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Strategically Acknowledging Roughness: The Tale of the Two Preemptive Discourse Markers in Korean

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Abstract—**Korean has two mitigating discourse markers sharing the source lexeme *mak* 'coarse(ly)', i.e., *makilay* and *makmallo*. The DM *makilay*, literally meaning 'X rashly says like this', presents a negative comment on the speaker's own statement, thus signaling that they are aware of the inappropriateness of their own utterance (Rhee, 2013). Similarly, the DM *makmallo*, literally 'with crude words', prefaces an unrefined expression, conveying the message: 'I already know my word choice in the following statement is crude, so don't criticize me', the strategy being to preempt criticism from the addressee who would likely find the question or statement too extreme and inordinate (Rhee, 2019). The development of these DMs reveals intriguing cognitive and discursive strategies: (i) meta-discursive strategies in which the speaker is monitoring their own utterances, (ii) shifted perspectivization wherein an imaginary third-party's negative evaluative viewpoint is adopted, (iii) rhetorical strategies of presenting assertions or questions that are extreme to the point of inordinateness but thus more forceful and persuasive, and (iv) elaborate intersubjectification in that the speaker is attenuating their own talk in a face-threatening act via self-deprecation.**

Index Terms—**discourse marker, preemptive strategy, self-deprecation, grammaticalization**

I. Introduction

Inspired by the pioneering works on discourse markers (DMs) by Schourup (1985), Schiffrin (1987), and Fraser (1988) in the 1980s, and keeping abreast of active research across languages, a plethora of research on DMs in Korean has been produced (Ahn, 1992; Lee, 1995; Lee, 1996; Kim, 2000; Choi, 2007; Rhee, 2013, 2016a, 2016b, 2019, 2024, among many others; see Koo, 2018 for an overview of Korean DMs). It has been widely accepted that the use of DMs is universal, especially in oral discourse (Fraser, 1990, 2006; Östman, 1982; Watts, 1989; Heine et al., 2021), even though they are frequently found in written discourse as well. It has also been well-noted that DMs develop from diverse conceptual and structural sources such as adjectives (e.g., *right*), conjunctions (e.g., *though*), adverbs (e.g., *actually*), prepositional phrases (e.g., *as a matter of fact*), interjections (e.g., *oh*), defective sentential fragments (e.g., *I mean*), and even full-fledged sentences (e.g., *That's OK!*). Overall, DMs perform various discourse-organizing and interpersonal functions (Koo, 2018; Heine et al., 2021), and most of them are typically polyfunctional (Brinton, 1996; Fischer, 2006; Heine et al., 2021; Traugott, 2023).

Korean has two types of DMs involving an identical source lexeme *mak* 'crudely, coarsely, recklessly': *makilay* (lit. '(one) says so recklessly') and *makmallo* ('in crude words'); hence, these bear the label 'crude'-DMs. As shall be elaborated in III-A, *makilay* has a number of variants, called '*makilay*-family DMs' (Rhee, 2013). Both the *makilay*-family DMs and the DM *makmallo* carry the primary function of proactive/preemptive mitigation ('down-toner') but involve different deployment strategies, i.e., *makilay* works in a repair/redressive manner at right periphery (RP), whereas *makmallo* works in a backgrounding manner at left periphery (LP) (Rhee, 2019). Studies of these DMs are largely underrepresented in extant research (see Section II), and the current study intends to fill this gap.

The objectives of this paper are twofold: (i) to describe the emergence of these 'crude'-DMs from the viewpoints of grammaticalization and discourse pragmatics, and (ii) to discuss relevant theoretical issues, e.g., shifted perspectives, meta-discursive strategies, intersubjectification, prosody, and positionality. To fulfill these objectives, this paper is organized in the following manner. After this introductory section, Section II provides a brief description of the research background and research methods; Section III exemplifies the DM uses of the 'crude'-DMs; Section IV discusses a few theoretically important issues involved in the development and use of the 'crude'-DMs; and Section V summarizes major findings and concludes the paper.

II. Background and Research Methods

The theoretical framework for this study is grammaticalization theory as pioneered by Meillet (1912), and further elaborated and refined by Kuryłowicz (1975, 1965), Lehmann (2015, 1982), Heine et al. (1991), Bybee et al. (1994), Hopper and Traugott (2003), and many other leading researchers. For analysis of grammaticalization of DMs and their

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intersubjective functions, the author of this research referenced works by Brinton (1996), Davidse et al. (2010 and works therein), Degand and Simon-Vandenbergen (2011), Heine (2013), Rhee (2020a, 2020b, 2020c), and Heine et al. (2021), among others.

Among the important issues in DM research are the mechanisms and strategies involved in their emergence, morpho-syntactic and prosodical properties, functions and their determinants, and distribution and positionality. These issues are well captured by the generalizations of DMs by Heine et al. (2021), shown in (1) below. As shall be seen in Section IV, the 'crude'-DMs largely exhibit all the features listed.

(1) Major features of DMs (adapted from Heine et al., 2021, p. 68)

a. Its meaning is outside of the sentence with which it is associated.
b. Its function is metatextual.
c. It is not a syntactic constituent of the sentence in which it occurs.
d. It is likely to be set off prosodically from the rest of the sentence.
e. It has semantic-pragmatic scope over the whole sentence.
f. It can be placed within the sentence or at its left or right periphery.

DMs are functionally diverse and polyfunctional. It is not unusual to find a DM with apparently anomalous or even antonymous functions (Kim et al., 2021; Rhee & Koo, 2021). The diversity of functions is such that no finite inventory has yet been proposed. The difficulty lies in the variable granularity of analysis of functions. A relatively well accepted list has been provided by Brinton (1996, pp. 37-38; note her label 'pragmatic markers' instead of discourse markers), as summarily shown in (2) below. As shall be made clear in Section III, the 'crude'-DMs carry the interpersonal, intersubjective functions that correspond to (2.i).

