S2: (.) it is between Russia and China.
08 S1: what do they eat?
09 S2: they eat (.) milk tea and lamb.
10 S1: what's the name of capital city (.) of Mongolia?
11 S2: ulan::ulanbator?
12 T: very good. (.) okay, now, I need a group work, ah (.) I'll give you
13→ one worksheet, one worksheet, okay? so, one worksheet for each group,
14 (.) write the name of your group members on it. okay? and, I'll give
15→ pictures (.) to each group. I'll give each group three pictures. so, each
16 group will have three pictures. on your worksheet, each group should
17 write two sentences to explain each picture. (.) for each picture, how
18 many sentences?=
19 Ss: =two.

In line 1 of the excerpt above, the teacher asks students to be volunteers. Without opening the floor for a next turn to the whole class, however, she selects S1, *Jina* as a next speaker. In lines 4−5, the teacher asks *Jina* and her counterpart student to stand up and gives them a direction of starting a Q & A sequence. Following the direction, the students repeats the adjacency pair sequences throughout lines 6−11. In line 12, the teacher resumes her talk with positive confirmations in responding to the students' verbal practice. She utters *okay* along with another marker *now*, "a topic−changer" (Aijmer 1996, p. 70) which indicates the beginning of a new round of talk. Just after the combination of DMs that serves as a strong signal for an upcoming change, she announces that the group work would start from then on and for the group work, assignment worksheets would be given to students. As displayed in lines 13, the

teacher generates *so* and adds extra information to her preceding statement. To be more exact, throughout lines 12–13 she self–repeats essential part of her utterance, *one worksheet* and registers a second *okay* with a rising intonation to make sure that all the students are listening to her. Shortly after this, with the *so*–prefacing she supplements the phrase she has just provided by giving an additional comment, *for each group* in order for her student to accurately understand her direction. The inserted *so* is used to signify elaboration since it leads to its "support" (Schiffrin 1987, p. 224) to the prior utterance, which is mean to supply further explanation. Elaborative *so* can be identified in its second occurrence as well. In lines 14–15, the teacher says she would give pictures to each group and self–repeats the utterance with the comment for the number of pictures. And immediately, with the deployment of *so* she rewords the preceding statement. The segment following the *so* is taken as a paraphrase of the previous utterance in that it is a different description of the same action. Paraphrase is a typical way of elaboration (Platon 2017). Consequently, the *so* in line 15 demonstrates that it can function as an elaborative marker by prefacing the rewording.

The second example of this section, Excerpt (8), is provided below. Similar discussion can be applied to the following excerpt as well.

Excerpt (8) [teacher Kim (27:10~31:00)]

01	T:	this activity is called 'read more' and for this activity, I gave a piece
02		of paper strip to (.) each of you. right?
03	S1:	yeap
04	T:	(.) there are (.) some words, there are some words, but (.) the words
05		are hidden (.) behind the strip, ok::ay?
06	Ss:	(in a quiet tone) yes
07	T:	if you find a right word for the red box on the screen, please underline
08		the word. actually it (.) this activity starts with an (.) individual work,
09		but in a minute, after a minute, it can be a pair work, ok::ay?
10	Ss:	(in a small voice) yes
11	T:	(.) maybe (.) this activity is (.) little bit difficult compared to before
12		activities, last activities. (.) okay, let's start.
13		(three minutes later)
14	T:	okay, everyone. it's time to exchange your strip with your partner's,
15→		okay? it's time to exchange, let's exchange strips (.) so, so, actually

16 you have two kinds of strips, for further reading one, and for further
17 reading two. exchange yours with your partner's. exchange. and then
18 check the answers, if necessary, it is okay (.) you can change your
19 answer, ok::ay?
20 Ss: (1.0) yea::h.

