

Clause final grounding and metonymy in Korean indirect requests

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This article proposes a Cognitive Grammar account of Korean conventional indirect requests and connective behavior. Sentence-ending particles (SEPs) are analyzed as grounding morphology that links clausal content to the speaker–addressee Ground. Clause type provides a default access path to a speech-act scenario, which may be overridden when an SEP profiles a subpart such as desire, ability, obligation, or intention. Mapping BEFORE, RESULT, and AFTER phases to Korean morphosyntax predicts the distribution of declaratives, interrogatives, and intention forms. It also accounts for the agent shift of *-ulkeyyo* in service talk and the preference for grammaticalized endings over periphrastic expressions. We extend the analysis to Sweetser’s domain shifts to show how *-umyen*, *-unikka*, *-ese*, and *-ciman* alternate across content, epistemic, and speech-act uses under clause-final anchoring. Integrating Panther & Thornburg’s scenario-based metonymy with CG grounding, the study links grammaticalized endings to speaker–hearer interaction in the usage event.

Keywords: cognitive grammar, sentence final endings, indirect speech acts, metonymy, Korean connectives

1. Introduction

This article argues that Korean grammar is organized around speech-act scenarios. It explains how utterances are grounded in the immediate interaction between speaker and hearer in the moment of speaking. We seek to explain clause types, final endings, and connectives through cognitively motivated links between scenario parts and grounding elements. To briefly illustrate our analysis, let us consider the conventional indirect request examples in (1)–(3). Example (1) states what the speaker wants, and hearers treat that as a request because a wish is one piece of the request scene. Example (2) checks a precondition and functions as a request. A negated permission form, such as (3), softens the request by ask-

ing whether a barrier is present. In general, declaratives encode speaker-centered desire, while interrogatives encode hearer-centered ability and permission.¹

- (1) chomyen-ey panmal-un samkaha-y cwu-si-ess-umyen
 first.meeting-LOC casual.speech-TOP refrain-do-CONN give-HON-PST-if
 hapnita.
 do-DC-POL
 ‘(I would appreciate it) if you could refrain from using casual speech upon first
 meeting.’ (NIKL)
- (2) ney-ka com chwuchen com hay-cwu-l swu iss-ni?
 you-NOM a.little recommend a.little do-give-FUT ability exist-Q.INT
 ‘Can you give me a few recommendations?’ (NIKL)
- (3) taum-i ani-la ipen-ey kunyang saymphul
 next.time-NOM NEG-CPL.CONN this.time-TEMP simply sample give-HON-if
 cwu-si-myen an-tway-yo?
 give-HON-if NEG-be.ok-Q. POL
 ‘Wouldn’t it be possible to give me a sample this time instead of next time?’
 (NIKL)

The scenario-based account (Panther & Thornburg 1998, 2003, 2004) and Cognitive Grammar (CG) account connect at the level of how utterances are anchored to the speech event.² In the scenario model, indirect requests arise when a speaker highlights one part of the request scenario, such as desire or ability, and the hearer infers the full act through a metonymic process.³ J Park’s (2015) work on Korean shows that modal expressions cluster with specific phases of the request scenario, which explains why particular endings are conventionally used for indirect requests. For example, ability questions belong to the *BEFORE* phase and are normally interrogatives, while obligation statements belong to the *RESULT* phase and are declaratives. The scenario model tells us why a given piece of language can license an indirect act. However, it does not by itself explain why Korean clause type and sentence-final morphology are central to these patterns. CG adds that explanation.

Langacker treats every finite clause as a symbolic unit anchored to the Ground. Ground refers to the immediate speech situation comprising the speaker (S), the hearer (H), and the here-and-now of the usage event; it serves as the deictic anchor that grounds person, tense, mood, modality, and definiteness. Clause

1. Examples (1)–(3) are drawn verbatim from the National Institute of the Korean Language (NIKL) Balanced Corpus, which is morphologically and syntactically tagged.

2. See Langacker (1987, 1991, 2001, 2008) for an overview of CG.

3. See also Panther (2022).

types are conventional resources that align with basic speech-act scenarios, while sentence-ending particles serve as grounding elements linking clausal content to the Ground. Korean endings such as *-ni* or *-antwayyo* illustrate this grounding role. Their semantic extensions are motivated by metonymic shifts in intention, and their performative force arises from their status as grounding morphemes. Similarly, connectives like *-ese* or *-umyen* expand from sequential or conditional meanings to epistemic and speech-act functions, reflecting how grounding shifts across content, knowledge, and interactional domains. In other words, while the scenario model shows how metonymy makes indirect requests interpretable, CG explains why certain forms are chosen. The CG framework thus provides the structural and interactional anchor for the scenario-based account. That framework makes it possible to describe Korean speech-act-sensitive grammar as the joint product of metonymy in scenarios and grounding in CG.

The article makes three contributions. First, it articulates a CG account of speech acts developed within Langacker's own framework. We base our analysis on the statement that clause types are grounded in basic speech acts and anchored to the speaker-hearer Ground, and that speech acts are conventional scenarios paired with clause types by default. Second, it formalizes how Panther & Thornburg scenarios predict Korean clause-type and sentence-ending selection in conventional indirect speech acts. The mapping from BEFORE/RESULT/AFTER phases to Korean modal frames and endings explains distributional facts in corpus and judgment data. Third, it extends the account to Korean connectives, showing how Sweetser's (1990) domain shifts (from content to epistemic and speech-act uses) integrate with CG grounding and scenario access.

In reviewing prior work, it is important to distinguish our approach from that of J. Park (2015) analyzes Korean conventional indirect requests within Panther & Thornburg's scenario model showing that specific modal expressions align with distinct phases of the request scenario. J. Park (2014), in turn, accounts for the polysemy of Korean connective endings by appealing to metonymy and metaphor. This particular piece adopts Sweetser's (1990) domain architecture to trace shifts from content to epistemic and speech-act uses. Neither study, however, employs CG. We show how the scenario-based and domain-based patterns described by J. Park can be understood within a unified CG account of speech acts. While J. Park (2014, 2015) demonstrates that modality and connectives in Korean systematically align with request scenarios and domain shifts, her analyses treat these as separate phenomena. The value of a CG account lies in its ability to provide a single, unified framework in which both patterns can be integrated. Grounding elements in CG are all conventional devices that tie conceptual content to the Ground of the current usage event. This allows us to view indirect requests and connective polysemy not as unrelated quirks of Korean, but as different manifestations of the

same mechanism: the anchoring of a scenario subpart to the discourse event. The CG perspective turns what appear to be pragmatic extensions into systematic features of the grammar itself. It also highlights Korean as a key test case for the general theory of how speech acts are encoded in grammar.

The organization of this article is as follows. Section 2 outlines CG and Panther & Thornburg's scenario model in broad terms. Section 3 then lays out the CG machinery: usage events, the Ground, clausal grounding, clause types, and default pairings with speech-act scenarios. It derives the necessary assumptions from Langacker (2008) and related work on discourse in CG. Section 4 summarizes Panther & Thornburg's scenario model and the role of illocutionary metonymy in conventional indirectness. Section 5 introduces the Korean empirical domains: (i) request-related modality and clause type; (ii) intention-type endings and agent shift (with *-ulkey* as the test case); and (iii) connective endings with domain shifts. Section 6 develops the analytical mapping: scenario phases to Korean morphosyntax via CG grounding, offering predictions about beneficiary structure, agent encoding, and degree of grammaticalization. Section 7 evaluates alternative analyses, briefly noting SAP (Speaker-Addressee Phrase)/treetop claims and explaining why a CG account suffices for the phenomena modeled here. Section 8 concludes with implications for cross-linguistic work on indirect speech acts and for the interface of grammar and interaction.

2. Background and theoretical integration

This section lays out the conceptual framework for the analysis. Our approach integrates three complementary perspectives: CG, Panther & Thornburg's scenario model of speech acts, and Sweetser's (1990) domain architecture. Each framework captures a distinct dimension of indirectness and the grammatical encoding of speech acts, and together they provide a unified explanation for the complex patterns observed in Korean. We also briefly review formal syntactic proposals, such as those within the Speaker-Addressee Phrase (SAP) or treetop approaches but argue that the empirical patterns of Korean speech acts can be captured effectively without positing additional syntactic projections.

2.1 CG and the scenario model

CG views linguistic units as symbolic pairings embedded in usage events. In this framework, clause types are not inert syntactic templates but conventional resources that align with basic speech-act scenarios. Declaratives, interrogatives, and imperatives are "grounded in particular speech acts (stating, questioning,

ordering).⁴ CG explicitly models default pairings between these three clause types and their corresponding speech-act scenarios, while allowing systematic re-pairings in context. This gives us a direct bridge from morphosyntax to illocution: form signals an invoked scenario, and grounding morphs anchor that scenario to speaker and addressee. More detailed accounts of CG are provided in Section 3.