(2) Major functions of DMs (Brinton, 1996, pp. 37-38)

a. to initiate or close discourse; b. to aid floor management; c. to fill a gap; d. to mark boundaries; e. to distinguish new and old information; f. to mark sequential dependence; g. to repair; h. to express a response or attitude; i. to effect cooperation, sharing, or intimacy interpersonally

The DM *makilay*, one of the 'crude'-DMs, has been analyzed by Choi (2012) and Rhee (2013). Choi (2012) notes that the speaker, by using the DM *makilay* in communication on the social media platform Twitter (now called X), treats their own utterances as if they were a third party's; Choi thus characterizes the function as 'otherization' (p. 241) whereby the speaker mitigates negativity, avoids an awkward situation, and completes an incomplete utterance. Similarly, Rhee (2013) analyzes *makilay* and its formal and functional relatives *makilay(yo), makyolay(yo), makcelay(yo), makcolay(yo),* and *makileko* from a grammaticalization perspective, tracing the formation of the adverb *mak(wu).* He notes that the development of the DM involves meta-discursive strategies, utilizes shifted perspectives, and exhibits intersubjectification. Despite the attention given to *makilay*, the other 'crude'-DM *makmallo* has received scant attention to date. The two above-referenced studies of *makilay* have contributed to a better understanding of *makilay* in terms of its contemporary functions. These contributions notwithstanding, analyses of *makilay*, especially in comparison with *makmallo*, have not yet been attempted, and this paper intends to fill that research gap.

The present research is a conceptual, descriptive analysis of linguistic data, involving no experimentation. The data have been collected from diverse sources, including historical and contemporary dictionaries, lexica, online resources, and, most importantly, historical and contemporary corpora. DMs arise from an interaction, either real or imagined, in discourse, and their functions are highly variable depending on the context in which they occur. Therefore, authentic discourse data are of crucial importance in DM research. Also, historical data are important in order to trace the change of the DMs, and their earlier forms and functions (Rhee & Zhang, 2024). For this reason, Korean data are taken from various historical and contemporary corpora, including the Sejong Historical Corpus (SHC) and the Naver News Library Corpus (NNLC) for diachronic investigation, and the Drama and Movie Corpus (DMC) and the KAIST KORTERM Corpus (KORTERM) for investigation of contemporary usage. The SHC is a 15-million-word, historical section (1446-1913) of the Sejong Corpus, developed as part of the government-led 21st Century Sejong Project. The NNLC covers newspaper articles published by five major companies between 1920 and 1999.[1] The Drama Corpus is a 24-million-word contemporary corpus based on a collection of 7,454 scenarios in dramas and movies dating from 1992 through 2015, compiled by Min Li. KORTERM, complied by the Korea Advanced Institute of Science and Technology (KAIST), consists of 15 million tagged words and 70 million un-tagged words.[2] For data search, UNICONC, a concordance program developed by Jinho Park, was used.[3] The data obtained from corpus search have been hand-screened for identification of their DM status and function.

[1] The information on the exact size of the NNLC is unavailable, but it is estimated to be over 20 million articles on over 1 million newspaper pages.

[2] Dramas and movie scripts are not spontaneous, but, as noted by Culpeper and Kytö (2010, p. 17; as cited in Traugott, 2022, pp. 13-14), they are relatively speech-like (cf. 'speech-based', 'speech-purposed') genres. Thus, they involve more spontaneous elements than constructed, written data, and are suitably authentic as research resources.

[3] Special thanks go to the developers of these corpora and search programs for generously granting their use for research.

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III. Results: Forms and Functions of 'Crude'-DMs

A. Makilay

The DM *makilay* is a sentence involving the adjective/adverb *mak* 'crude(ly), rash(ly), coarse(ly)' (see IV-A for further explanation), the proximal demonstrative *i* 'this', the adverbializer *-le*, the light verb *ha-* 'do, be', the mode adverbializer (also known as converb) *-key*, the verb *ha-* 'do, say', and the 'universal' sentence-ender *-e* (named so because it is used across all speech-act types). This structure is shown in (3) below, in which extensive fusion and erosion of participating components are evident (note that the sentence-final *-a-e* vowel sequence changes to *-ay*, as a process following a lexically controlled phonological rule):

(3) *mak* *i-le-ha-key* *ha-e* > *mak* *ilehkey* *ha-y* > ***makilay***
crudely this-ADVZ-be-MODE say-END crudely like.this say-END DM
'(X) crudely says like this.'

The DM *makilay* has a number of variants (thus collectively labeled '*makilay*-family DMs' or '*makilay*-DMs' for short), modified by four main variables: distance variation, diminutivization of demonstratives, politeness marking, and sentence-ender replacement with the connective form. Distance variation is performed by replacing the proximal *i* with medial *ku* or distal *ce*. Diminutivization of the demonstratives is performed by adding the 'light' (also known as 'positive') vowel quality (i.e., /o/) to the demonstratives, i.e., changing proximal *i* to diminutive proximal *yo*, medial *ku* to diminutive medial *ko*, and distal *ce* to diminutive distal *co*. A typical effect of diminutivization is adding pejorative attitude toward a small or insignificant object. Politeness is marked by the verbal suffix *-yo* on the predicate, indicating the speaker's polite attitude toward the addressee. Sentence-ender replacement is performed by substituting the universal ender *-e* with the connective *-ko* 'and'. Incidentally, this connective *-ko* is currently undergoing 'incoordination' (Rhee, 2020b), whereby the coordinated clause is elided and *-ko* occurs sentence-finally. The set of the *makilay*-family DMs with these variations is listed in Table 1 (POL for polite, END for sentence-ender, and CONN for connective).