In lines 1–2, the teacher initiates her turn with the introduction for the upcoming activity and reminds students that she gave a piece of paper strip to each one. Before she completes her turn, she presents the token, *right* with a rising intonation. The intonation signifies the teacher's intention for getting acknowledgement from students. Yet, line 3 shows that only one student, S1 reacts to the intention. As indicated in lines 4–5, the teacher continues her instruction by means of repetition and registers *okay* as a question tag at the end of her utterance. The *okay* seems to be her attempt to elicit some sort of confirmation from students. The next turn shows that a few students claim hearing and understanding of the preceding turn with *yes* in a quiet tone as described in parentheses. Throughout lines 7–9, the teacher provides directions regarding what students should do with the paper strip given to them and recycles *okay* to check students' understanding once again. Yet, in line 10, students still react in a little voice upon the teacher's inquiry. Given that the small-voiced responses from the students in the previous turns, it is assumed that the students are not making their active contribution to the progress of the lesson. In lines 11–12, the teacher guides students to the individual work. After finishing the three-minute work, she proceeds with the direction regarding the next phase as displayed in line 14. That is to say, the teacher repeats a core part of her utterance, *exchange* in succession in lines 14–15. Then, she generates *so* twice following a short pause and registers background information explaining to the students that there are two types of strip and each student of a pair has a different one. The information is referred to as a specification since it provides additive description for the purpose of clearing up the teacher's preceding reference. Through the specification, the teacher seems to attempt to clarify her direction and thereby, facilitate students' better understanding. The *so*-prefaced clause echoes Halliday and Matthiessen's (2004) argument that "one clause elaborates on the meaning of another by further specifying or describing it" (p. 396). Thus, the *so* here works as an elaborative marker to invite a specification of what precedes.

This section has illustrated that the teachers employ *so* as a preface in order to add more information, rewording, or specification to their instruction. We could say that the *so* gets its elaborative function when the teachers are going to supplement their preceding utterance for students to fully understand it. This function of *so* seems to be a logical bridge that expands what precedes by relating additive information to it. Mortier and Degand (2009) present the term, "mental leap" to refer to "a comment made by the speaker on a thought which is not or only implicitly expressed in the preceding context" (p. 320). This study holds its importance since it attests that the DM *so* is used to draw teacher mental leap for pedagogical benefits and assures that the *so* works on the cognitive state of the speaker.

5. Conclusion

The current study has investigated diverse discourse marker functions of the DM *so* employed by Korean teachers of English by exploring naturally occurring teacher-led classroom discourse. For this purpose, the production of the DM *so* has been classified on the basis of Fung and Carter's (2007) core functional paradigm of DMs and rigorously analyzed adhering to the CA framework. The results evince that the DM *so* used by the teachers fulfills varied functions falling into all the four categories presented in the functional paradigm.

Key findings are summarized as follows. First, the DM *so* deployed by teachers implicitly provides a feedback delivering confirmation and acknowledgement of students' answer and at the same time, signaling the beginning of a new IRF. This *so* occurs in the teacher feedback position of IRF pattern. Since the DM *so* appears without any account of repair work after students' answer to the preceding teacher question and at the same time, it is immediately followed by a new question, students understand it as a sign of an affirmative teacher response. As this *so* is taken as a positive feedback device for showing teacher responses to student answers, the function of *so* falls into the interpersonal category. Second, teachers deploy the DM *so* in order to express the resultative relation between the adjoining utterances. The DM *so* makes salient a change in state between the successive events or between the propositional contents. As such, it helps students to gauge the semantic tie given by its neighboring utterances, echoing the referential category. Third, teachers use the DM *so* at a transitional juncture to close off the on-going phase and move on to a new discourse

move. The DM *so* which belongs to the structural category is uttered when the teacher wants to change the topic in progress to the next phase or return to the main topic from an aside. Lastly, teachers employ the DM *so* as an elaborative device when they need to provide more information, paraphrase, or specification to their preceding statements. This *so* is frequently found when teachers supplement their instruction for the classroom activities with a view to facilitating students' understanding. The elaborative *so* can be situated within the cognitive category.

The findings indicate that in the Korean EFL classroom context non-native teachers of English use the DM *so* with a full range of functional spectrum across all the four functional categories. The result is inconsistent with the Fung and Carter's (2007) core functional paradigm which illuminates the production of DMs presented in data drawn from a pedagogic sub-corpus of British English (CANCODE) and a Hong Kong ESL classroom corpus. According to the core functional paradigm, *so*'s spectrum of use is limited to two categories, the referential and the structural. Given that the extension of the *so* usage into the other functional categories by Korean teachers of English, a tentative explanation may be offered that the Korean EFL teachers have predominately employed the DM *so* in order to organize classroom discourse and structure particular teaching segments. Paradoxically, it implies that students themselves should try to catch their teachers' intentions projected by the DM *so*, although they have never learned about a variety of pragmatic functions which the DM *so* has. As pointed out previously, DMs have not been explicitly taught and thus, are "seldom part of the curriculum" (Liao 2009, p. 1314). There is not much difference in the Korean EFL context. It seems therefore expedient for the language teachers to raise their awareness for the importance of teaching not only the diverse functions of the DM *so* but also those of diverse DMs in their EFL classroom discourse.