Panther & Thornburg offer a compatible account from cognitive pragmatics. Illocutionary meaning is accessed metonymically through salient subparts of culturally conventional scenarios. Their work demonstrates how an utterance that profiles, for instance, the speaker's desire or the hearer's ability can stand for a request. This is because the profiled component is a constitutive phase of the request scenario. Illocutionary metonymy thus functions as a natural inference schema, since a salient part cues the whole act.⁵ While classic speech-act theory already recognized the phenomenon of indirectness, Panther & Thornburg's metonymic mechanism renders the mapping explicit and learnable, aligning with Searle's insight but grounding it in cognitive processes.

2.2 Sweetser's (1990) domain architecture

Langacker's explicit treatment of speech acts as "standard cultural models" that pair with clause types allows us to integrate Korean patterns of indirectness without positing an extra syntactic projection. The speech act is a scenario invoked at the discourse level. The same clause type can be re-paired with a different act when a metonymically salient subpart of a scenario is profiled. CG thus provides the representational primitives, such as Ground, conceptualizer, clausal grounding, and clause-type pairings, needed to connect utterance form to illocutionary force.

4. Wilcox et al. (2024) extend Cognitive Grammar to signed languages and show that nonmanual markers, such as facial gestures and body posture, function as grounding devices anchoring the utterance to discourse participants, in ways analogous to sentence-ending particles in spoken languages. Their evidence that visual prosody contributes to illocutionary meaning across modalities supports the universality of grounding structures and reinforces this paper's cross-modal perspective on the Ground.

5. Ahn and Yap (2023), building on their 2022 study of the grammaticalization of *com* 'a bit', show that the marker has developed from a scalar quantifier into a discourse-level mitigator for politeness and face management. Their analysis demonstrates how speakers exploit metonymic reinterpretation of scalar meaning to manage stance and alignment indirectly. This interactional reanalysis supports the Cognitive Grammar view that illocutionary meaning can emerge through scenario-based metonymic inference, without requiring additional syntactic projections.

At this point, however, clause types and sentence-final endings represent only part of the picture. Korean connectives also show systematic shifts in meaning, sometimes linking events in the world, sometimes linking evidence to conclusions, and sometimes licensing the act of speaking itself. To capture this polysemy, we adopt Sweetser's (1990) domain architecture, which distinguishes content, epistemic, and speech-act domains. As extensively discussed in J. Park (2014), the Korean data instantiate exactly these shifts. The endings *-umyen*, *-unikka*, and *-ciman* all move across these domains in predictable ways. For example, the conditional ending *-umyen* illustrates all three domains. In the content domain, (4) describes a straightforward conditional relation between two events. In the epistemic domain, the same ending expresses not a causal relation between two events but the speaker's inference, as shown in (5). In (5), the experience of going there serves as evidence for the conclusion. In the speech-act domain shown in (6), the ending no longer describes events or evidence but instead licenses the act of admitting something. The same form *-umyen* is thus used across three domains, and each use is conventional.

- (4) *cwusa mac-umyen kumpang kwaynchan-a-ci-l ke-yeyo.*
 injection get-if soon be.fine-CONN-become-FUT thing-CPL.POL
 'If you get a shot, you'll soon get better.' (NIKL)
- (5) *kakkai-eyse po-myen mok-to aphu-tela*
 close-LOC see-if neck-also hurt-RETRO
 'When (I) see it up close, (I find that) my neck also hurts.' (NIKL)
- (6) *kulehkey malha-myen pwuthak-ha-ki mianha-n-tey?*
 so say-if request-do-NML be.sorry-ADN-END
 'If you say it like that, I feel bad about asking (for a favor).' (NIKL)

Other connectives exhibit similar domain extensions. The causal ending *-unikka* functions in all three domains as well. In the content domain, as in (7), it links two external events, where one provides the situational context for the other. It also works in the epistemic domain, as illustrated in (8), where the prior experience serves as supporting the speaker's conclusion. In the speech-act domain in (9), the speaker uses *-unikka* not to link events but to provide a reason for issuing a directive.

- (7) *ilehkey mani o-nikka nemwu tanghwangsulep-ne.*
 this.much many come-because very be.embarrassed-DC
 'So many people came that I'm really flustered.' (NIKL)
- (8) *olaynmaney ceycwuto o-nikka coh-ta.*
 after.a.long.time Jeju.island come-because good-DC
 'It feels nice because I came to Jeju after a long time.' (NIKL)

- (9) *acik sikan manh-unikka chenchenhi po-ca.*
 still time be.plentiful-because slowly see-PROP
 ‘Since we still have plenty of time, let’s take our time looking around.’ (NIKL)

The contrastive connective *-ciman* shows a similar pattern. In the content domain in (10), the statement contrasts two propositions. In the epistemic domain, the sentence in (11) frames the speaker’s judgment despite limited evidence. In the speech-act domain, as shown in (12), the speaker uses *-ciman* not to contrast propositions but to acknowledge a social constraint or precondition before making a request.

- (10) *kwukyeng-to coh-ciman ancen-i kacang cwungyo-ha-ci.*
 sightseeing-also good-but safety-NOM most important-do-DC
 ‘Sightseeing is nice, but safety is the most important thing.’ (NIKL)
- (11) *cal-un molu-ciman caymiiss-ul kes kath-ayo.*
 well-TOP not.know-but interesting-FUT thing seem-POL.END
 ‘I don’t really know, but it seems like it’ll be interesting.’ (NIKL)
- (12) *mian-ha-ciman na mence kal-key.*
 sorry-do-but I first go-INT.END
 ‘I’m sorry, but I’ll go first.’ (NIKL)

Bringing Sweetser’s domains into the analysis ensures that connectives are treated within the same unified framework as clause types and endings: all are conventional cues that map scenario structure onto the Ground. In this way, scenario-guided metonymy and metaphor account for *why* such semantic shifts are possible, while CG specifies *how* they are anchored in the discourse event. The result is a usage-based account in which indirectness is not a pragmatic anomaly but a regular outcome of entrenched access paths between parts of a scenario and the whole speech act.

2.3 A formal syntactic account: Treetop/SAP syntax

Competing syntactic proposals, such as Treetop or SAP analyses,⁶ posit high left-peripheral projections (including SpeakerP, AddresseeP, and Commitment

6. Pak, Portner, and Zanuttini (2022) extend the formal Participant Structure framework to model the semantic decomposition of honorific meaning in Korean speech-style particles. Their analysis posits a high functional head *c* that takes Speaker and Addressee as arguments, encoding the relational features of Hierarchy and Formality at the syntax- semantics interface. While their model provides an explicit formal account of allocutive meaning, it requires an additional structural layer comparable in purpose to SAP analyses. The present Cognitive Grammar approach captures the same relational semantics without invoking this projection,

Phrase) above ForceP to encode illocutionary force and public commitment (Speas & Tenny 2003; Haegeman & Hill 2013; Hill 2014; Miyagawa 2022; Miyagawa 2023; Wiltschko 2021). These approaches typically rely on diagnostics such as vocatives, allocutive morphology, clause-type particles, and root-only effects (Hill 2014; Wiltschko 2021).

We do not rely on those specific diagnostics. Instead, our contrasts follow from Korean sentence-final modality and a metonymic mapping from modal subparts to request force.⁷ Specifically, desire, ability, permission, and prohibition align with the BEFORE phase of the request scenario; obligation aligns with RESULT; and intention aligns with AFTER. Grammaticalized, performative endings inherently favor request readings over descriptive modal constructions. This coverage allows us to capture the observed patterns without positing extra projections. Agent-shift in intention, suggestive, and interrogative endings, including *-ulkey*, *-psita*, and *-ulka*, yields directive force via the semantics of intention rather than requiring dedicated SAP heads. Related directive effects with connective endings similarly follow from metonymic and metaphoric extension across content, epistemic, and speech-act domains, not from added structure.⁸

Independent evidence supports the view that speech-act force is not fully reducible to syntax or mood.⁹ Force is instead derived at the discourse level from updates and commitments, and is not fixed solely by clause type (Austin 1962; Searle 1975; Sadock 1974; Sadock 2004; Roberts 2018; Horn & Ward 2004; Gutzmann 2015). Imperatives are often under-specified for conversational function and necessitate pragmatic resolution (Kaufmann 2020). Furthermore, the

deriving performativity from conceptual grounding within the usage event. In this respect, the CG analysis offers a more parsimonious and cognitively motivated explanation of the interpersonal semantics encoded by SEPs.

7. See also Ruiz de Mendoza Ibáñez & Pérez Hernández (2011) for a discussion of how conceptual mappings at the metaphor–metonymy interface can account for grammatical phenomena without invoking additional syntactic layers.