Table 1
Makilay-Family DMs and Their Composition

DM	Distance	Diminutive	POL	END/CONN
makilay	proximal (*i*)	N	N	END (*-e*)
makilayyo	proximal (*i*)	N	Y (*-yo*)	ENE (*-e*)
makileko	proximal (*i*)	N	N	CONN (*-ko*)
makilekoyo	proximal (*i*)	N	Y (*-yo*)	CONN (*-ko*)
makyolay	proximal (*i*)	Y (*yo*)	N	END (*-e*)
makyolayyo	proximal (*i*)	Y (*yo*)	Y (*-yo*)	END (*-e*)
makyoleko	proximal (*i*)	Y (*yo*)	N	CONN (*-ko*)
makyolekoyo	proximal (*i*)	Y (*yo*)	Y (*-yo*)	CONN (*-ko*)
makcelay	distal (*ce*)	N	N	END (*-e*)
makcelayyo	distal (*ce*)	N	Y (*-yo*)	END (*-e*)
makceleko	distal (*ce*)	N	N	CONN (*-ko*)
makcelekoyo	distal (*ce*)	N	Y (*-yo*)	CONN (*-ko*)
makcolay	distal (*ce*)	Y (*co*)	N	END (*-e*)
makcolayyo	distal (*ce*)	Y (*co*)	Y (*-yo*)	END (*-e*)
makcoleko	distal (*ce*)	Y (*co*)	N	CONN (*-ko*)
makcolekoyo	distal (*ce*)	Y (*co*)	Y (*-yo*)	CONN (*-ko*)
makkulay	medial (*ku*)	N	N	END (*-e*)
makkulayyo	medial (*ku*)	N	Y (*-yo*)	END (*-e*)
makkuleko	medial (*ku*)	N	N	CONN (*-ko*)
makkulekoyo	medial (ku)	N	Y (*-yo*)	CONN (*-ko*)
makkolay	medial (*ku*)	Y (*ko*)	N	END (*-e*)
makkolayyo	medial (*ku*)	Y (*ko*)	Y (*-yo*)	END (*-e*)
makkoleko	medial (*ku*)	Y (*ko*)	N	CONN (*-ko*)
makkolekoyo	medial (*ku*)	Y (*ko*)	Y (*-yo*)	CONN (*-ko*)

The DMs within the *makilay*-family do not have the same level of productivity, i.e., their use frequencies are widely different (see IV-A below for more). The most frequently used form is *makilay*, as exemplified in the following:

(4) a. *na-n* *nemwu* *chakha-y.* *chensa-kath-ay.* ***makilay***.
I-TOP very be.good-END angel-be.like-END DM
'I am a good (girl). (I'm) like an angel. DM (= '(X) rashly says like this.')'
(2018.05.03, Instagram post; recited from Rhee, 2019)

b. *na-n* *cengmal* *chakha-ko* *ippe-e.* ***makilay***.
I-TOP really be.nice-and be.pretty-END DM
'I am really nice and pretty. DM (= '(X) rashly says like this.')' (Rhee 2013: 481, modified)

c. *ppa* *na-ø* *onul* *cemsim-ø* *sa-cw-e.* ***makilay***.
older.brother I-(DAT) today lunch-(ACC) buy-BEN-END DM
'Older brother, buy me lunch today. DM (= '(X) rashly says like this.')' (Rhee 2013: 481, modified)

d. [I am very happy to participate in the lucky draw event.]
ce-ø *ppop-a.cwu-si-myen* *tay.pakna-si-l.kkey-e-yyo.* ***makilay***.

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I:HUM-(ACC) pick-BEN-HON-if hit.jackpot-HON-FUT-END-POL DM
'If you pick me (to be the winner) your business will hit the jackpot. DM (= (X) rashly says like this.)
(2013.05.13 online posting at jachulsa.com)

In the excerpts (4a) and (4b) above, the speakers comment on their own personality and appearance to their SNS audiences, and upon completion of the statement (note the sentence-enders *-ay* and *-e*), the DM *makilay* (literally meaning '(X) rashly says like this') is included as an addendum, as if it were a sentence spoken by a third party. It is to be noted that Korean often omits the sentential arguments (including the syntactic subject). The omission is not only possible but also desirable in contexts where the argument is situationally recoverable or unimportant. The identity of the missing argument may remain ambiguous; it can be 'I' or 's/he' or 'someone', but in the context of the DM *makilay* the implicit subject is understood to be third person 's/he', the referent of which is the speaker (see IV-B below for more). The use of the DM *makilay* in this example mitigates the audience's uneasiness about the speaker's/writer's blatant self-praise by implying self-deprecation. Similarly, in (4c) and (4d), each speaker makes a request: one to her boyfriend or older male friend (called 'older brother') to buy food for her (4c), and the other to the business owner to pick her as the winner of the lucky draw for a luxurious bike. In both contexts, the speakers know their request is either too much or impossible, thus they mitigate the illocutionary force by deploying the DM *makilay* whereby they acknowledge the inappropriateness of the request and relieve the addressee of the burden of compliance.

Due to space constraints, we cannot exemplify all *makilay*-family DMs, but the following two excerpts (of the proximal, diminutive *makyolay* and the proximal, connective *makileko*) will serve the purpose of illustrating other modified DMs (note that *khkh* in (6a) and *hh* in (6b) are letter-based emoticons for the laughter ideophone describing the multiple bursts of air in laughter).

