

Establishing common ground in discourse: The role of discourse marker *maliya* in Korea

1. Introduction

This paper investigates the nature of Korean discourse marker *maliya* in spontaneous conversational data. The focus of the paper is on the interactive use of *maliya* as a common ground marker. Most previous studies have focused on a single primary function of *maliya*, for example as a hedger (Lee and Park 1991) or an expletive (Noh 1996), as in (1). Yim (1998) and Suh (2010) suggested two other main functions of *maliya*, namely, to attract attention to the following information, as in (2), and to create emphatic effect by identifying the preceding information as in (3). However, there have not been any notable attempts to discuss the functions of *maliya* based on naturally occurring data, and this paper intends to fill this gap, examining the usage of *maliya* on the basis of the spoken corpus compiled by the 21st Sejong project.

(1) Na-nun *maliya* ku nyesuk-ul *maliya* cuk-tolok twutulkyecwu-ess-tan *maliya*
1SG-TOP MALIYA the guy-ACC MALIYA die-SUF beat-PST-ADN MALIYA
'I almost beat the guy to death.'

(2) kulentey, Celswu-ka *maliya*, ipeney kyotongsako-lul khuke tanghay-ss-tanta
by.the.way, Celswu-NOM MALIYA this.time traffic.accident-ACC heavily have-PST-DEC
'By the way, Celswu (Expletive!) had a heavy traffic accident this time.'
(Yim 1998: xx, gloss and translation added)

(3) A: ce wiey ceke com kkenaycwe
there over MALIYA that please give
'Give me that thing over there?'

B: enu ke?
'Which one?'

A: ceke *maliya*
that MALIYA
'that one' (emphatic stance indicated by *maliya*)

2. Historical development of *malita* and *maliya*

Korean *malita* (N. *mal* ‘word’+ COP *i* ‘be’ + DEC *-ta*) was derived from a combination of a lexical noun meaning ‘word’ followed by copula *i* and declarative sentence ender *ta*. An example of *mal* used as a lexical noun meaning ‘word’ is illustrated in (4). When *mal* is used in cleft constructions as in (5), it is reanalyzed as a complementizer and often also as an emphatic marker, as evident in (5).

- (4) *Hamsayng-un cwungsayng-ul ilkheth-nun mal-i-ta*
 Hamsayng-NOM all mankind –ACC refer.to –ADN word-be-DEC
 ‘Hamsayng is the word referring to all mankind.’ (*anlakukthaycacen* 1576)

- (5) *i kicip-a, an-doy-l mal-i-ta*
 this girl-VOC not-become-ADN COMP-be-DEC
 Lit. ‘This, girl, **it is that** (it) will not be possible’
 ‘Girl, I **am saying that** (it) will not be possible’ -> ‘Girl, it will not be possible!’
 (*chwunhyangcen* 18th century)

Along with *malita*, the sentence final marker *maliya* (N. *mal* ‘word’+ COP *i* ‘be’ + DEC *-ya*) was also used as a complementizer and emphatic marker in the 18th century as seen in (6). The sentence final particle *maliya* developed into a discourse marker with an interpersonal meaning as in (7) under the influence of final particle *ya*, a highly productive common ground marker. The final particle *-ya* has the function of emphasizing the speaker’s thoughts or intentions and inviting the addressee to be involved in the conversation (Co 2010).

- (6) *pilok cuelsAyk -i mos-toy-na*
 although rare.beauty-NOM not-become-but
makpwuin yangnyey kahi kopta mal-i-ya.
 Mrs. Yang very beautiful COMP-be-DEC
 Lit. ‘**It is that** although she is not a rare beauty, Mrs. Yang is very beautiful.’

‘I am saying that although she is not a rare beauty, Mrs. Yang is very beautiful.’

→ ‘Although she is not a rare beauty, Mrs. Yang is very beautiful!’

(*pingpingtyen* 18th century)

- (7) *nAy soncA-ul nuyla-sye chi-n-ta-n maliya*
my grandson-ACC who –HON beat-PRES-DEC-ADN DM
‘Who on earth is beating my grandson!?’ (*chwunhyangcen* 18th century)

Maliya occurred not only at the end of the sentence but also in the middle of the sentence, especially after a subject or a topic as in (8). Here, *maliya* has the function of introduce a topical referent, and *maliya* can be replaced by Korean topic marker-*nun*. However, *maliya*, in contrast to the topic marker *nun*, adds the meaning of speakers’ annoyance or complaint toward the addressee.

- (8) *canay maliya conay-manun kule-khi-ka swi-wulswu-nka*
You DM good-though so –do+NOMZ-NOM easy-can-Q
‘you! though it is good, is it easy to do so?’
‘Though it is good, is it easy for you to do so?’
(*sukungka* 19th)

In the early 20th, *maliya* was also used as a hedge which ‘weakens the illocutionary force of a statement’ (Watts, 2003: 169) as shown in (9). The use of *maliya* mitigates the utterance, and expresses politeness.