8. Ahn and Yap (2022) trace the grammaticalization of Korean *com* ‘a bit’ from a scalar quantifier to a discourse marker of mitigation and politeness. Their study identifies a two-stage shift: grammaticalization followed by cooptation. Through which, *com* is reinterpreted in interactional contexts to serve discourse-level functions. This diachronic development illustrates how metonymic reinterpretation of scalar meaning can yield speech-act-level force, paralleling our claim that Korean sentence-final markers likewise derive illocutionary meaning through Ground-anchored, usage-based reanalysis rather than through syntactic projection.

9. This view aligns with recent formal semantic work that integrates speech-act concepts into compositional grammar. For a comprehensive theory proposing how illocutionary force is encoded within grammatical structure as a type of discourse update, see Krifka (2023). His framework models how expressive and performative dimensions of language contribute to overall meaning and discourse commitment.

same clause type can realize distinct acts, as demonstrated by rising declaratives and Basque knowledge-confirmation questions (Jeong 2018; Ituarte 2024). We therefore choose to remain agnostic about the necessity of SAP. We implement force via clause type, modality, and update mechanics rather than relying on dedicated speech-act heads.

3. Cognitive grammar machinery

This section introduces the key analytic tools of CG needed for our account. The goal is not to reproduce the full framework but to highlight the specific notions that connect linguistic form to speech-act interpretation. These notions, drawn mainly from Langacker (2008), provide the baseline for analyzing Korean sentence-final morphology and clause type within a scenario-based account.¹⁰ We focus on the following core concepts: (i) usage events as the fundamental unit of analysis, (ii) the Ground and the current discourse space, (iii) grounding as the anchoring of expressions to the Ground, (iv) clause types and their conventional pairings with speech acts, and (v) the possibility of re-pairings in context.

3.1 Usage events, clause structure, and speech-act pairings

A usage event is a situated act of speaking and understanding. It includes a speaker, a hearer, a vocalization, and a conceptualization, and it unfolds in real time. Each usage event is evaluated against what the participants currently take as shared knowledge, referred to as the current discourse space (CDS). CG treats all grammatical structures as abstractions over such events. Figure 1 illustrates how CG situates meaning within the ongoing flow of communication. In the middle is the current usage event, where speaker (S) and hearer (H) interact as part of the Ground. Their interaction highlights some objective content, which is the immediate subject of the utterance.¹¹ To the left are previous usage events, which

10. Kwon (2025) integrates Mental Spaces Theory with Cognitive Grammar to model multi-layered meaning construction, including modality and speech-act interpretation. His account formalizes how distinct conceptual layers (epistemic, deontic, interpersonal) interact dynamically within a usage event. This approach reinforces the present analysis of Korean illocutionary meaning as arising from layered Ground alignment rather than discrete syntactic projections.

11. The objective content portion is bolded. In CG diagrams, a bolded portion marks the profiled portion of a symbolic structure. That is, it indicates the element singled out as the focus of linguistic designation within a larger conceptual base. The heavier outline visually distinguishes the profiled content (here, the clausal process) from non-profiled supporting structure in the conceptual network.

provide the background knowledge that feeds into the current discourse space (CDS). To the right are anticipated usage events, representing the likely outcomes or responses to the present utterance. Surrounding all of this are two layers: the transient context, which includes temporary situational factors, and stable knowledge, which includes long-term cultural and linguistic knowledge. In short, the figure shows that every utterance is not an isolated act but part of a continuous discourse chain. It draws on prior discourse, is grounded in the speaker–hearer relationship, and points toward expected future developments.

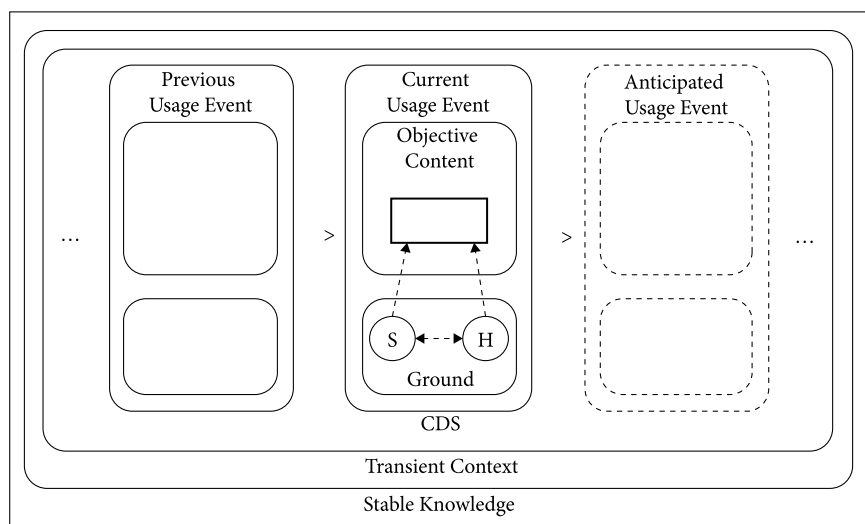


Figure 1. A usage event, redrawn after Langacker (2008: 466)

Clausal grounding situates the profiled process relative to the Ground. Tense, modality, and mood function as grounding elements that anchor a general process type to the time, knowledge, and interactional stance of the speaker and hearer. For nominals, determiners and demonstratives perform an analogous grounding function by linking entities to the discourse space. In Korean, sentence-ending particles are the primary clausal grounding devices, packaging mood, evidentiality, and speech-level distinctions that directly connect the clause to the Ground.

Clause types are conventional symbolic pairings with the three basic speech acts of stating, questioning, and directing. These default pairings can be repaired in context. For instance, a declarative encoding of desire may function as a request; an interrogative encoding of ability may likewise function as a request. Such re-pairings are not arbitrary but licensed by salient metonymic links between the clausal content and subparts of a familiar speech-act scenario.

Discourse is inherently dynamic. As conversation unfolds, the current discourse space (CDS) updates with new entities, propositions, and commitments. Grounding keeps track of this dynamic relationship by marking how each clause connects to the Ground at the moment of speaking. Imperatives update the addressee's commitments; interrogatives update the shared questions under discussion; declaratives update the shared body of knowledge. CG thus provides a usage-based mechanism for explaining how individual utterances contribute to the evolving discourse space.

3.2 Putting the pieces together for speech-act analysis

The machinery outlined above enables a compositional account of how form and function interact in speech acts. A clause always contributes two layers: conceptual content and anchoring of that content. The conceptual content is the event or state profiled by the clause, such as the addressee delivering a document. The anchoring is provided by grounding morphology, which ties the content to the speaker and addressee in the current usage event. For example, a sentence-final form may present the event not simply as a description but as the speaker's current desire. In this way, content and anchoring jointly create the conditions for an interactional interpretation.

The specific inventory of grounding devices is language-specific. In Korean, sentence-ending particles, honorific markers, and modal verbs serve as clausal grounding elements. Each carries a conventional profile that specifies how the utterance stands in relation to speaker and addressee. Endings can express intention, willingness, permission, obligation, or evidential status. These meanings function as interactional levers that allow speakers to construct polite requests, softened directives, and institutional notices, often without using imperative forms. CG predicts the general role of grounding elements, but the particular form–function mappings must be established empirically for each language.

Consider a Korean desire-based request, such as (13). The profiled content is a process in which the speaker requests an apology from the hearer, with the speaker as the beneficiary. The sentence-final construction profiles the speaker's desire at the moment of speaking and presents it to the hearer. The clause is formally declarative, whose default function would be a statement. Yet in this case, the clause is re-paired as a request, because the expression of desire constitutes a salient subpart of the request scenario, and the clause is explicitly anchored to the relation between speaker and hearer. Here, the Ground comprises the speaker, hearer, and speech event; the grounding elements *-umyen hapnita* jointly link the process to the speaker's desire and encode a polite stance toward a hearer. Together they yield the conventional construal of a desire-based request.

- (13) sakwa-lul cokum te senguy iss-key hay-cwu-si-ess-umyen
 apology-ACC a.little more sincerity have-CONN do-give-HON-PST-if
 hapnita.
 do-DC.POL
 'I would appreciate it if you could offer your apology with a bit more sincerity.'
 (NIKL)

This mechanism demonstrates why no additional syntactic projection is needed to capture speech-act features. Clause types inherently carry conventional discourse functions, and grounding already connects content to the Ground. Repairings arise naturally when a clause highlights a scenario subpart that implies a different act, while grounding clarifies the interactional stance taken toward that content. Korean clearly illustrates this principle. Sentence-ending particles and clause types work in tandem to signal how an utterance engages the speaker–addressee configuration. Later sections will extend this same anchoring process to connective meanings.

4. Illocutionary scenarios and metonymy

Thornburg & Panther (1997) and Panther & Thornburg (1998, 2003, 2004) model each speech act as a mini-script consisting of four ordered components, i.e., BEFORE, CORE, RESULT, and AFTER. In this model, speakers often mention a peripheral component and let hearers infer the unspoken Core through metonymy, a PART FOR WHOLE relation.¹² The illocutionary scenario schema proposed by these scholars is provided in Figure 2.