(5) a. (An amateur street artist, volunteering in a communal project of reviving an old village, participates in repairing an old well-wall with cement and drawing on it, and finds the job too difficult to enjoy.)
kulayto na icey-n ceypep pyek micangha-y.cwu-nun hoysa
but I now-TOP fairly wall do.cement.masonry-BEN-ADN company
chwicikha-yto toy-keyss-ta ~. ***makyolay***. *khkh*
get.employed-even be.good-FUT-DEC DM EMO:LAUGH
'Still, my (cement mason skills have become such that) I can fairly competently work at a cement mason company~. DM (= '(X) rashly says like this.') ha ha' (2011.06.26 SNS posting on streetart.history.com)

b. (A posts a video strip of her young son gladly sharing his ice-cream with her, and B responds to the posting.)
B: [Your son is very kind.]
A: *na-ø talm-ase hh* ***makileko***
I-(ACC) take.after-because EMO:LAUGH DM
'Because he takes after me. ha ha DM (= '(X) rashly says like this.')' (2024.02.17 SNS posting on Meta, threads.net)

Although the DMs *makyolay* and *makileko* illustrated in (5) above are slightly different in form from those in (4), their functions are essentially the same. In other words, in (5a) the speaker makes an audacious claim that, with only limited experience as a volunteer cement mason, she has become a professional cement mason, and then, acknowledging the absurdity of her claim, she adds the DM *makyolay* to say 'She rashly says like this' as mitigation of her claim. In a similar vein, the speaker A in (5b) responds that her son's being kind-hearted is because he takes after her, which, in effect, is tantamount to the claim that she is kind-hearted herself, and adds the DM *makileko*, which literally means '(She) rashly says like this, and' (note that the final *-ko* is a connective).

B. Makmallo

As briefly alluded to in III-A above, *mak* is an adjective/adverb denoting 'rash(ly), crude(ly), coarse(ly)' (see also IV-A below for more). The lexeme can be used as a derivational prefix to verbal, adverbial, or nominal roots to designate 'recklessness' or 'low quality' (Rhee, 2020c). In particular, when it is prefixed to a noun, it derives a noun denoting low quality, e.g., *mak-tocang* 'cheap wooden seal', *mak-kwukswu* 'cheap buckwheat noodles', *mak-notong* 'menial labor', *mak-tampay* 'cheap tobacco without filter', etc. *Mak-mal* 'coarse word' denotes words, expressions, or speech acts that are too straightforward and lack decorum, manners, or refinement, and it typically has no markers signaling politeness or honorification toward the addressee. The expression *makmallo* (< *mak-mal-lo*) consists of *mak* 'coarse', *mal* 'word' and the instrumental marker *-lo* 'with'; thus, compositionally it means 'with a coarse word, in coarse words'.

When *makmallo* functions as a DM (see IV-A below for its grammaticalization into a DM), it carries a function similar to that of the *makilay*-family DMs, i.e., mitigator. In other words, the use of *makmallo* signals that what is to follow is a straightforward (and thus often avoidable) expression. The use is exemplified in the following excerpts, taken from Rhee (2019).

(6) a. (Wife to her husband, who criticizes her for not following the doctor's suggestions,)
makmallo *nwu-ka ne-hanthey keseyha-la-myen ha-kyess-ni?*
DM someone-NOM you-DAT castrate-COMP-if do-FUT-Q
'DM (= 'To put it bluntly') if someone tells you to, would you castrate yourself?' (1998 Drama *Kecismal* Episode #5)

b. (Mother, to her son who sides with his wife and asks his mother to be nicer to his wife,)
[Are you saying that your wife is more important than your own mother who raised you for 21 years?]

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makmallo *yeca-n* *tto* *et-umyen* *kuman-i-ciman*
DM woman-TOP again acquire-if end-be-but
pwumocasik-un *ttey-llay-ya* *ttey-l.swu.eps-nun-ke-y-a*
parent.child-TOP detach-ATTM-CONC detach-be.unable-ADN-NOMZ-be-END
'DM (= 'To put it bluntly') the relation to a woman ends when a man finds another woman, but the relation between the parents and children cannot be severed no matter what.' (2006 Drama *Somwunnan chilkongcwu* Episode #4)

Excerpt (6a) is taken from a scene in a drama where the speaker is protesting to her husband, who blames her for being stubborn and irrational because she is not following the doctor's recommendation for hysterectomy to avoid uterus cancer. She is reluctant to accept the suggested surgery because removing her uterus means losing important femininity. Since her husband sides with the doctor, she makes reference to castration in the rhetorical question, knowing that it is unthinkable for her husband. Incidentally, the word *kesey* 'castration' is typically used for animal neutering, rarely used for humans, and borders on taboo. Thus, the question is prefaced by the DM *makmallo* 'to put it bluntly; in coarse words' in order to mitigate the harshness of the analogy. Similarly, (6b) is also taken from a scene in a drama, in which the speaker, the mother of the addressee, is chiding her son after he asks her to treat his wife more nicely. The conflict between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law is a proverbial familial problem in Korean culture. The speaker in the scene alludes to divorce, a very nearly taboo topic in the society. Knowing how objectionable the topic is, the speaker prefaces her statement with the self-deprecating DM *makmallo* 'to put it bluntly; in coarse words'.

IV. Discussion

The development of the 'crude'-DMs exemplified above that originated from the lexeme *mak* reveals intriguing cognitive and discursive strategies with respect to grammaticalization of linguistic forms. In the following, we will discuss grammaticalization, feigned speaker-shift strategy, meta-discursive strategy, intersubjectification, prosody, and positionality, in turn.

