

The Way of Truth: The Case of Pragmaticalization of Certain Discourse Markers in Korean*

1. Introduction

- Korean has a large inventory of discourse markers (DMs) that carry diverse discursive functions.
- These DMs develop from various source lexemes and constructions. Among such classes of DM sources is one the members of which make reference to truth and its closely related concepts, i.e., fact and reality.

- (1) a. Four core lexemes: *ceng* ‘correct(ness)’, *cham* ‘true/truth’, *sil* ‘truth, reality’, *cin* ‘truth’
b. Eight DMs: *cengmal* ‘correct word’, *cham* ‘true’, *chammal* ‘true word’, *chammallo* ‘in true words’, *sasil* ‘fact’, *sasilun* ‘fact is’, *silun* ‘fact is’, *cincca* ‘genuine thing’

- This class appears to be one of the common sources of DMs across languages.

- (2) English *truly*, *really*, *actually*, *in fact*, *fact is*, etc.
Spanish *en efecto* ‘in truth’, *efectivamente* ‘truly’, etc.
French *en fait* ‘in fact’, *vraiment* ‘really’, etc.
Chinese *qishi* ‘actually’, *shishishang* ‘in fact’, etc.

[Objectives]

This presentation addresses:

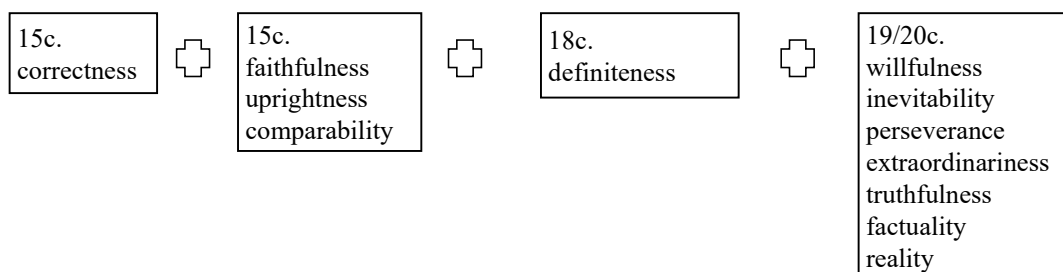
- (3) a. how DMs emerged from the ‘truth’-related lexemes and constructions
b. how those DMs developed similar functions, yet displaying slightly different specializations
c. how pragmatic inferences of DMs at different positions led to different specializations in function

[Data Sources]

- Historical corpus (The Sejong Historical Corpus for diachronic investigation): A 15-million word, historical section of the Sejong Corpus, a 200-million word corpus developed as part of the 21st Century Sejong Project by the Korean Ministry of Culture and Tourism and the National Institute of Korean Language (1998-2006). The texts in the historical section date from 1446 through 1913.
- Contemporary corpus (The Drama & Cinema Corpus): A 24-million word contemporary corpus, a collection of 7,454 scenarios of dramas and cinemas dating from 1992 through 2015, compiled by Min Li of Seoul National University.

2. Semantic Change

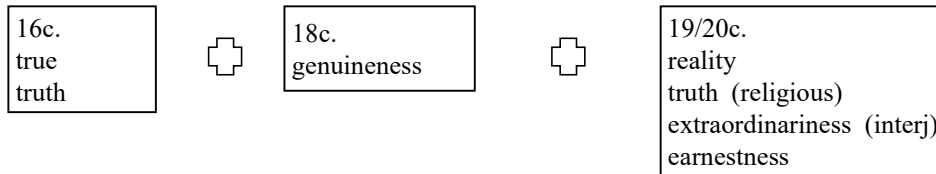
- (4) *ceng* (*ceng* & *cengmal*)
a. *ceng*: Sino-Korean ‘correct(ness)’
b. *cengmal* ‘correct word/speech’ (< *ceng* ‘correct’ + *mal* ‘word/speech’)
c.



* This research was supported by the National Research Foundation of Korea (NRF-2014S1A5B1065578).