Figure 2 illustrates every speech act as a small-scale event that unfolds over time, by placing that event on a vertical timeline whose key point is t_0 , the instant when the utterance is performed. All prerequisites that must be satisfied before the speaker can perform the act, such as the relevant social conventions, the

12. Barcelona (2022a) revisits metonymy as a core cognitive operation rather than a peripheral associative process. He argues that metonymic inferencing functions as an activation schema linking mental spaces, thus grounding pragmatic inference in general cognitive architecture. His updated model provides strong theoretical support for the present account of illocutionary scenarios as dynamic, metonymically driven inference structures that mediate between conceptual and speech-act levels. Barcelona (2022b) offers a comprehensive monograph that situates metonymy at the core of conceptual and communicative processes across linguistic and non-linguistic domains. His synthesis extends beyond the linguistic model of Panther and Thornburg (1998, 2003) to integrate evidence from gesture, visual art, and discourse, presenting metonymy as a universal cognitive shortcut that operates across modalities. This broader framing supports the present paper's view of illocutionary scenarios as instances of general cognitive processes linking conceptual activation with communicative intent.

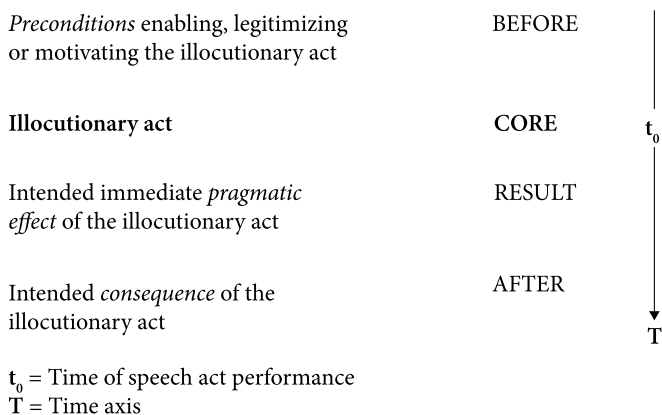


Figure 2. Illocutionary scenario schema (Panther 2022: 128)

speaker's sincerity, and the hearer's ability to understand. Any other "preparatory conditions," are grouped in the *BEFORE* segment (above t_0). At t_0 itself lies the *CORE*, the illocutionary act proper (asserting, promising, requesting, declaring, and so on). Immediately below that, in the *RESULT* segment, the model locates the speaker's intended immediate pragmatic payoff, such as the recognition of a commitment or the conferring of a right. Finally, the *AFTER* segment extends further down the timeline to capture any longer-term consequences the speaker hopes to bring about. By assigning each component of an illocutionary act to a distinct temporal slot, the schema offers a dynamic alternative to Searle's static catalog of felicity conditions, one that can be applied uniformly across all classic illocutionary categories.

Consider the simple promise in (14). Before the utterance are produced, several prerequisites must hold. The speaker must genuinely intend to repay the money and believe that repayment is possible. The hearer must understand the language and regard the speaker as trustworthy. These background conditions make the forthcoming promise a felicitous act. At the moment of speaking, the *CORE* of the act occurs: the sentence itself is uttered, and because it carries the performative force of a promise, it counts as a commissive speech act. Immediately afterward, the *RESULT* phase begins. The promise instantly creates a new social commitment: the speaker is now obligated to repay, and the hearer gains the right to expect the money on *Friday*. This shift in interpersonal rights and duties constitutes the pragmatic payoff that takes effect the moment the words are spoken. Finally, the *AFTER* phase extends into the future until *Friday* arrives. If the speaker hands over the twenty dollars, the intended consequence of the promise has been fulfilled. If the speaker fails to do so, the promise is broken, and social consequences such as loss of trust may follow.

(14) I will repay the \$ 20 on Friday.

Mapping the promise onto the four stages (prerequisites, utterance, immediate social change, and later consequences) illustrates how the illocutionary-scenario model captures both the temporal flow and the pragmatic force of a speech act. The four-stage scenario is not merely a timeline but a conceptual frame whose individual parts can stand metonymically for the whole speech act. The sentence in (14) explicitly names only one element of the four-stage scenario, that is, the future consequence that is supposed to materialize after the utterance. Because the language foregrounds the *AFTER* phase (actual repayment), the hearer fills in the rest of the script by metonymic inference. Thus, a single linguistic reference to the intended consequence (“repay the \$ 20 on Friday”) metonymically evokes the entire promise scenario, enabling the utterance to function pragmatically as a full-fledged promise even though only one component is explicitly expressed.

5. Korean conventional indirect requests

Korean request force arises from the metonymic profiling of scenario subparts combined with clausal grounding in the sentence-final zone. Building on J. Park’s (2015) scenario mapping, this section reviews the statement critically and adds new diagnostics and examples. The analysis is cast in CG, where clause types and sentence-ending particles serve as grounding devices that link the profiled process to the usage event.

5.1 Requests: Modality, clause type, and beneficiary

J. Park shows that desire clusters with declaratives, ability and permission with interrogatives, obligation with declaratives, and intention forms span both. This distribution follows if an utterance highlights a *BEFORE*, *RESULT*, or *AFTER* phase of the request scenario.¹³ Desire is speaker-oriented and typically declaratives,

13. The mechanism by which a single scenario element, such as the *AFTER* phase, metonymically evokes the entire illocutionary act relies on the principles of the Contemporary Theory of Metaphor (CTM). Ruiz de Mendoza Ibáñez and Pérez Hernández (2011) define metonymy as a one-correspondence mapping system involving conceptual interaction. In this context, the highlighted element (the repayment consequence) functions as a conspicuous subpart that attracts attention and achieves secondary focus. This salient element then serves as a cue enabling the hearer to invoke the entire promise scenario (the *CORE* act) through a conventionalized *PART FOR WHOLE* metonymic inference. The strength of this metonymic link depends on the degree of conceptual contiguity between the profiled subpart and the *CORE* of the request or promise.

as in (15)–(16); ability questions are addressee-oriented and interrogatives, as in (17)–(18); permission and negative-permission forms share the same interrogative profile in (19)–(20). Obligation declaratives convey authoritative directives, especially when the addressee benefits, as in (21)–(22).¹⁴ Intention forms bridge requests and offers in (23)–(24), institutional instructional style encodes the AFTER phase with present declaratives, as in (25). These distributions match J. Park's scenario-phase generalizations and demonstrate conventional indirectness arising from modal profiling together with clause-final grounding.

- (15) i pokose onul an-ey kemtho hay cwu-si-ess-umyen hapnita.
 this report today inside-LOC review do give-HON-PST-if do-DC-POL
 'I would appreciate it) if you could review this report today.'
- (16) calyo kongyu hay cwu-si-ess-umyen coh-kess-supnita.
 material share do give-HON-PST-if good-SUPP-DC-POL
 'I would appreciate it if you could share the materials.'
- (17) cikum selyu sukhayn hay cwu-si-l swu iss-ul-kka-yo?
 now document scan do give-HON-ADN ability exist-FUT-Q-POL
 'Could you scan the document now?'
- (18) camkkan-man cali com pikhye cwu-si-l swu iss-na-yo?
 moment-only seat a.little move give-HON-ADN ability exist-Q-POL
 'Could you please move aside for a moment?'
- (19) yeki mence kyelcey hay-to toy-l-kka-yo?
 here first payment do-though be.okay-FUT-Q-POL
 'Would it be okay to make the payment here first?'
- (20) cikum mwun com camka cwu-si-myen an tway-yo?
 now door a.little lock give-HON-if NEG be.okay-POL
 'Could you please lock the door now?'
- (21) yeki-se-nun ancenmo-lul pantusi chakyong-ha-si-e-ya hapnita.
 here-LOC-TOP safety.helmet-ACC surely wear-do-HON-CONN-OBL DC-POL
 'You must wear a safety helmet here.'

14. Lee (2017) provides experimental evidence that Korean subject honorifics (-*si*-) are not merely syntactic agreement markers but encode the speaker's evaluation of social hierarchy and role alignment in discourse. Participants judged honorific forms as felicitous only when the speaker-addressee relationship warranted deferential stance-taking. This finding demonstrates that honorific morphology interacts directly with the speech-act layer, shaping illocutionary force through grounding relations rather than through syntactic projection alone. Lee's results thus empirically reinforce the present analysis of Korean clause-final morphology as a locus of interpersonal alignment and scenario-based illocution.