There are two limitations in the present study. First, since the analysis for this study is confined to Fung and Carter's (2007) paradigm, there is the possibility of other functions that remain to be explored. Second, the current study mainly focuses on the multi-functional use of the DM *so* in the overall teacher talk and does not examine individual differences or preferences among the teachers in using *so*. Nonetheless, this study carries its own importance in that it is the first attempt to demonstrate the functional spectrum of the DM *so* in naturally-occurring Korean EFL teacher talk. Plus, it provides a new empirical evidence with regard to the institutional practice of a DM in the EFL pedagogical context for a CA-driven new field of inquiry. The researcher hopes that the findings of this study would be utilized to help students

successfully understand teacher talk in English classroom interaction as well as the teachers fully be aware of the practice of the DM *so* in their class and carefully plan teacher talk for specific pedagogical goals. Suggestions for further studies are related with the limitations of the present study. First of all, with more diverse classification schemes, the DM *so* in non-native teacher talk need to be thoroughly examined. Throughout the wide-ranging investigations, a full picture of discourse marker use of *so* in teacher talk can be obtained. In addition, it is recommended to compare the results of this study with the case studies regarding *so*'s spectrum of use by native English speaking teachers in the EFL context. The comparative study would provide valuable insight into distinguishing features and patterns of the DM use between two teacher groups of different L1 backgrounds.

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Examples in: English
Applicable Languages: English
Applicable Level: Tertiary

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Appendix 1: Transcription Convention

A Core Functional Paradigm of Discourse Markers in Pedagogical Discourse
(Fung and Carter 2007, p. 418)

Interpersonal	Referential	Structural	cognitive
Marking Shared Knowledge: *See, you see, you know, listen*	Cause: *Because, cos* Contrast: *But, and, yet, however, nevertheless*	Opening and closing of topics: *Now, OK/okay, right/alright, well, let's start, let's discuss, let me conclude the discussion*	Denoting thinking process: *Well, I think, I see, and*
Indicating attitudes: *Well, really, I think, obviously, absolutely, exactly, basically, sort of, kind of, like, to be frank, to be honest, just, oh*	Coordination: *And* Disjunction: *Or*	Sequence: *First, firstly, second, secondly, next, then, finally*	Reformulation/ Self-correction: *I mean, that is, in other words, what I mean is, to put it in another way*
Showing response: *OK/okay, oh, right/alright, yeah, yes, I see, great, oh great, sure, yeah*	Consequence: *So*	Topic shift: *So, now, well, and what about, how about*	Elaboration: *Like, I mean*
	Digression: *Anyway*	Summarizing opinions: *So*	Hesitation: *Well, sort of*
	Comparison: *Likewise, similarly*	Continuation of topics: *Yeah, and, cos, so*	Assessment of the listener's knowledge about the utterances: *You know*

Appendix 2: Transcription Convention

The glossary of transcript symbols presented below is mostly based on the descriptions provided in Jefferson (1989) and ten Have (2007).

Speaker identification

T Teacher
S1 Identified student 1
Ss Several or all students simultaneously

Sequencing

[ ] Overlap between utterance
= = One is positioned at the end of one line, and the other, at the beginning of the next line, indicating no 'pause' between the speakers' talk. This is called *latching*.

Time intervals

(0.5) Numbers in parentheses indicate the duration of silence timed in seconds.
(.) A dot in parenthesis indicates small untimed pause.

Speech production characteristics

? Interrogative tone
<u>Word</u> Underline indicates stress by means of voice intensity
hhh laughter
:: Colons indicate prolonged syllable or sound.
° ° The utterance between the degree signs is noticeably softer than the surrounding talk
↑ ↓ Arrows indicates upward rise or downward fall in intonation.

Transcriber's doubts and comments

(( )) Double parenthesis indicates transcriber's descriptions.