- (9) *maliya ney-to ele was-keys-ney*
Hedge you- also hard PST-may -PTL
‘You also may have had a hard time.’ (*cwukselwu* early 20th)

3. Discourse functions of *maliya* in the Sejong corpus (Contemporary Korean)

Based on an analysis of the uses of *maliya* in contemporary Korean in the Sejong corpus, we identified four major functions, namely, emphatic marker, counterexpectation marker, marker of speaker’s negative feeling, and a marker signaling that a given discourse topic is shared information between speaker and hearer. We elaborate on each of these functions below.

3.1 Emphatic marker

Discourse marker *maliya* is used to emphasize the whole utterance, and evoke the participation of the addressee in the discourse as in (10). In modern Korean, common ground marker *maliya* can co-occur with emotion adjectives to emphasize the speaker's feelings, as in (11) below, where *maliya* is also used by the speaker as a strategic device to evoke the addressee's empathy.

(10) A: ku kyoswunim-i

the professor-NOM

'The professor='

B: ung

'=Yes' (backchanneling)

A: hakkyo-eyta chen man-wen-ul kicungha-yss-ta-n *maliya*
school-to 10 million-won-ACC donate-PST-DEC-ADN DM

'The professor donated 10 million won (i.e. Korean dollars) to the university!'

B: a !

'Ah!'

(11) A: wuli-n dothay an toy-na? Pwulanhata-n *maliya*

1PL-NOM weed.out not become-Q nervous-ADN DM

'Are we weeded out? I am nervous about it, **you know**.'

B: Um

'Maybe, you are right'

Maliya is also used to confirm the shared knowledge between the participants in the discourse as in (12) and (13), where both speakers use *maliya* to express strong agreement with the previous utterance. In (12), discourse marker *kuleke* signals agreement, and *maliya* further intensifies the agreement. In (13), interestingly, whereas discourse marker *kulssey* 'well' is associated with avoiding giving an opinion or expressing uncertainty about the previous talk, the additional presence of *maliya*, however, drowns out the hesitation associated with *kulssey* because *maliya* identifies the previous utterance as shared belief.

(12) A: ettehkey kuke-l ta paykpeseynt ihayha-kwu-hay?

how it-ACC all 100% understand-and- do
'How can we understand it 100 %, and do it?'

B: kuleke *maliya*
DM DM
'Yes, indeed'

(13) A: wuli-ka yenlak-ul ceytaylo an-ha-yss-canha
1PL-NOM contact-ACC properly not-do-PST-DEC
'We didn't contact them properly.'

B: wuli onul ta cenhwaha-kilo ha-yss-nuntay,
1PL today all call-supposed do-PST- SEQ
'We were supposed to call them all today...'

A: kulssey *maliya*
well DM
'Yes, indeed'

3.2 Counterexpectation marker

Maliya is also used as a 'counterexpectation marker' (CE), which as defined by Heine et al. (1991: 194) expresses a contrast between what is asserted on the one hand and what is either presupposed or assumed to be the norm on the other. In (14), speaker B uses the CE marker *maliya* to clarify an apparent discrepancy between the utterance and the inference assumed as common ground. Speaker B also uses *maliya* in the interrogative context to express surprise caused by the discrepancy, and to seek confirmation from speaker A because his utterance is still surprising and unbelievable to speaker B.

(14) A: *cwunghakkyo ttay swul-ul paywe-ss-ci-mwe*
middle school when alcohol-ACC learn-PST-DEC-though
'When I went to middle school, I learned to drink though.'

Sensayngnim-tul-i cwu-canha wenlay.

teacher-PL-NOM give-PRT generally

'Teachers give alcohol to the students in general.'

B: *inkan-i cwunghakkyo ttay swul-ul cwunta-n maliya?*
man-NOM middle school when alcohol-ACC give-ADN CE

‘A man giving alcohol to middle school kids?!’

3.3 Marker of speaker’s negative feeling

In Korean discourse, *maliya* can also be used to mark the speaker’s negative feeling, especially to express a complaint or some annoyance, as in (15), where speaker A’s utterance contradicts speaker B’s expectation, and speaker B then replies with an utterance involving *maliya* as a strategic device to invite speaker A to recognize the implication of the utterance, and at the same time express annoyance toward A.

(15) A: kelssi na-to cincca ay-ka peyn cap-en ci
well 1SG-also really child-NOM pen catch-ADN NOMZ
olay toy-ss-kuna nukky-ess-canha
long become-PST-EXCL feel-PST-DEC

‘Well, I felt it has been a really long time since I didn’t study!’

B: kongpwu com ha-ci **maliya**, kongpwu-to an-ha-ko
study please do-IMP DM study-also not-do-CE

‘Please study! (**I am annoyed that you didn’t study**). Why don’t you study?’