- (22) cikum yak twu-si-e-ya tway-yo.
 now medicine take-HON-CONN OBL-POL
 ‘You need to take your medicine now.’
- (23) changmwun com tat-a cwu-si-l-lay-yo?
 window a.little close-CONN give-HON-FUT-INT-POL
 ‘Would you please close the window?’
- (24) kyesan tow-a twuli-l-kka-yo?
 payment help-CONN give-FUT-Q-POL
 ‘Shall I help you with the payment?’
- (25) pisang si-ey-nun kyetan-ul iyong-hapnita.
 emergency time-LOC-TOP stair-ACC use-DC-POL
 ‘In case of emergency, use the stairs.’

Evidence that sentence-ending particles function as grounding devices is three-fold. First, within CG, tense, modality, mood, and clause-final formatives are collectively treated as clausal grounding. In Korean, sentence-ending particles are the primary locus for that anchoring, packaging speech level, honorification, and clause type in a way that allows the clause to update the common ground. Put differently, Korean sentence-ending particles are central clausal grounding devices. Second, when the same modal content is expressed periphrastically, performative readings tend to weaken. J. Park (2015) observes that grammaticalized forms, such as *-keyss-*, *-(u)silkkayo*, *-(u)sillayyo*, and *-(u)syeya toyta*, outrank descriptive periphrases like *-(u)lyeko hata* or *-(u)l kesita* in conventional indirect requests. The superiority of endings over periphrases follows naturally if the endings themselves perform the grounding function by linking the utterance to the discourse Ground. Third, addressee-directed formatives at the right edge of the clause can trigger speech-act readings that extend even beyond the clause nucleus. J. Park shows that attaching *-yo* to a connective licenses speech-act “reason-for-doing-this” uses otherwise unavailable with that connective. This is an effect expected if *-yo* introduces an additional layer of addressee-anchoring. In short, prefinal tense and modal markers establish temporal and modal stance, while sentence-ending particles provide the interactional anchoring that converts subparts of a scenario into conventional requests, as illustrated in (15)–(25).

5.2 Intention-type endings and agent shift: *-ulkey* as test case

J. Park (2015) documents a service-register extension of *-ulkeyyo*, where a canonical first-person promise turns into a polite directive about the addressee’s next move. We treat this as a metonymic promotion of a salient AFTER-phase subpart,

with the sentence-ending particle grounding the uptake in the current exchange. In (27), the causative periphrasis is managerial and temporally mediated, whereas in (26), the sentence-final anchor schedules the addressee's action now. The honorific bundle *-si-* plus *-yo* in (26) manifests addressee anchoring.

- (26) *sengham malssum-hay cwu-si-l-key-yo.*
 name word-do give-HON-FUT-INT-POL
 'I will tell you (your name), sir.' / 'Let me have your name, please.'
- (27) *sengham malsseum-ha-si-tolok ha-l-key-yo.*
 name word-do-HON-so.that do-FUT-INT-POL
 'I will have you tell me your name.' / 'I'll make sure you say your name.'
- (28) *iccok-ulo o-si-keyss-e-yo?*
 this.side-to come-HON-SUPP-CONN-POL
 'Would you please come this way?'
- (29) *iccwok-ulo o-si-l-key-yo.*
 this.side-to come-HON-FUT-INT-POL
 'I will come this way (for you).' / 'Would you please come this way?'
- (30) *?cikap-ey ton iss-u-si-l-key-yo.*
 wallet-LOC money exist-CONN-HON-FUT-INT-POL
 '?You must have money in your wallet (I presume).'

The oddity of (30) shows a control constraint: agent-shift *-silkeyyo* favors near-term controllable events within the speaker's immediate control. The contrast between (28) and (29) separates willingness questions from pre-scheduled directives, hallmarks of grounding rather than paraphrase.

5.3 Connectives across content, epistemic, and speech-act domains

J. Park (2014) argues that some connective shifts are metonymic and others are metaphoric across Sweetser's (1990) content, epistemic, and speech-act domains. CG unifies these shifts under a single grounding mechanism. Each connective profiles a relation, and clause-final anchoring determines whether that relation connects events, evidence, or the speech act itself. The conditional *-umyen* spans the content domain in (31), epistemic evidence in (32), and speech-act licensing in (33). The causal *-unikka* marks content relations in (34), epistemic discovery in (35), and speech-act motivation in (36). The precedence connective *-eyse* develops causal meaning and, when addressee-anchored, motivates an institutional act in (37). The overlap-sequence connective *-taka* trends toward causal and condi-

tional meaning in (38). Finally, the contrastive *-ciman* parallels this same three-way domain split in (39)–(41).

- (31) pi o-myen cihacwuchacang-ulo itong-hapnita.
rain come-if underground-parking.lot-to move-DC-POL
'If it rains, (we) move to the underground parking lot.'
- (32) hyencang-ey ka-po-myen kot al-key toypnita.
site-LOC go-try-if soon know-CONN become-DC-POL
'If (you) go to the site, you will soon find out.'
- (33) han-mati-lo mal-ha-myen cikum-un cwungtan-ipnita.
one-word-with say-do-if now-TOP suspension-DC-POL
'In short, it is currently suspended.'
- (34) kongsaka kil-e-ci-ni-kka so-um-i
construction lengthen-become-since noise-NMN-NOM
khe-ci-ess-supnita.
grow-become-PST-DC-POL
'Since the construction was prolonged, the noise increased.'
- (35) caseyhi al-a-po-ni-kka piyong-i tel tupnita.
closely know-CONN-try-since cost-NOM less cost-DC-POL
'After checking in detail, (we found that) the cost is lower.'
- (36) sikan-i eps-uni-kka selmyeng-un saynglyak-ha-l-key-yo.
time-NOM not.exist-since explanation-TOP omit-do-FUT-INT-POL
'Since there's no time, I'll skip the explanation.'
- (37) selyu-ka pwucok-hay-se onul-un cepswu-man
document-NOM lack-do-because-of today-TOP submission-TOP
kanunghapnita.
be.possible-DC-POL
'Because the documents are insufficient, only submission is possible today.'
- (38) kuleh-key pamsay il-ha-ta-ka thal-na-yo.
so-manner overnight work-do-SEQ-and.then get.sick-DC-POL
'If you work all night like that, you'll fall ill.'
- (39) sengnung-un coh-ciman mwukep-supnita.
performance-TOP good-but heavy-DC-POL
'It performs well, but it's heavy.'
- (40) cikcep sse-po-ci-n anh-ass-ciman phyeng-un coh-supnita.
directly use-try-PST.ADN not-do-PST-but evaluation-TOP good-DC-POL
'I haven't personally used it, but the reviews are good.'

- (41) *coysong-ha-ciman cikum-un myentam-i elyep-supnita.*
 sorry-do-but now-TOP interview-NOM difficult-DC-POL
 ‘I’m sorry, but an interview isn’t possible right now.’

These patterns corroborate J. Park’s domain analysis and clarify why clause-final morphology and the particle *-yo* are crucial. They supply the Ground link that converts a content-level relation into an interactional justification for performing the act in the matrix.

5.4 What J. Park gets right, where we differ, and the open issues

J. Park’s core insight is robust: modality aligns with phases of the request scenario, and connective endings migrate across domains in regular ways. Those alignments explain why ability and permission questions in (17)–(20), obligation declaratives in (21)–(22), intention forms in (23)–(24), and instructional presents in (25) function as conventional indirect requests, and why *-umyen*, *-unikka*, *-eyse*, *-taka*, and *-ciman* pattern as in (31)–(41). Our divergence from J. Park is both theoretical and empirical. While J. Park treats sentence-ending particles as useful vehicles for indirectness, we analyze them as grounding morphemes. The stronger performativity of grammaticalized endings, such as *(u)si-keyss-eyo*, *-(u)sil-lay-yo*, *-(u)sil-kka-yo*, and *-(u)sye-ya-tway-yo*, over periphrastic counterparts is therefore not merely stylistic but diagnostic. That is, clause-final morphology itself creates an addressee-anchored update. For *-lkeyyo*, J. Park allows an ellipsis-style paraphrase. However, the timing and uptake facts in (26)–(30) argue against such a reduction, showing that live directive force tracks the sentence-final anchor, not hidden causatives. The agent-shift pathway that J. Park documents thus results naturally from intention anchoring toward the addressee in service registers. Similarly, this agent shift falls out from intention anchoring to the addressee in service scenarios, which we treat as a Ground effect. Finally, J. Park’s connective results show a *-yo* effect and a clause-order effect, but the mechanism for these results is left descriptive. We attribute both to grounding load. The ending *-yo* adds addressee anchoring, and clause-final packaging turns reasons into REASONS FOR THIS ACT, as specifically shown in (36)–(37) and (41).

These differences open several testable statements. First, prosodic diagnostics for desire-declaratives and ability-interrogatives remain underdeveloped. Second, speech-level bundling with *-si-* and *-yo* in service vs. peer talk requires explicit modeling. Third, control and telicity constraints on *-(u)sil-keyyo*, seen in the deviance of (40), warrant explicit formulation. In addition, preference hierarchies among near-synonymous requesters should be empirically measured rather than

assumed. Our account predicts all four of these testable issues to track grounding strength.