A. Grammaticalization

The origin of the core lexical item in the 'crude'-DMs is *mak*, which in contemporary Korean is polyfunctional across grammatical categories, e.g., adjective 'coarse', adverb 'coarsely', derivational prefix 'of low quality', among others. However, the lexical origin is deeper, originating from the Middle Korean verb *mak-* denoting 'block, seal off, plug, stuff (a hole)', which, with the adverbializing suffix *-o*, later became an adverb *mako* 'in the manner of blocking/sealing' (first attested in 1775 *Yekeyuhaypo*, Choi & Kim, 1997, p. 310).[4] The meaning later became subjectified to mean 'completely, firmly, forcefully' (now obsolete in Modern Korean; Rhee, 2020c). The Modern Korean adverb *makwu* 'randomly, carelessly' subjectified from 'completely, forcefully' in its predecessor *mako*, and is first attested in the historical corpora in 1896 newspaper articles (*Toklipsinmwun*, The Independence) where it referred to reckless beating of a person (*makwu ttayli-* [coarsely beat]), thoughtlessly digging up farmland (*makwu phacyeschi-* [coarsely dig up]), taking others' property by force (*makwu spays-* [coarsely take by force]), arresting people improperly (*makwu capaka-* [coarsely haul away]), etc. (Rhee, 2013).

In Modern Korean, the source adverbial *makwu* has undergone both a phonological reduction into *mak(wu)* and semantic splits. These processes resulted in forming multiple layers with the former imprudence meaning 'coarsely' for *mak(wu)*; the immediacy meaning 'without hesitation' for *mak(wu)*; and the new imminence meaning 'be about to, just at the verge of, just at the point of, just now' for *mak* (Rhee, 2020c). The 'crude'-DMs are based on the older meaning of the source adverbial. The heterosemes of *mak* are listed in (7) below:

(7) Heterosemes of *mak* (Rhee, 2020c, pp. 387-402)
a. *mak-* v. 'block, seal off'
b. *mak* adj. 'coarse'
c. *mak-* pref. 'cheap, low quality'
d. *mak(wu)* adv. (< *makwu* < *mako* < *mak-o* [coarse-ADVZ])
(i) 'coarsely, without care, without planning, recklessly, uncontrollably'
(ii) 'without hesitation, on the spur of the moment, straightforwardly, fiercely'
e. *mak* adv. 'be about to, just now, just then'

From the core lexeme *mak*, especially with the meaning (7d), the 'crude'-DMs were formed. As indicated in III-A, *makilay* is a full-fledged sentence (with an implicit subject), consisting of *mak* 'coarsely', *ilehkey* 'like this' (note that this can be further broken down, cf. III-A), *ha-* 'say', and the sentence-ender *-e*. Also, as shown in III-B above, the DM *makmallo* is an adverbial, consisting of *mak* 'coarse', *mal* 'word', and the instrumental suffix *-lo*. We describe each of their grammaticalizations in turn in the following paragraphs.

The expression *makilay* seems to have started its life as a reportative speech act, denoting '(X) recklessly says like this', with reference to someone who said something inappropriate. For instance, an example in Kim (2020, p. 226, modified) illustrates the point.

[4] The meaning of 'stuff an empty hole' of the verb *mak-* is related to the verb *mek-* 'eat', which forms ablaut-based doublets with the former. Korean has a number of ablaut-based doublets such as *mas* 'n. taste' and *mes* 'n. beauty'; *cas-* 'v. spin' and *ces-* 'v. stir'; etc.

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(8) *kyay-ka* *na-hanthey* *"socwu* *masy-e"* ***mak*** ***ilay***
that.guy-NOM I-DAT soju drink-END coarsely say.like.this:END
'That guy (says) to me, "Drink soju." (He) recklessly says like this.' (Kim, 2020, p. 226)

In the example above, the speaker is narrating what happened between her and a man who urged her to drink soju, a type of cheap, hard Korean liquor. The narrator thinks it was inappropriate (though she does not explicitly state this in the example), probably because urging a woman to drink, especially cheap, hard liquor, and employing neither an honorification nor a politeness marker, are evidently out of decorum. Naturally, the expression is loaded with critical overtones. It is also noteworthy that the expression usually does not contain the past-tense marker although it always pertains to a past event (e.g., 'He says like this' instead of 'He said like this'), most likely to dramatize the event and make it more vivid as if it were happening at the moment of speech. The accusatory overtone has become the most prominent pragmatic effect in the development of *makilay*, which came into existence around the turn of the 21st century and was widely used in spoken registers among the young generation, especially young girls, until around 2015 (Rhee, 2013). Its popularity in spoken discourse is fast declining in Present-Day Korean (PDK), but it still circulates widely in written registers, especially in social media posts.

Since the decline of the circulation of *makilay* is apparent in PDK, it would be interesting to see the change of use frequency that has occurred over the last decade (2013-2024), comparing the statistics provided in Rhee (2013) with more current statistics. This comparison is restricted to items included in Rhee (2013) in his statistics of a google data search dated May 22, 2013, and to the more current statistics based on search results dated December 28, 2024, using the same search method. Table 2 shows the change of use seen in the past decade (N.B. the results do not discriminate DM and non-DM uses).

TABLE 2
MAKILAY-FAMILY DMS GOOGLE SEARCH HITS
(CONN: CONNECTIVE; DS: DISTAL; DIM: DIMINUTIVE; PR: PROXIMAL; POL: POLITE; END: SENTENCE-ENDER)

Form	Features	Hits in 2013	Hits in 2024	Percentage increase
a. *makilay*	PR, SE	661,000	4,260,000	+ 544%
b. *makileko*	PR, CONN	611,000	863,000	+ 41%
c. *makilayyo*	PR, POL, END	138,000	360,000	+ 160%
d. *makyolay*	PR, DIM, END	208,000	247,000	+ 18%
e. *makilekoyo*	PR, POL, CONN	46,600	469,000	+ 906%
f. *makyolayyo*	PR, DIM, END	7,820	1,090	- 86%
g. *makcelay*	DS, END	4,530	467,000	+ 1,020%
h. *makcolay*	DS, DIM, END	569	67,200	+ 1,171%
i. *makcelayyo*	DS, POL, END	99	46	- 53%
j. *makcolayyo*	DS, DIM, POL, END	2	441,000	+ 22,049,900%