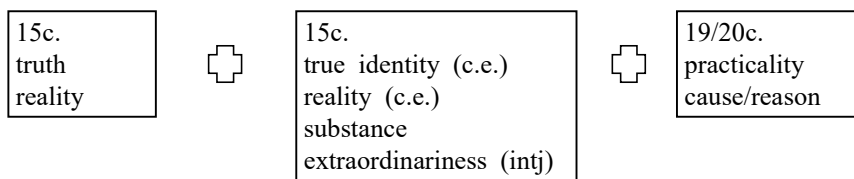
(5) *cham* (*cham*, *chammal* & *chammallo*)

- a. *cham*: native Korean ‘true/truth’
- b. *chammal* ‘true word/speech’ (< *cham* ‘true’ + *mal* ‘word/speech’)
- c. *chammallo* ‘in true words’ (< *cham* ‘true’ + *mal* ‘word/speech’ + *-lo* INST)
- d.



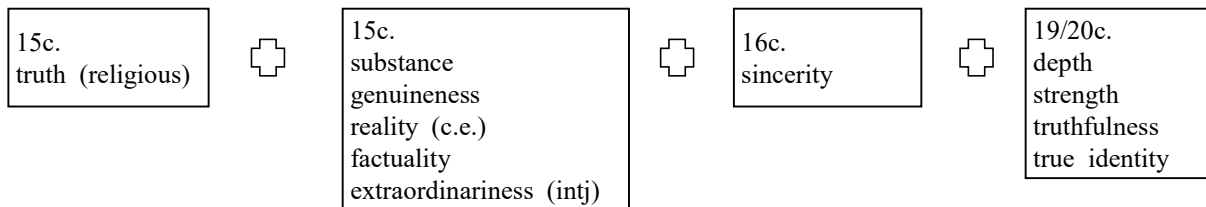
(6) *sil* (*sil*, *sillo*, *kisilun*, *silun*, *silsang*, *silsangun*, *sasil* & *sasilun*)

- a. *sil*: Sino-Korean ‘truth’
- b. *sil-lo* ‘in truth’; *silun* ‘truth is’; *kisilun* ‘its truth is’; *silsang* ‘true facet’; *silsangun* ‘true facet is’; *sasil* ‘fact’; *sasilun* ‘fact is’
- c.



(7) *cin* (*cin*, *cinsil*, *cinsillo*, *cintis*, *cinceng*, *cincengulo*, *cincengici*, & *cincengkho*)

- a. *cin*: Sino-Korean ‘truth’
- b. *cinsil* ‘true fact’; *cinsillo* ‘in true fact’; *cintis* ‘true thing’; *cinceng* ‘true and correct’; *cincengulo* ‘in truth and correctness’; *cincengkho* ‘after being true and correct’
- c.



3. Discourse-Pragmatic Functions

3.1 *cengmal* ‘correct word’

• *cengmal* ‘correct word’ (formally a noun)

(8) The “I am serious” Function

A: [I’m lucky to have a great friend like you.]

B: [Great? What’s great in a retiring old man.]

cengmal na-n son ttey-l sayngkak-i-ney (정말 난 손 떴 생각이네.)

DM I-TOP hand take.off-ADN thought-be-END

‘DM (seriously), I am thinking about retiring.’ (2003, Drama *1%-uy etten kes* Episode #26)

(9) The “I am annoyed/frustrated” Function

A: [Hey, Mr. Na. Where’s Mr. Ha? I don’t see him since hours ago. What’s he doing? Go get him quickly.]

B: (irritated and stands up) *a cengmal il mos ha-keyss-ney* (아 정말 일 못 하겠네.)

INTJ DM work cannot do-FUT-EXCL

‘O, DM (xxx) I can’t work!’ (2001, Drama *Swuhochensa* Episode #13)

(10) The “I am surprised” Function (Interjection; ellipsis)

[A police officer is dragging a suspect (an ex-convict) out of a coffee shop to where A is.]

(이 사람 정말... 출소한지 얼마나 됐다고 이래.)

A: *i salam cengmal... chwulsoha-nci elmana tway-ss-tako ila-y*
this person DM be.out.of.jail-since how.long become-PST-CONN do.this-END

‘This guy is DM (How pathetic!)... how long ago was it that you finished your prison term, and now you do this (again)?’ (2000, Drama *Kkokci* Episode #41)

- (11) The “That reminds me” Function (Sudden Remembrance)
a cengmal nic-epeli-lpenhA-ys-kwun (아 정말 니저버릴번히군.)
 oh DM forget-COMPL-AVERT-PST-EXCLM
 ‘Oh, DM (right), I almost forgot (it)!’ (1912 *Twukyenseng*)

• *Cengmal* is frequently used with the Filler function in PDK among youngsters, especially as a question.