In sum, Korean conventional indirect requests are established as regular pairings between request-scenario subparts and clause-final grounding. Desire-declaratives, ability and permission questions, obligation declaratives, intention forms, and instructional presents pattern precisely as expected once sentence-ending particles are explicitly treated as grounding morphemes. Agent shift with *-lkeyyo* is a natural outcome when intention is anchored addressee-ward in the usage event. Connective domain shifts follow the same process. They arise when the right-edge morphology ties a profiled relation to the act being performed in the matrix clause. The central contribution of this analysis is to make that grounding mechanism explicit and to motivate it with distributional evidence across endings, clause types, and connectives, rather than to rely on descriptive lists.

6. Analysis: Grounded scenario-to-form mapping in Korean

Section 6 turns from the empirical survey to the analytical mapping. The goal is to explain why the Korean patterns identified in Section 5 fall out naturally from the joint use of Panther & Thornburg's scenario model and Langacker's CC. We treat sentence-ending particles as clausal grounding devices that anchor scenario subparts to the Ground, and we show how the different phases of the request scenario are systematically mapped onto Korean clause types and endings. The following subsections walk through this mapping step by step, assuming the schematic structure of Langacker's usage-event diagram and the scenario schemata proposed by Panther & Thornburg.

6.1 Grounding with sentence-ending particles

Figure 3 reuses the usage-event architecture introduced in Figure 1. It shows a rounded box for Objective content placed above another rounded box for Ground, both enclosed within a dashed frame representing the current usage event. The inner rectangle marked Clausal base stands for the propositional structure whose process is profiled.¹⁵ Korean sentence-final morphology is depicted as a profiled grounding unit enclosed in a dotted rectangle labeled SEP. SEPs are

15. Once again, a profile is the focal element of a conceptual structure, which includes the entity, process, or relation that an expression designates within a larger conceptual base. Profiling identifies what part of a conceptual network is linguistically foregrounded as the expression's meaning.

positioned to the right of the clause and linked to the Clausal base by a dotted attachment line. The dotted link marks form-level attachment; semantically the SEP performs grounding rather than composing with the clausal base. The thick curved arrow from the SEP box to the top edge of Ground depicts performative grounding, i.e., the update that anchors the utterance to S and H (asserting, asking, directing).^{16, 17} This diagram implements our central claim that in Korean, the sentence-final zone carries the main clausal grounding load.

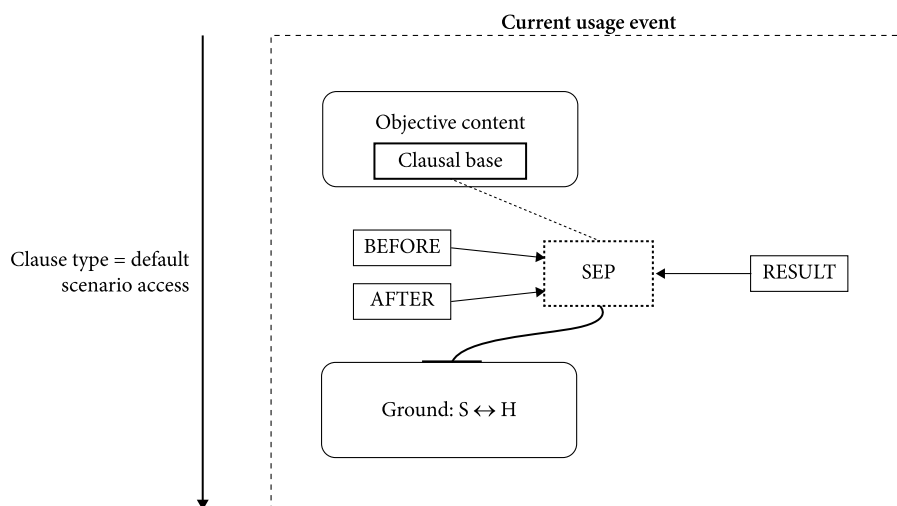


Figure 3. Usage-event diagram adapted to Korean

The figure distinguishes content from grounding and highlights two routes by which a clause can affect the Ground. The three callouts labeled *BEFORE*, *RESULT*, and *AFTER* represent specific subparts of the illocutionary request scenario proposed by Panther & Thornburg. In this analysis, these callouts are not connected to the clausal base. This separation is crucial because it ensures that only the clause-final morphology has the capability to bring a selected scenario

16. The short bold segment on the top edge of the Ground box is not part of the original CG notation. It is added only to highlight the point where the SEP → Ground arrow terminates, i.e., the locus of the discourse update that anchors the utterance in the current interaction. Omitting this accent does not alter the analysis, since the grounding arrow itself already represents the link between the clausal structure and the speaker–hearer Ground.

17. Phonetic evidence supports this clause-final grounding account. Brown, Oh, and Idemaru (2024) show that in Korean interactional speech, deferential utterances feature prosodic reduction (shorter IP-final syllables and compressed pitch) indicating that politeness is acoustically anchored at the sentence-final position (the SEP).

subpart into contact with the Ground, initiating an integrated update. The alternation mechanism is summarized by the thin vertical overlay labeled “Clause type = default scenario access.” This overlay is placed outside the dashed frame and represents the CG defaults that conventionally pair clause types with basic speech-act scenarios. These defaults offer a baseline pathway from content toward a Ground update when no special morphology is present. The analysis shows that a sentence-ending particle can select one specific scenario subpart. Through the SEP → Ground path, the SEP can override the clause-type default pairing by packaging that selected subpart as the locus of the discourse update. For example, an interrogative clause type would normally default to a question, but the SEP *-(u)l swu iss-ni* packages hearer ability (a BEFORE subpart) and binds it to the Ground, conventionally yielding an indirect request for action rather than information seeking, as shown in (42). The ending *-ul-key-yo* canonically marks the speaker’s intention. In service talk, as in (43), it undergoes agent shift to the hearer, so the SEP packages an AFTER subpart (the hearer’s intended action) and functions as a polite command, again overriding the clause-type default.

(42) *naypkhin com cip-e cwu-l swu iss-ni?*
napkin a.little pick.up-CONN give-ADN ability exist-Q
 ‘Can you hand me a napkin?’ (J. Park 2015: 86)

(43) *sam-chung-ulo olla-ka-si-l-key-yo.*
third-floor-to go.up-go-HON-FUT-INT-POL
 ‘Please go up to the third floor.’ (J. Park 2013: 254)

The dotted SEP box serves as an analytic frame used here to foreground sentence-final endings as grounding devices in Korean, not a new CG primitive.¹⁸ This account accords with evidence that the modal meanings encoded in SEPs metonymically stand for the whole request scenario and thereby license conventional indirect requests. It also aligns with the broader pattern of metonymic extensions documented for Korean grammar.

Distributional evidence further supports treating SEPs as grounding elements. They constitute root-phenomenon morphology. They are ill-formed in non-quoted subordinate clauses but grammatical within quoted speech, which

18. Rhee (2017) discusses “audience-blind” sentence enders in Korean that are insensitive to addressee presence, demonstrating their role as stance and attitude markers rather than interpersonal cues. These forms encode the speaker’s evaluative or epistemic orientation apart from propositional meaning, underscoring the need to separate epistemic from interpersonal grounding in Korean morphosyntax. The present analysis extends this insight by treating such markers as schematic Ground links within the Cognitive Grammar framework, capturing their status as discourse-level anchoring devices.

targets a distinct usage event. Compare (44) and (45) with (46). This root-restriction follows if SEPs are the very devices that connect propositional content directly to the Speaker (S) and Hearer (H) in the current usage event.¹⁹ In CG terms, they are not objective content; rather, they constitute the Ground–link itself.

(44) minci-ka nayil o-n-ta-ko sayngkak-hay-yo.
 Minji-NOM tomorrow come-ADN-DC-COMP think-do-POL
 ‘I think Minji is coming tomorrow.’

(45) *minci-ka nayil ol ke-ye-yo-la-ko sayngkak-hay-yo.
 Minji-NOM tomorrow come FUT-DC-POL-QUOT think-do-POL
 ‘I think Minji will come tomorrow (polite quote).’

(46) minci-ka “nayil ol ke-ye-yo”-la-ko mal-hay-ss-eyo.
 Minji-NOM tomorrow come FUT-DC-POL-QUOT say-do-PST-POL
 ‘Minji said, “I will come tomorrow.”’

The scenario approach provides the explanatory mechanism for why this anchoring matters. Interlocutors routinely infer the full speech act (the CORE) from a salient, anchored part of its scenario. A mention of desire or ability can “stand for” a request because these elements correspond to BEFORE components of the request scenario. Similarly, obligation can “stand for” a directive because it represents the RESULT component, or the immediate pragmatic payoff. The strength of this metonymic link ultimately depends on the conceptual distance of the profiled subpart from the CORE of the request and on the specific context.