Table 2 provides a number of interesting aspects of *makilay*-family DMs, most notably that they are still in wide circulation, disproving the notion that they have fallen into disuse. In written discourse, the increase in token frequency is remarkable, especially so with the representative form (a) *makilay*. In terms of proportion, the growth of (j) *makcolayyo* (distal, diminutive, polite, sentence-ender) is significant, from being nearly non-existent (2 hits) to becoming one of the most common DMs (441,000 hits). Furthermore, the frequency of certain forms, such as (g) *makcelay* and (h) *makcolay*, has increased by more than 1,000 percent. Regarding (f) *makyolayyo* and (i) *makcelayyo* (in shaded cells), there is a conundrum around why the hit counts decreased. Conceding that those two occurred at fairly low frequency in 2013 (7,820 and 99 hits, respectively), the decrease in 2024 cannot be easily accounted for if we assume that the data stored in Google's database has remained unchanged since the initial search. In any case, this particular detail may be insignificant in light of the overall picture of how the frequency of the *makilay*-family DMs has changed over the past decade.

On the other hand, the phrasal expression *makmallo*, with the literal meaning 'in coarse words', is first found in a 1929 newspaper article in the referenced corpus, as exemplified below with modification:

(9) *uylon-ul* *ha-taka-nun* ***makmallo*** *"mancwu-lo* *ka-ci"* *ha-ko*
discussion-ACC do-TRANS-TOP in.coarse.words [name]-DIR go-COMT say-and
wuli-nun *ip̣pelus-kathi* *oyi-n-ta*
we-TOP common.phrase-like recite-PRES-DEC
'While discussing the issues (when we cannot find solutions), we tend to repeat in coarse words, "Let's go to Manchuria (that will solve the problem)."' (*Chosunilbo Daily*, February 12, 1929)

In the above excerpt, the writer criticizes the platitudinous attitude of people who are less interested in actively solving problems, as they are more interested in running away from them and repeating clich és about leaving the country. In the excerpt, *makmallo* is a manner adverbial and, at the same time, *makmal* 'coarse words' refers to the appositional quoted utterance. It is noteworthy that in earlier attestations, *makmallo* often occurs embedded in clauses rather than standing alone, as shown in the following examples of non-DM usage:

(10) a. ***makmallo*** *ha-myen* *michinsalam-kachi* *khunkil* *kawuntey-lo*
in.coarse.words say-if insane.person-like big.road middle-DIR
hwipssul-myense *hyen-uy* *cip-ulo* *ttwieka-n-ta-nun* *kes-un…*
sweep-while [name]-GEN house-DIR run-PRES-DEC-ADN NOMZ-TOP

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'(That) he was, if I say in coarse words, like an insane person running to Hyun's house through the middle of the big road in a sweeping manner was…' (*Chosunilbo Daily,* July 18, 1933)

b. *satto-nun* *kwichanh-ta-nun* *tus-i* ***makmallo*** *capattey-ss-nuntey*
magistrate-TOP be.annoyed-COMP-ADN appearance-ADVZ in.coarse.words deny-PST-CONN
'The magistrate denied (it) with coarse words making it seem that he is annoyed and…' (*Dongailbo Daily*, July 6, 1972)

In these excerpts, *makmallo* in (10a) is a modifying adverbial 'in coarse words' for the modified verb 'say' in a conditional clause, and similarly, *makmallo* in (10b) is a manner adverbial modifying 'deny'. While manner adverbials are widely known to be the source of DMs (Traugott & Dasher, 2002; Traugott, 2022), in the excerpts above, the manner adverbial *makmallo* had not yet acquired syntactic freedom, a crucial property in the development of DMs. As a matter of fact, many instances of *makmallo*, even in the latter half of the 20th century in the KAIST KORTERM Corpus, occur as bound to the sentences in which they occur, for example, *makmallo malipnita* 'I'm saying in coarse words', *makmallo xx-lako chipsita* 'let's hypothesize it as xx in a coarse language', *makmallo hamyen* 'if I say in coarse words', *makmallo hayse* 'as said in coarse words', etc. (Rhee, 2019). Although the DM usage of *makmallo* is recorded in the early 20th century, it is only in the 1990s when it began to occur at a high frequency in news reports. In PDK, *makmallo* is frequently used both in speaking and writing as a device for mitigation.

B. Feigned Speaker-Shift Strategy

An interesting aspect of the development of 'crude'-DMs is the adoption of feigned speaker-shift strategy, in which 'crude'-DMs are used as a signal that the speaker has adopted or is about to adopt a switched perspective in what has just been said or in what is to follow. For example, the DM *makilay* '(X) recklessly says this' clearly signals the speaker's shift, and *makmallo* 'in coarse words', while less prominent than *makilay*, also shows the speaker distancing themselves from the text being produced. The motivation for the adoption of the feigned speaker-shift is discursively straightforward – preemption of potential protest from the addressee by way of self-deprecation.

To elaborate, the speaker, by using *makilay*, for instance, is employing the strategy of expressing a hypothetical third-party's potential response or evaluation of the utterance (Rhee, 2013). This shift is facilitated by the idiosyncrasy of Korean syntax, wherein sentential arguments may be freely omitted as long as they are recoverable from the context. Due to the inherited property of reportative function from its earlier usage, the naturally understood subject of the DM predicate is third-person ("S/he says this recklessly"). Therefore, the discursive meaning of "S/he says this recklessly" is, in effect, "I already know I am shameless to say this, so you don't need to blame me for that." This is clear in the examples given in (4a) and (4c), repeated here for convenience as (11a) and (11b), respectively, and their interpretation as (11a') and (11b'), respectively:

(11) a. *na-n* *nemwu* *chakha-y.* *chensa-kath-ay.* ***makilay***
I-TOP very be.good-END angel-be.like-END DM
'I am a good (girl). (I'm) like an angel. DM (= '(She) rashly says like this.')' (2018.05.03, Instagram post)

b. *cɐppa* *na-ø* *onul* *cemsim-ø* *sa-cw-e* ***makilay***
older.brother I-(DAT) today lunch-(ACC) buy-BEN-END DM
'Older brother, buy me lunch today. DM (= '(She) rashly says like this.')' (Rhee 2013: 481, modified)

(11) a'. Locution: "I am a good girl. I'm like an angel. "Oh, she impudently says something like this!""
Illocution: "I am a good girl. I'm like an angel. Oh, I know what I just said is not appropriate, so don't be harsh on me."

b'. Locution: "Older brother, buy me lunch today. "Oh, she impudently says something like this!""
Illocution: "Older brother, buy me lunch today. Oh, I know what I just said is an inappropriate request, so don't take it too seriously."

This state-of-affairs, involving the imagined third-party speaker's negative evaluation as a plain juxtaposed utterance, is reminiscent of such notions as 'polyphony' (Bakhtin, 1986; Buchstaller, 2014; Rhee, 2016a, b), and 'speech within speech and speech about speech' (Vološinov, 1930, p. 115). One immediate discursive effect of deploying the *makilay* DM is that the speaker can say something that they would not be able to say otherwise, being relieved of the burden of blame for an inappropriate speech act, and, furthermore, the addressee is relieved of the burden of agreement to the statement or of compliance to the request. As argued in Rhee (2013), the benefit of using these DMs is that the speaker can say something extreme under the disguise of someone else's, i.e., the implied third-person's, utterance, resembling the so-called 'borrowed mouth' phenomenon (Rhee, 2009). In other words, by virtue of having been produced, the speaker's statement or request is valid although not to be taken seriously, in a delicate discourse situation that Koreans often call *nongtam kathun cintam* 'earnest talk in disguise of jest' (cf. the English idiom *speaking half in jest, half in earnest*).

A similar observation can be made with the DM *makmallo* 'in coarse words', which is typically used at the left-periphery (LP; see IV-E below). By deploying *makmallo*, the self-appraisal of the statement or question in advance signals that the speaker is aware of the coarseness of the content and 'detaches' themselves from the utterance. By using the DM *makmallo*, the speaker is in effect saying, "I would not say this, but someone might say in a coarse language…". This preempts the addressee's potential protest at the lack of refinement of the expression (Rhee, 2019).

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The feigned speaker-shift strategy is an excellent example of the speaker's linguistic manipulation for discursive needs, analogous to the comments made by an omniscient narrator in works of fiction. This is also consonant with Palacas' (1989, p. 514) characterization of parentheticals as providing second-order reflection, commentary, or evaluation upon the anchor or host proposition that precedes or follows 'crude'-DMs. Such parentheticals as described in Palacas' (1989) and other studies (e.g. Dehé & Kavalova, 2007, and the works therein) may not switch the perspectives in terms of the 'speaker', but in the case of the 'crude'-DMs, especially the *makilay*-family DMs, the switching of perspectives and speakers is a unique and prominent aspect of the DM use (Rhee, 2019). It also bears relevance to the notions of 'hypothetical discourse' (Golato, 2012) and 'rhetorical strategy' (Koo, 2010; Koo & Rhee, 2013), and some similar instances of preemption of face-threatening acts or objection (Haiman, 1998; Beeching, 2002; Brinton & Traugott, 2005; Horie, 2012; Koo, 2015; Grieve, 1996; as cited in Beeching, 2009; Mišković-Luković et al., 2009; Beeching, 2009; Sanso, 2024).

C. Meta-Discursive Strategy

Another aspect closely related to the feigned speaker-shift is meta-discursive strategy. The use of the 'crude'-DMs shows that the speaker, while engaged in language production, is monitoring their own utterances and making evaluative judgments of them (Rhee, 2013). This phenomenon is immediately reminiscent of such notions as 'parentheticals' (Thompson & Mulac, 1991), 'comment clauses' (Brinton, 2008), or 'theticals' (Kaltenböck et al., 2011, 2014), all of which refer to material inserted into the utterance being produced but which conceptually belong on the meta-textual level.

In other words, the 'crude'-DMs are not propositionally bound to the host utterance, and in fact belong to an entirely different linguistic plane, i.e., the 'thetical grammar' rather than the 'sentence grammar' in Kaltenböck et al.'s (2011) terms. Additionally, the use of the 'crude'-DMs exactly coincides with Corum's (1975, p. 135) description of 'parenthetic adjuncts' which are used for speaker evaluation, softening, and a "sneaky" or deceptive use "to seduce the addressee into believing the content of the proposition" (Rhee, 2019).

D. Intersubjectification

The development of the 'crude'-DMs shows the occurrence of elaborate 'intersubjectification' processes (Traugott & Dasher, 2002; Narrog, 2010). The speakers attenuate the illocutionary force of their talk by protecting both the face of the addressee and their own in a potentially face-threatening act. When the DMs develop into full-fledged markers of mitigation, the intersubjective function becomes a part of the semantic-pragmatic meanings of the form, a process termed 'intersubjectification' (Traugott & Dasher, 2002). In other words, when the source forms of the 'crude'-DMs grammaticalize as mitigating DMs, the new meaning departs from the propositional meaning of the sources (i.e., it is no longer an expression that merely describes a state of affairs) and becomes a signal to the addressee to be aware that the speaker is cognizant of the negative implications of what they just said or what they are about to say, and thus the addressee should not feel obligated to comply with the request or to respond to the statement.

As is widely known, face-consideration is a discursive tactic to show politeness toward the addressee, a universal aspect in language use (Brown & Levinson, 1987). For instance, by using the DM *makmallo* 'in coarse words', the speaker is conveying the message: 'I know my word choice in the following is crude, so don't criticize me.' This is well illustrated with the example (6a), repeated here as (12) for convenience with its interpretation in (13).