2.4 Marker of a discourse topic

Maliya is also used to signal that a particular discourse topic is shared knowledge between speaker and hearer, as in (16) and (17). Common ground marker *maliya* also serves the function of eliciting the hearer’s attention to the new topic and signals an appeal to the involvement and cooperation of the addressee in the subsequent speech event. In (16), *maliya* introduces a topic of common interest and shared background knowledge, and in (17), the use of *maliya* further allows speaker A to introduce the topic, *Myengpin’s youngest sister*, not only as someone known to both speaker and hearer but to also elicit the hearer’s attention to the topical referent.

(16) ches-salang **maliya**, cal-toy-la- kula-yss-nuntay,
first-love DM well-become-intend-do-PST-and
yay-ka kuceney sakwi-ess-ten yeca-ka
3SG-NOM before date-PST-ADN woman-NOM

natana-nikka kapeli-te-la, kunang.
 appear-as leave-EVID-DEC without reason
 ‘First love, you know, I almost succeeded in my first love, but he left me as he met again
 the woman whom he dated previously.’

(17) A: *Myengpin-i maknay nwui maliya. Nay-ka yelhan sal ttay*
 Myengpin-NOM youngest sister DM 1SG-NOM eleven years.old when
thayenanun wul-um soli-l tul-ess-ketun
 born cry-NMZ sound-ACC hear-PST-PRT.
 ‘Myengpin’s youngest sister, **you know**, when I was eleven years old, I heard her cry
 soon after she was born.’

B: *acik nai-ka eli-kunyo*
 still age-NOM young-PRT
 ‘She is still young!’

4. The frequency of common ground marker *maliya*

The historical analysis of *maliya* is largely on the basis of UNICONC (Korean historical corpus), which comprise 6,606,332 words of 18th and 19th and 2,209,352 words of 20th. The analysis of common ground marker *maliya* in present-day Korean is largely based on data from the Sejong spoken corpus, which consists of spontaneous conversation data (500,000 words). As shown in 2, *maliya* was used as an emphatic marker and a marker of introducing a topical reference in the late 18th and 19th. In the early 20th, the hedging function of *maliya* was added. However, as displayed in Table 1, *maliya* occurred as a lexical expression (N. *mal* ‘word’+ COP *i* ‘be’ + DEC *-ta*)(72%) more frequently than discourse functions (28%) in the late 18th and 19th. The usage of *maliya* as a discourse marker increased to be 48% whereas it was still used as a lexical expression (52%) in the early 20th.

In the contemporary data, *maliya* is mostly used as a common ground marker (95%) while *maliya* has the lexical meaning (5%) of ‘mal’ in the single expression *mwusun maliya?* ‘what is said?’ only. As highlighted in Table 1, *maliya* occurs as an emphatic marker (72%) far more frequently than as a counterexpectation marker (12%), or as a marker of speaker’s negative feeling (10.5%), or as a marker to signal that a discourse topic is known or familiar to both speaker and hearer (5.5%). In the late 18th and early 19th, *maliya* was used to introduce a topic of the sentence or utterance whereas common

ground *maliya* in the present day is used to introduce an entire discourse. *maliya* does not occur as a hedger(0%) in the contemporary spoken data, which was used in the early 20th.

This analysis shows that *maliya* began to be used as a discourse marker in the 18th and is a fully developed common ground marker in the present day. These results imply that *maliya* is most frequently used to emphasize the speaker’s thoughts or feelings, and evoke the participation and empathy of the addressee. In addition, speakers use *maliya* to identify the previous utterance as common ground, and express strong agreement with it.

Table 1 Frequency of common ground marker *maliya*

Period	DM	lexical
late 18C ~ 19C	emphatic marker 14 topic introduction marker 1	54
Early 20C	emphatic marker 57 topic introduction marker 3 hedge 2	58
Contemporary	emphatic marker 145 topic introduction marker 11 counterexpectation marker 24 Negative emotion marker 21	5

5. Conclusion

We investigated the discourse functions of *maliya*: emphatic marker, counterexpectation marker, marker of speaker’s negative feeling, and marker signaling that a given topic is shared knowledge between speaker and hearer. Emphatic marker *maliya* has the functions of emphasizing speakers’ beliefs or feelings and eliciting the empathy of the addressee, and confirming the shared knowledge between the participants in the discourse. *Maliya* is also used as a counterexpectation marker to express a contrast or discrepancy between what is asserted and what is assumed to be the shared belief. *Maliya* is also used to express speaker’s strong emotion, especially complaint or annoyance when the speaker’s utterance is not acknowledged as common ground. *Maliya* is also used to introduce a discourse topic at the beginning or in the course of the conversation that is shared knowledge or belief between the speaker and the addressee.

Thus, *maliya* invites the addressee to be involved in the joint construction of a representation by drawing appropriate inferences, which are either acknowledged or exploited as common ground, whether explicitly stated or not.

References

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