6.2 From scenario phases to Korean morphosyntax

We now map Panther & Thornburg’s scenario phases onto Korean clause types and SEP choices. The BEFORE phase of the scenario yields conventional indirect requests, typically anchored as interrogatives or as declaratives expressing desire. Ability, permission, and “negative-permission” interrogatives (e.g., (48)–(50)) profile the hearer-side preconditions. Conversely, desire-declaratives (e.g., (47)) profile the speaker-side motivation. All four constructions are conceptually located above the CORE in the scenario, and subsequently, they license requests

19. A critical alternative perspective views Korean addressee honorification (Sentence-Ending Particles, SEPs) not as a conceptual grounding device but as a feature-driven syntactic Agree process (Jou 2024). Another formal account (An 2022) attributes root effects to prosodic integration via high clause movement. Both analyses offer structural explanations for the root restriction, contrasting with the Cognitive Grammar view that SEPs themselves instantiate the Ground link.

metonymically. In desire-declaratives such as (47), the SEP profiles the Speaker's (S's) desire, anchoring this wish to the Ground and inviting the Hearer (H) to supply the CORE (the corresponding obligation). In interrogative Examples (48)–(50), the SEP points directly at the H's ability, permission, or the absence of prohibition. These BEFORE cues are conceptually close enough to the CORE that the resulting metonymic “stand-for” reading remains particularly strong in ordinary service encounters.

- (47) phulinthu-mul-i manh-a-se i phail onul an-ey ponay
 printout-NMN-NOM many-because this file today inside-LOC send-CONN
 cwu-si-ess-umyen hapnita.
 give-HON-PST-if do-DC-POL
 ‘Since there are many printouts, (I would appreciate it) if you could send this file today.’
- (48) eyekhen com kke cwu-l swu iss-e?
 air.conditioner a.little turn.off-CONN give-ADN ability exist-Q
 ‘Can you turn off the air conditioner?’
- (49) changmwun com yel-e-to toy-na-yo?
 window a.little open-CONN-even.if be.okay-Q-POL
 ‘Is it okay if I open the window a little?’
- (50) cokum-man coyong-hi ha-y cwu-si-myen an toy-l-kka-yo?
 a.little-only quietly do-CONN give-HON-if not be.okay-FUT-POL
 ‘Could you please be a little quieter?’

The RESULT phase of the request scenario yields obligation-declaratives, primarily used for hearer-benefiting directives. When the Speaker (S) asserts deontic necessity for the Hearer (H), the clause profiles the immediate social result of a directive, as shown in (51). Because this component sits just below the CORE, the resulting directive reading is robust without imperative morphology.

- (51) swuchi-ka manhi an coh-a-yo. onul-un yak-ul kkok
 number-NOM much not good-DC-POL today-TOP medicine-ACC surely
 tu-si-e-ya tway-yo.
 take-HON-CONN-must OBL-POL
 ‘The numbers aren’t good. You must take your medicine today.’

The AFTER phase of the scenario yields intention and agent-shift. Korean intention morphology can anchor either S's forthcoming action or, in certain registers, S's intention about H's action. The latter yields polite directives without overt imperatives. This mechanism is agent shift via metonymic extension: moving from profiling “my action” to profiling “your action I intend to bring about.” In

(52), intention anchors S's plan, and the resulting act effected is a floor-taking directive. In (53), the SEP *-(u)lkeyyo* no longer promises S's action. It instead packages S's control of H's next move.

- (52) cikum-pwuthe cilmwun mence pat-keyss-supnita.
 now-from question first receive-FUT-DC-POL
 'We will begin by taking questions now.'
- (53) hwanca-pwun-un cinlyo-sil-lo tul-e-ka-si-l-key-yo.
 patient-HON-TOP examination-room-to enter-CONN-go-HON-FUT-INT-POL
 '(You) will now go into the consultation room.' / 'Please go into the consultation room.'

Service talk exploits this reading. The agent shift is understood not as an error but as a conventionalized metonymic extension inside the intention domain. These specific pairings do not require extra syntactic projections to capture the illocutionary force. Instead, the force is derived compositionally. Clause type supplies a default scenario link; the SEP provides the Ground-anchor; the scenario metonymy supplies the resulting illocutionary force.

6.3 Predictions and diagnostics

This subsection derives testable predictions from the CG-scenario mapping, focusing on beneficiary structure, agent encoding, degrees of grammaticalization, and connective domain shifts in Korean.²⁰ First, the mapping predicts a systematic alignment between the beneficiary of the act and the scenario phase that is profiled. Forms that profile BEFORE-phase material (desire, ability, permission, or the absence of prohibition) are preferred when the speaker stands to gain. This is because these meanings highlight the speaker's motivation or the hearer's enablement without yet imposing a norm. Conversely, RESULT-phase obligation reads naturally when the addressee benefits. This occurs since a statement of what must be done presents compliance as prudent or protective for the hearer. Finally, AFTER-phase intention is flexible across beneficiary types. In institutional and service registers, it readily packages a next step as already scheduled, which yields a polite but firm direction.

Second, intention-type SEPs license agent shift precisely in those service contexts where the speaker manages the addressee's next move. Endings such as

20. We follow Sweetser's (1990) domain architecture. In CG terms, a connective profiles a relation; sentence-final morphology determines whether it is anchored as event-to-event (content), evidence-to-conclusion (epistemic), or premise-to-illocution (speech-act). We use the domains descriptively, with grounding doing the explanatory work

-(u)lkeyyo, suggestives like *-psita*, and interrogative intention forms like *-ulkka* stand at the boundary between commissives and directives. A small reorientation of whose intention is at issue (speaker vs. addressee) thus produces directive force without an imperative. The resulting shift is a metonymic extension within the intention domain rather than an arbitrary reassignment of grammatical roles. This extension is most stable with near-future, controllable actions.

Third, grammaticalized, addressee-oriented sentence-ending particles (SEPs) outperform periphrastic modals as vehicles of conventional indirect requests. Endings such as *-(u)llay*, *-(u)lkkayo*, *-(u)seyyo*, and *-(u)lkeyyo* directly anchor the utterance to the Ground, ensuring the request is performed at the clause edge. By contrast, periphrastic descriptive constructions, such as *-(u)l kes-* and *-(u)lyeko ha-*, sit in the clausal base and describe a disposition or plan. They assert content about an expected or intended course rather than performing a Ground update.²¹ Thus, descriptive forms like (54a) and (56a) profile prediction or internal intention, whereas the sentence-final counterparts in (54b) and (56b) are grounding morphology that anchors the clause to $S \leftrightarrow H$ and perform a commitment or directive at speech time. Queries built from descriptive intention, such as (55a) fails as a conventional request, while grammaticalized SEPs in (55b) encode speaker- or hearer-oriented performativity and yield the request reading. This contrast tracks the CG split between propositional description and grounding. It also supports the metonymic account in which SEP-encoded modality brings a scenario subpart into contact with the Ground to license indirect request force.

- (54) a. cikum na-ka-lyeko hay-yo.
 now go-out-INT do-POL
 'I'm about to leave now.'
- b. cikum na-kal-key-yo.
 now go-out-FUT-INT-POL
 'I'll be leaving now.' / 'Let me head out now.'
- (55) a. *naypkhin com cip-e cwu-lyeko hay?
 napkin a.little pick.up-CONN give-INT do-Q
 'Are you about to hand me a napkin?'
- b. naypkhin com cip-e cwu-l-lay/cwu-keyss-ni?
 napkin a.little pick.up-CONN give-FUT-INT/give-FUT-Q
 Intended: 'Would you hand me a napkin?' / 'Could you hand me a napkin?'

21. "Disposition" here means a subject- or situation-oriented modal state evaluated independently of the utterance event, such as intention, plan, or settled tendency, not only long-run habit.

- (56) a. khawunthe-eyse kyelcey-ha-si-l ke-ye-yo.
 counter-at pay-do-HON-FUT thing-be-POL
 ‘You will pay at the counter.’
- b. yeki-se ipcangkwen kwuip-ha-si-e-ya tway-yo.
 here-at admission.ticket buy-do-HON-CONN-MUST OBL-POL
 ‘You must purchase your admission ticket here.’

Fourth, Korean connective endings guide the hearer across content, epistemic, and speech-act domains and thereby license or mitigate the act anchored by the SEP. To account for these shifts, our analysis adopted Sweetser’s domain architecture. The conditional ending *-umyen* illustrates this pattern. In (57), it profiles a content-domain condition that introduces an imperative. The contrastive ending *-ciman*, as in (58), does not primarily contrast propositions but rather acknowledges a social constraint prior to the request, which is a speech-act-domain use. The causal ending *-nikka*, as in (59), presents the speaker’s justificatory basis for issuing the directive that follows. These systematic shifts across domains parallel the “independent *if*-clause” strategy in English, where a premise located in a hypothetical space carries deontic or expressive force. The core mechanism is that clause-final anchoring (via the SEP) determines whether the connective relation links events (content), evidence (epistemic), or the act itself (speech-act).