(12) (Wife to her husband, who criticizes her for not following the doctor's suggestions)

makmallo	*nwu-ka*	*ne-hanthey*	*keseyha-la-myen*	*ha-kyess-ni?*
DM	someone-NOM	you-DAT	castrate-COMP-if	do-FUT-Q

'DM (= 'To put it bluntly') if someone tells you to, would you castrate yourself?' (1998 Drama *Kecismal* Episode #5)

(13) Locution: "To put it bluntly, if someone tells you to, would you castrate yourself?"
Illocution: "I know this sounds unthinkable and offensive to you, so don't be harsh on me for asking you this. If someone tells you to, would you castrate yourself?"

E. Prosody and Positionality

Prosody and positionalities are important issues in DM studies (Hancil, 2013; Sohn, 2016; Song, 2013; Kim & Sohn, 2015; Rhee, 2020a). As exemplified in the preceding exposition, the *makilay*-family DMs occur at RP, i.e., they are anaphoric (i.e., backward-scoping) DMs. It has been shown that in Korean, unlike the DMs that occur at LP or utterance-medially, DMs that occur at RP tend to be located in the enveloping prosodic contour of the preceding sentence (Kim & Sohn, 2015; Rhee, 2020a). However, although the DM *makilay* is located at RP (Rhee, 2013), they generally do not occur within the prosodic envelope of the preceding remarks (see, however, a thetical's characteristic of prosodic separation from its anchor, as described in Kaltenböck et al., 2011, p. 853), nor do they follow a noticeable pause in speech. In other words, *makilay* closely follows the preceding utterance without a break, but it is not prosodically incorporated in the utterance. The motivation for this interesting situation seems to be intuitively clear. For instance, the prosodic-contour break seems to have been motivated by the speaker's desire to mark the shifted perspectives from the first speaker's to the third-party's. At the same time, the absence of a noticeable pause seems motivated by the speaker's anxiety over the possibility of incurring the addressee's displeasure by a seemingly shameless demand, question, claim, or statement (Rhee, 2013). That is to say, the speaker wants to foil the addressee becoming displeased by the utterance and responding to it

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by quickly intervening with the hypothetical third-party's evaluation that the remark was reckless and thus should not be taken seriously (Rhee, 2019).

On the other hand, the DM *makmallo*, as illustrated in the preceding description, occurs invariably at LP as a cataphoric (i.e., forward-scoping) DM. It also occurs with a separate prosody from the following statement, and is normally spoken with a pause and often with a non-falling intonation (Rhee, 2013). The motivation for this manifestation pattern is also intuitively straightforward. The prosodic-contour separation and the pause may be triggered by the desire to signal the perspective shift and to prepare the mind of the addressee to anticipate something that the speaker would not ordinarily say. The non-falling intonation may be motivated by the desire to make the DM perceptually prominent and thus to attract the addressee's attention to what is to follow (Rhee, 2019).

Previous studies have examined the asymmetry of functions of DMs by their positionality, known as functional asymmetry hypothesis, which suggests that LP is the locus of DMs generally marking subjective functions, whereas RP is the locus of DMs generally marking intersubjective functions (Onodera, 2007; Degand, 2014; Traugott, 2014; Beeching & Detges, 2014; Onodera & Traugott, 2016). Mitigation and preempting the addressee's negative response toward 'crude'-DMs are undoubtedly intersubjective functions. However, the 'crude'-DMs show nearly-exclusive positional preferences, with the *makilay*-family DMs at RP and the *makmallo* DM at LP. This situation suggests that the hypothesis of functional asymmetry by the periphery is not supported by the 'crude'-DMs in Korean.

V. Summary and Conclusion

In this paper, we have addressed 'crude'-DMs in Korean, which arose from the core lexeme *mak* 'crude, coarse'. The 'crude'-DMs consist of *makilay* '(X) crudely says like this' and its formal and functional relatives, formed by modulation of distance, diminutivity, politeness, and verbal suffixes (of sentence-ender or connective), and the manner adverbial *makmallo* 'in coarse words'.

We have seen that the 'crude'-DMs largely perform double duty: on one hand, they meet the needs of the speaker's attitudinal stance of showing politeness (by neutralizing negative aspects of their own utterance) in interactive discourse scenes, and on the other hand, they sanction their intended speech (which might be hurtful or burdensome), under the guise of someone else's utterance. The emergence of the 'crude'-DMs shows intriguing aspects involving (i) meta-discursive strategies wherein the speaker is monitoring their own utterances, (ii) shifted perspectivization in that an imaginary third-party's negative evaluative viewpoint is adopted, (iii) rhetorical strategies of presenting assertions or questions that are extreme to the point of inordinateness but thus more forceful and persuasive, and (iv) elaborate intersubjectification in that the speaker attenuates the illocutionary force of their own talk by self-deprecation in a face-threatening act. In conclusion, the development of the 'crude'-DMs shows the intricate discourse cognitive strategies that motivated their grammaticalization.

Appedix. Abbreviations

ACC: accusative; ADN: adnominalizer; ADVZ: adverbializer; ATTM: attemptive; BEN: benefactive; COMP: complementizer; COMT: committal; CONC: concessive; CONN/CON: connective; D: distal; DAT: dative; DEC: declarative; DIM: diminutive; DIR: directional; DM: discourse marker; EMO: emoticon; END: sentence-ender; FUT: future; GEN: genitive; HON: honorific; HUM: humilific; INST: instrumental; MODE: mode-converb; NOM: nominative; NOMZ: nominalizer; P: proximal; POL: politeness; PRES: present; PST: past; Q: question; TOP: topic; TRANS: transferentive.

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