3.2 *cham* ‘true/truly’

• *cham* ‘true/truth’ (formally a noun/adjective)

- (12) The “I am serious” Function (Emphatic)
na-to cham mos sal-keys-so (나도 참 못 살겠소.)
 I-too DM cannot live-FUT-END
 ‘I, too, DM (indeed), cannot go on.’ (1908, *Komokhwa*)
- (13) The “I am annoyed/frustrated” Function
cham nay kuman com kwungsilengtay-ø-yo. (참 내 그만 좀 궁시렁대요.)
 DM my so.much a.little complain-END-POL
 ‘DM (O my), stop complaining, please.’ (2003, Drama *I-pheseynthuuy ettenkes* Episode #6)
- (14) The “I am surprised” Function (Interjection; ellipsis)
aikwu cham emenim-to... huycini-ka acik ilehkey eli-ntey... (아이구 참 어머님도... 희진이가 아직 이렇게 어린데...)
 INTJ DM mother-too [name]-NOM yet like.this be.young-while
 ‘O, my, DM (how can) you [mother] (say so).. Hijin is still so young..’ (2002, Drama *Kyewulyenka* Episode #3)
- (15) The “That reminds me” Function (Sudden Remembrance)
cham sunglyong-a keki cim com tule-se nay cha-eyta sil-ecw-e (참 승룡아 거기 짐 좀 들어서 내 차에다가 실어줘.)
 DM [name]-VOC there box please lift-and my car-to load-BEN-END
 ‘DM (O, right!), Seunglyong! Pick up the boxes over there and load them in my car.’
 (2002, Drama *Kyewulyenka* Episode #5)

3.3 *chammal* ‘true word’ ‘truthful saying’

• *chammal* ‘true word’ ‘truthful saying’ (formally a noun)

- (16) The “I am serious” Function (Emphatic)
 [A is following a wagon carrying tributary goods for the king, under the order of protecting it from robbers.]
 (참말 무신 일인지... 나넌 하나도 모르것나네.)
 A: *chammal mwusin il-i-nci... na-nen hanato molu-kes-naney*
 DM what.kind matter-be-COMP ... I-TOP one-even not.understand-FUT-END
 ‘DM (truly), I don’t understand what this (fuss) is all about..’ (2009, Drama *Thamnanuntota* Episode #7)
- (17) The “I’m annoyed/frustrated” Function
 [A’s brother complains to his father about his parents’ frequent fighting, and A thinks that his brother doing so is not polite to his father.]
 (니가 안 그라도 아버지 지금 쪽이 쪽이 아닐긴데 니 참말 와 이카노.)
 A: *ni-ka an kula-yto apeci cikum ssok-i ssok-i ani-lki-ntey ni chammal wa ikha-no*
 you-NOM not do.so-CONN father now mind-NOM mind-NOM be.not-FUT-CONN you DM why do.this-Q
 ‘Father is worrying even without your complaint, and DM (why on earth) are you doing this?’
 (1993, Drama *Kimkaika* Episode #4)
- (18) The “I am surprised” Function (Interjection; often elliptical)
 [A admires a westerner who speaks Korean very well.]
 A: *atta chammal ekswulo cosen-mal cal ha-ney* (아따 참말 억수로 조선말 잘 하네.)
 INTJ DM very.much Korean-language well say-EXCL
 ‘Wow, DM (surprisingly), (you) speak Korean so well!’ (2009, Drama *Thamnanuntota* Episode #11)

3.4 *chamallo* ‘in true words’ ‘in truthful saying’

- *chamallo* ‘in true words’ ‘in a truthful saying’

(19) The “I am serious” Function (Emphatic)

[Perhaps you think we are bad guys just because you always hang around bad guys..]

chamallo ile-myen nay-ka sepsepha-yici-nuntey... (참말로 이러면 내가 섭섭해지는데...)
DM do.this-if I-NOM be.disappointed-CAUS-END

‘DM (really), I am disappointed if you do this to me...’ (2000, Drama *Kkokci* Episode #42)

(20) The “I am annoyed/frustrated” Function

[A’s son, a police officer, has been reported as absent without leave.]