- (57) pi-ka o-myen wusan chayng-ki-sey-yo.
 rain-NOM come-if umbrella take-HON-POL
 ‘If it rains, please take your umbrella.’
- (58) coysong-ha-ciman, i-kes com towa-cwu-sey-yo.
 sorry-do-but this-thing a.little help-give-HON-POL
 ‘I’m sorry, but could you please help me with this?’
- (59) yelsoy-lul chac-ass-uni-kka camkkan-man kita-lye cwu-sey-yo.
 key-ACC find-PST-because a.moment-only wait-CONN give-HON-POL
 ‘I found the key, so please wait just a moment.’

Finally, the scenario model renders these readings economical. Interlocutors store entrenched links between the salient BEFORE/RESULT/AFTER components of a scenario and the whole illocutionary act. Once an SEP anchors one such component to the speaker–addressee Ground, the CORE is supplied with minimal inference. This minimal inference pathway, which relies on conventional metonymic extension, explains why the conventional indirect request in (57)–(59) is processed as quickly as a direct imperative. To recapitulate, the result is a usage-based account in which indirectness is not an anomaly but a regular outcome of entrenched access paths between parts of a scenario and the whole act.

Our analysis shows that SEPs function as grounding morphology and that clause type is a conventional path into a speech-act scenario. Korean modality and connectives supply the metonymic cue that selects the scenario phase. These three elements derive the observed illocutionary force patterns. Furthermore, this integrated mechanism predicts where agent shift, beneficiary effects, and grammaticalization will play a significant role, yielding a set of testable diagnostics.

7. Alternatives

A *formal alternative* to the present CG account has been developed within the generative framework. This line of research, chiefly represented by the work of Speas & Tenny (2003) and Hill (2007), argues that clause structure extends beyond CP to a higher functional domain responsible for encoding the roles of Speaker and Addressee. Within this architecture, the clause root is not merely syntactic but pragmatically anchored, as the highest projection, often termed the *Speaker-Addressee Phrase (SAP)*, hosts features associated with point of view and illocutionary force. Miyagawa (2022) further develops this framework by arguing that allocutive markers such as Korean *-(su)pni-* and Japanese *-mas/-des* are licensed only in this high speech-act layer, empirically supporting the existence of a distinct SAP domain. This *formal perspective* stands in contrast to the CG view, which attributes illocutionary anchoring not to a dedicated syntactic head but to the *Ground* link instantiated by clause-final morphology.²²

SAP and related “treetop” proposals posit a high speech-act layer above CP that hosts clause-type heads and speaker/addressee features.²³ This architecture is designed to capture the well-known defaults that associate declaratives with assertion, interrogatives with questioning, and imperatives with command. While we adopt these defaults as background tendencies, our analysis finds that, for the specific Korean patterns at issue, these defaults alone do not determine illocutionary

22. For a comprehensive semantic model that integrates speech acts into compositional grammar, see Krifka (2023). While formal approaches such as Hill (2007) locate illocutionary force in the syntactic periphery, Cognitive Grammar accounts treat grounding as a symbolic relation between clause structure and discourse participants (Langacker 2008).

23. An (2024) provides comparative evidence for the Treetop (SAP) architecture by demonstrating that the formal politeness markers in Korean (*-(su)pni-*) and Japanese (*-mas/-des*) exhibit parallel allocutive behavior restricted to Emonds' root contexts. This distribution indicates that these morphemes must establish a local relation with the high Speaker-Addressee Phrase at the clause root. As these markers are TP-external in Korean, their licensing high in the structure empirically supports the existence of a separate speech-act layer — a key alternative to the Cognitive Grammar view that SEPs merely instantiate the Ground link.

force. Our data consistently show that overt SEPs, functioning as grounding morphology, bring selected parts of a request scenario into contact with the Ground in the current usage event. This mechanism yields conventional indirect requests even when clause type would otherwise default to a different illocutionary force. Our account suffices for these effects because it treats SEPs as the very mechanism that performs the update that anchors the utterance to the Speaker and Hearer (S ↔ H) relation. This approach offers several advantages.

First, our account offers a clear advantage because it aligns form with the locus of force. Syntactic alternatives such as SAP/treetop proposals posit a high head (Force/SAP) that bears speaker–addressee features and conventionally pairs clause type with default force. Under our analysis, the SEP itself is grounding morphology. The SEP then performs the primary function by selecting a scenario subpart and anchors it to the Ground (the S ↔ H interaction) in the current usage event. This fundamental division between clausal content and SEP-based grounding predicts the observed contrast between periphrastic, clausal-base descriptions, and grammaticalized edge endings.

Second, our account is predictive at the level of scenario structure. Our scenario mapping links desire, ability, permission, and prohibition to the BEFORE phase; obligation to the RESULT phase; and intention to the AFTER phase. This mapping accurately predicts the distributional preferences we observe. BEFORE-based forms are favored in speaker-benefiting requests, RESULT-based obligation is natural in hearer-benefiting guidance, and intention-based forms are available across both beneficiary types. The same mapping also explains why specific forms function as directives: why certain interrogatives (profiling ability/permission) pattern as requests; why the declaratives (profiling desire or obligation) yield directives in service talk; and why intention endings, such as *-ulkeyyo*, can undergo agent shift and yet still deliver directive force.

Third, our approach scales beyond the specific SEPs illustrated in this article. The same metonymic pressures that allow intention and obligation endings to extend into directive uses also organize the well-documented extensions of Korean connective endings across the content, epistemic, and speech-act domains. This broader distribution supports a cognitive explanation grounded in the VEHICLE FOR TARGET metonymy rather than in the stipulation of additional high syntactic projections. The generalization is that forms which encode a part of an interactional scenario can stand for the whole illocutionary act (the CORE) at the moment of the Ground update.

Finally, the account remains compatible with treetop intuitions. Clause type still provides a default access path from content toward a Ground update, and nothing in our analysis prevents enriching that path with higher syntactic structure where independent evidence demands it. However, our claim is narrower.

For the Korean request patterns examined here, the observed forces follow naturally once content and grounding are distinguished. SEPs function as clause-final grounding devices that select a specific scenario subpart and connect it to the $S \leftrightarrow H$ relation in the usage event. On this view, the defaults encoded by treetop models are acknowledged as defaults. But the heavy lifting for these conventional indirect requests is performed by the morphology that actually touches the Ground.

8. Conclusion

This article has developed a CG account of Korean indirect requests and related connective uses. Sentence-ending particles (SEPs) act as grounding morphology that links a profiled scenario subpart (such as desire, ability, obligation, or intention) to the Ground (the speaker-addressee interaction) in the usage event. Clause type provides a default access path to a speech act scenario, while connectives traverse the content, epistemic, and speech act domains when clause-final anchoring is present. Combined, these components derive the observed force patterns without invoking additional syntactic projections.

The empirical payoff is clear. Desire aligns with declaratives (BEFORE phase), ability and permission align with interrogatives (BEFORE Phase), and obligation aligns with declaratives (RESULT Phase), particularly in hearer-benefiting guidance. Intention spans both and licenses agent shift in service talk (AFTER Phase), as seen with forms like *-(u)l keyyo*. Furthermore, grammaticalized endings outrank periphrases in performativity. Right edge morphology also consistently demonstrates root restrictions and a *-yo* effect, reflecting addressee anchoring. These results hold consistently across the empirical examples and diagnostics presented in Sections 5–6.

Analytically, the account integrates scenario metonymy with CG grounding. The BEFORE, RESULT, and AFTER phases of the illocutionary scenario explain why specific forms cue requests. The SEP packages the selected phase and performs the $S \leftrightarrow H$ update. Crucially, the same mechanism scales to connective shifts across domains. The mapping yields testable predictions: beneficiary structure should track the scenario phase; agent shift should prefer near-future controllables; the degree of grammaticalization should correlate with performativity; and prosody and clause order should interact with right-edge anchoring.

The approach remains compatible with treetop intuitions. Both the CG and treetop models locate illocutionary force at the edge of the clause. However, the CG account attributes the mechanism to grounding via conventionalized morphology rather than to a dedicated high syntactic head. This keeps the analysis simple while retaining the defaults that clause type supplies. The broader implica-










tion is that Korean organizes parts of its grammar around conventional scenario-to-Ground links. Therefore, indirectness is not residual pragmatics; it is a regular outcome of clause-final grounding by conventional morphology.

Glossary

Abbreviations not provided by *Korean Linguistics* are:

ADN	adnominal
END	ending connective
INT	intentional
OBL	obligation
PROP	propositive
SEQ	sequential
TEMP	Temporal

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