A: *haikwu... i nwum-ul ettekhe-n-tey, chamallo...* (하이구 이 놈을 어떡헌데, 참말로)
INTJ this guy-ACC do.what-PRES-END DM

‘Alas, what can I do with him... DM (how frustrating!)’ (2000, Drama *Kkokci* Episode #25)

3.5 *sasil* ‘fact’

- *sasil* ‘fact’ (formally a noun)

(21) The “as a matter of fact” Function (with weak Contrast; ‘to think of it’)

[A: If you two loved each other from your childhood, you guys must be the first and the only love to each other.]

sasil kulayse com ekwulha-ki-n ha-y-yo (사실 그래서 좀 억울하긴 해요.)
DM so a.little feel.unfair-NOMZ-TOP be-END-POL

‘DM (as a matter of fact) I feel that it’s a little unfair (to me).’ (2009, Drama *Naycouy yewang* Episode #4)

(22) The “as you may have expected” Function (Conforming, ‘since you say so’)

[B is visiting his girlfriend’s father, A.]

A: [How come you don’t take (marry) Miok?]

(사실 그것 때문에 왔습니다. 저 미옥씨랑 결혼합니다 아버지님.)

B: *sasil kukes ttaymwuney w-ass-supnita ce miok-ssi-lang kyelhonha-pnita apenim*
DM that because.of come-PST-DEC I:HUM [name]-HON-with marry-DEC father

‘DM (I’m telling you since you say so), I came just because of that. I’m marrying Miok, Father(-in-law)!’
(2004, Drama *Kkochpota alumtawe* Episode #22)

3.6 *sasilun* ‘fact is’

- *sasilun* ‘fact is’ (formally a topic-marked noun)

(23) The “to tell the truth” Function (Prelude to Revelation, ‘this may surprise you’)

[A is the body-guard of the son of the President, B. B wants to temporarily stay at A’s apartment to which he comes with luggage without notice.]

A: [What’s the reason that you want to move in?]

B: *sasilun na chwum tayhoy naka-ø* (사실은 나 춤 대회 나가.)
DM I dance competition go-END

‘DM (this may surprise you), I am competing in a dance competition.’

A: (raising one eyebrow in surprise) *chwum...* (춤...)
dance...

‘Dance...?! (Did you mean dance?)’ (2008, Drama *Kangcektul* Episode #12)

(24) The “I am sorry to tell you” Function (Apologetic)

[A wants to open a confectionary factory. B is knowledgeable about machinery for confectioners.]

A: [I want to make a factory for cookies so people can give a delicious treat to their children. It’s not just business but that’s my aspiration. Wouldn’t you be a part of our enterprise?]

B: *sasilun casin-i eps-ese kula-y-yo* (사실은 자신이 없어서 그래요.)
DM confidence-NOM not.exist-because do.so-END-POL

‘DM (I’m sorry but) I’m reluctant because I don’t have confidence (that I would get investment for it).’
(1999, Drama *Kwukhyu* Episode #12)

3.7 *silun* ‘fact is’

- *silun* ‘fact is’ (formally a topic-marked noun; *sil* rarely functions as an independent noun)

(25) The “to tell the truth” Function (Prelude to revelation ‘this may surprise you’)

[A is talking to her friend’s mother, B. A is worried about her boyfriend and B’s son’s girlfriend.]

A: [You know Yoojin is working at a ski resort construction site?]

B: [Yes, what about it?]

A: *silun ku kongsa chaykimca-ka cey ayin-i-ey-yo* (실은 그 공사 책임자가 제 애인이예요.)
DM the construction supervisor-NOM my boyfriend-be-END-POL

‘DM (this may surprise you, but) the supervisor at the construction site is my boyfriend.’

(2002, Drama *Kyewulyenka* Episode #8)

3.8 *cincca* ‘real thing’

- *cincca* ‘real thing; genuine thing’ (formally a noun)
- no attestation in the historical corpus (in contemporary corpus only)

(26) The “I am serious” Function (Emphatic, ‘Honestly’)

[Hearing knocks on the 2nd floor window C is scared and is in the arms of his father. His siblings A and B look at him pathetically.]

A: [You are in your father’s arms because you don’t want to study (in your room).]

B: [No doubt. I, too, used to say I had stomachache to avoid studying when I was young.]

(아니라니까요! 진짜 누가 창문을 두드렸대구요!)

C: *ani-lanikkanyo! cincca nwuka changmwun-ul twutuly-ess-takwu-yo!*
be.not-END DM someone window-ACC knock-PST-END-POL

‘No! DM (truly) someone knocked at the window! (and that’s why I am so scared!)’

(2008, Sitcom *Khokkili* Episode #116)

(27) The “I am annoyed/frustrated” Function (Often elliptical)

[A runs after his girlfriend, B, who saw him with a woman. B gets in a taxi and drives away before A stops her.]

A: *sencwu-ssiii* (taxi drives away; A watches it blankly) *a cincca...!* (선주씨이... (...) 아 진짜!)

[name]-HON INTJ DM..

‘Sunjoo~! Alas, DM (it’s so frustrating!)’ (2007, Drama *Talcauy pom* Episode #8)

(28) The “I am challenging you” Function (Often elliptical)

[A and B are traveling companions without mutual knowledge. A says he is indebted to B.]

A: [Even beasts know how to pay back. They pluck their own hair to make a clothes for their owner.]

B: [(plucking hair from his nostril) here’s one. Make a fur jacket with it.]

A: (in fury) *i yangpan-i cincca po-ca po-ca ha-nikka...* (이 양반이 진짜 보자보자 하니까...)
this guy-NOM DM see-HORT see-HORT say-CONN

‘(Look at) this guy DM (I’m challenging you). I’ve been patiently swallowing insult but...’

B: (in fury) *mwe? i yangpan? ike-y cwuk-ullakwu cincca...* (뭐? 이 양반? 이게 죽을라구 진짜...)
what? this guy? this.thing-NOM die-PURP DM

‘What? This guy? (Look at) this man. He’s begging to die, DM (I’m challenging you).’

(2011, Cinema *Cosen myengthamceng*)

(29) The “I am surprised” Function (Interjection; ellipsis)

[Is this the house you used to live?]

wa~ ne cincca coh-un tey sal-ass-kwuna (와~ 너 진짜 좋은 데 살았구나.)

INTJ you DM be.good-ADN place live-PST-EXCL

‘Wow... you DM (what a surprise!) lived in a wonderful place!’ (2009, Drama *Kutay wuseyo* Episode #6)

(30) The Filler Function (No distinct function other; semantically near-vacuous; ‘I am speechless’)

[A learns that his girlfriend’s, B’s, father remarried. Now in reference to B’s younger sister he met the other day:]

B: [So I live with my stepmother’s daughter and the girl you met the other day is...]

A: [Aha, I got it. She is the work of my would-be father-in-law and his new wife!]

B: (smiles)... *aa.. cincca...* (아아.. 진짜...)

INTJ DM...

‘Oh, DM (come on..)’

A: *cincca mwe-yo?* (진짜 뭐요?)

real what-POL

‘Real what?’

(2009, Drama *Chenmanpen salanghay* Episode #22)

4. Discussion

4.1 Diachronic Development in Meaning/Function

- Diachronically, these forms have undergone the process of abstraction and intersubjectification in pragmaticalization:

(31)

- a. *cengmal* ‘correct words’ >> Emphasis; Frustration; Surprise; Sudden Remembrance; FILLER
- b. *cham* ‘true, truth’ >> Emphasis; Frustration; Surprise; Sudden Remembrance
- c. *chammal* ‘true words’ >> Emphasis; Frustration; Surprise
- d. *chammallo* ‘in true words’ >> Emphasis; Frustration
- e. *cincca* ‘genuine thing’ >> Emphasis; Frustration; Surprise; Challenge; FILLER
- f. *sasil* ‘fact’ >> Weak Contrast; Expectation Conformity
- g. *sasilun* ‘fact is’ >> Strong Contrast; Apologetic Revelation
- h. *silun* ‘fact is’ >> Revelation

(32)

- a. Correctness, Truthfulness, Reality are closely related, as shown in lexical development.
- b. How we experience the world is often regarded as superficial, i.e., not real. (cf. seriousness/earnestness, emphasis (intensification), counter-expectation, surprise, etc.)
- c. In DM developments, the notion of “reality” extends to surprise, frustration, annoyance, seriousness, factuality, challenge, etc.
- d. DMs containing the topic marker *-(n)un*, e.g. *sasilun* & *silun*, carry stronger contrast meaning than their counterpart without the marker.
- e. DMs of similar semantic sources show considerable similarity (cf. Bybee et al. 1994), but the development is not deterministic, as shown by differences in functions (e.g. sudden remembrance, etc.)
- f. In DM developments, the “reality/correctness” meaning sometimes deteriorates through bleaching/routinization, especially with high-frequency DMs.
- g. In DM developments, most change patterns are affective, interactional, and intersubjective.
- h. Nouns/Adjectives often carry the adverbial function. (cf. E. *very* adj. (< L. *vērus* ‘true’) > adv)

(33) *real* vs. *really*; *very* vs. *verily*; *precious* vs. *preciously*; *awful* vs. *awfully* (Rhee 2016: 420)

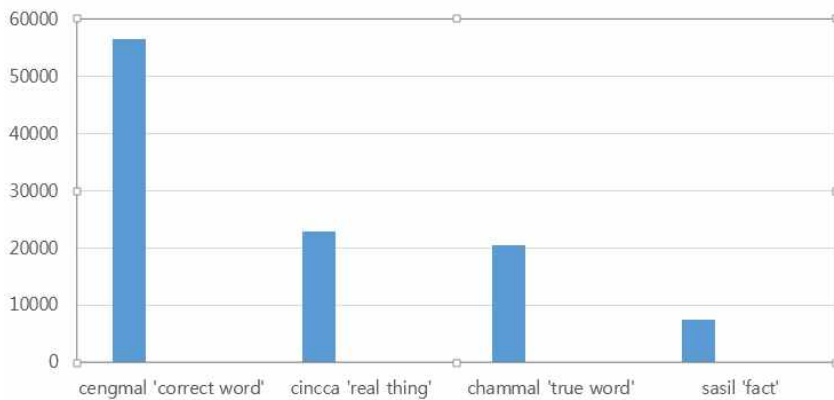
4.2 Diachronic Development in Form/Structure

- (34) a. As a modifier, the scope of modification generally widens from narrow to wide.
- b. In terms of structural properties, they have undergone change in morphosyntactic positionality, i.e., from argument positions (or clause-internal positions) to peripheral positions, typically at the left-periphery, thus acquiring positional freedom.
 - c. Most of them further moved to the right-periphery, with additional functional change. When they moved from clause-internal position to the left-periphery, their functions changed with increased discursive meaning, resembling the change from ‘content’ unit interpretation to ‘speech act’ unit interpretation in the sense of Sweetser (1990). Thus, for example, the ‘true’ meaning of the lexical *cham* (e.g. ‘true love’, ‘true identity’, etc.) changed into the discursive meaning of ‘What I say truthfully is that...’ as it becomes a DM.
 - d. This observation is largely in line with the hypothesized functional asymmetry between the peripheries (Degand 2014, Traugott 2014, Beeching & Detges 2014, among others).

4.3 Specialization and Divergence

- (35) a. Many of the forms developed into markers of similar discourse functions (cf. Source Determination Hypothesis; Bybee et al. 1994)
- b. However, these DMs came to have differential specialization which is often reflected in distinctive prosody. For instance, the DMs at the left-periphery are often followed by a short pause, thus, signaling their higher-order nature of referring function, i.e., to propositions or propositional attitudes rather than concrete entities. When they occur at the right-periphery, however, they often accompany a trailing intonation as if the speakers are employing ellipsis thus signaling that they are unable to complete the utterance due to overwhelming emotions such as irritation, frustration, etc. This state of affairs supports the previous research that observed the crucial role of ‘insubordination’ (Evans 2007, Evans & Watanabe 2016) in grammaticalization in Korean (Sohn 1995, Rhee 2012).

(36) Differential Token Frequency (caveat: contains noise)



5. Summary & Conclusion

- This presentation addressed seven DMs developed from four core lexemes: *ceng* 'correct(ness)', *cham* 'true/truth', *sil* 'truth, reality', *cin* 'truth'
- Due to their semantic similarities these DMs have undergone similar developmental paths.
- Their pragmatic functions include marking Emphasis, Frustration, Surprise, Sudden Remembrance, Challenge, Contrast, Conformity, Revelation, etc.
- In DM developments, most change patterns are affective, interactional, and intersubjective.
- Most DMs have acquired positional freedom in their development, largely first leftward then rightward.
- In PDK, the most commonly used DM among them is *cengmal* 'true words'.

Abbreviations

ACC: accusative; ADN: adnominalizer; ADVZ: adverbializer; CAUS: causal; COMP: complementizer; CONN: connective; DEC: declarative; DFR: deferential; END: sentence-ender; EVID: evidential; EXCL: exclamative; FUT: future; GEN: genitive; HON: honorific; INST: instrumental; MIR: mirative; NOM: nominative; NOMZ: nominalizer; PDK: Present-Day Korean; PERF: perfective; POL: polite; PRES: present; PST: past; QUOT: quotative; REPT: reportative; RETRO: retrospective; SEQ: sequential connective; SFP: sentence-final particle; TOP: topic

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