

A Comprehensive Analysis of Response Tokens in Korean: Resources for Managing Turns, Sequences, and Stances in Talk-in-Interaction

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1 Introduction

This study aims to explore how Korean speakers make use of response tokens in talk-in-interaction. Response tokens refer to brief listener responses, which indicate that “talk by another has been heard, acknowledged, perhaps understood or agreed with or treated as news, or not news” (Gardner 2001: 13). Although what counts as a response token is not uniform across studies,

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response tokens typically include minimal verbal responses (e.g., continuers, acknowledgments), brief assessments, repetition of a portion of the prior talk, and so on (Goodwin 1986; Drummond and Hopper 1993; Yeh 2018; Wong and Waring 2020).

Prior research studies have demonstrated that response tokens perform various interactional practices and social actions in conversation. The production of a particular response token, for instance, indicates how the recipient of a turn manages his/her turn-at-talk (e.g., *uh huh*, Schegloff 1982), how s/he positions him/herself regarding knowledge and information (e.g., *oh*, Heritage 1984), or whether and to what extent s/he affiliates with a stance conveyed in the prior turn's talk (e.g., *no*, Jefferson 2002).

There is a growing body of research that indicates the significant interactional roles and functions of response tokens in Korean conversation (e.g., Kim and Yoon 2019; Ha 2022), however, many areas have not yet been examined or necessitate further exploration. To fill this gap, by adopting the methods of interactional linguistic frameworks, this study intends to examine and identify how the recipient of a turn employs response tokens to accomplish a diverse range of interactional work.

Specifically, this study analyzes the use of the following eight verbal response tokens: *ung*, *e*, *ney*, *yey*, *kulay*, *kulehci*, *kulenikka*, and *maca*, employed in naturally occurring Korean talk-in-interaction. The first four 'yes'-type response tokens (i.e., *ung*, *e*, *ney*, and *yey*) are translated as 'yes, yeah,' while the rest of the tokens (i.e., *kulay*, *kulehci*, *kulenikka*, and *maca*) can be translated roughly as '(that's/you're) right' in English. A qualitative analysis of the conversational excerpts provided in this study demonstrates how the recipient of a turn utilizes these tokens to address interactional practice (e.g., repair-initiation) or social action(s) (e.g., a request for information/confirmation, informing, assertion, and assessment) implemented in a prior turn.

In this study's conversational data, the four 'yes'-type tokens and *kulay* recurrently occur in the organization of turn-taking or a sequence. In addition, the three response tokens, *kulehci*, *kulenikka*, and *maca*, are regularly deployed in response to an assertion, informing, and assessment, but each has a distinctive use. By examining these eight response tokens, this study seeks to provide a comprehensive picture of the interactional work that the selection and production of a particular response token in a particular sequential environment achieves in Korean talk-in-interaction.

2 Data and Methodology

Adopting interactional linguistics as its analytical framework, this study examines the uses of the eight response tokens (*ung*, *e*, *ney*, *yey*, *kulay*, *kulehci*, *kulenikka*, and *maca*) (see Table 1 for each token's meaning and lexical

components), which appear most frequently in the data, as they are deployed in naturally occurring Korean (1) telephone conversations, (2) face-to-face conversations, and (3) broadcast talk.

The conversational data used in this study were transcribed following conventions developed by Gail Jefferson, which enable precise representation of verbal utterances as well as other embodied dimensions, in particular nonverbal vocalizations (e.g., audible outbreaths, laughter, and sighs) and prosodic details (e.g., a loud voice) (Ochs et al. 1996).

tokens	meaning	lexical components
<i>panmal</i> 'non-honorific'	<i>ung</i>	
	<i>e</i>	-
<i>contaymal</i> 'honorific'	<i>yey</i>	
	<i>ney</i>	
<i>kulay</i>		informal ending <i>-e/a</i>
<i>kulehci</i>		connective suffix <i>-(u)nikka</i> 'because'
	<i>kulehta</i> 'be so' +	
	'right'	
<i>kulenikka</i>		committal suffix <i>-ci</i> 'definitely, I suppose'
<i>maca</i>		<i>macta</i> 'right' + informal ending <i>-e/a</i>

Table 1. The meaning and lexical components of each response token

The specific research questions that this study seeks to answer are as follows: (1) What social actions does the production of a particular response token accomplish, and how is it treated by co-interlocutors? and (2) If a response token is followed or preceded by additional turn component(s) by the same speaker (e.g., additional unit of talk), what do the additional component(s) express, and how do the co-interlocutors treat them?

3 Resources for Managing Turns or Sequences

In this study's data, it is observed that the four 'yes'-type tokens and the *kulehta*-type token *kulay* 'right' commonly occur as turn or sequence management resources in a turn responsive to various social actions launched in the

prior speaker's turn, such as informing, assessing, requesting for information or confirmation, and so on. Specifically, the present section examines how speakers of Korean make use of the four 'yes'-type tokens and *kulay* to yield a turn to their co-interlocutor(s) (Excerpt 1) and initiate or close a sequence (Excerpts 2, 3, and 4).

3.1 Turn Yielding

In the data, the two honorific 'yes'-type tokens, *ney* and *yey*, occur frequently in the turn-final position to indicate that the *ney/yey* producer has finished or withdrawn his/her turn and that the prior speaker should continue speaking as the next speaker. This use of *ney* and *yey* is routinely observed in a responsive turn within a pre-sequence (Schegloff 2007: 28) in which the prior speaker launches a request for confirmation before pursuing the main request for confirmation or information.

Excerpt 1 is a case in point, which is taken from one of the episodes of the television program *My Golden Kids*. In this segment, the hosts and parents of a child discuss the child's problematic behaviors after seeing a pre-recorded footage.

Excerpt 1. First time [My Golden Kids 091721]

- 01 Aer: kuntey ape-nim-un sasil: ilehkey caseyhi
by.the.way father-HON-TOP in.fact like.this closely
- 02 po-si-n ke-n cheum-[i-l °ke aniey-yo.°
see-SH-RL thing-RL first.time-be-RL thing be.not-POL
**By the way, for you (father), it should be your first time
to see (how your son behaves) this closely.**
- 03** Fat: [cheum-i-cyo yey.
first.time-be-COMM:POL yes
First time, right, YEY.
- 04** cheum-°i-pnita°. (.) [yey.
first.time-be-DEF yes
First time. YEY.
- 05 Aer: [po-si-nikka ette-sey-yo?
see-SH-because how-SH-POL
**How do you feel after seeing (the
footage of your son)?**
- 06 (()): [() an ha-sy-ess-ul ke-yey-yo.
NEG do-SH-PST-RL thing-PRS-POL
- 07 ku-cyo?
be.so-COMM:POL
I assume that you did not (). Right?
- 08 Fat: °maum° ((smacks lips)) (.) maum-i aphu-cyo.
heart heart-NOM hurt-COMM:POL
Heart, It breaks my heart.

09 (0.5)
10 You: um:::
DM
Yeah.

Aera, one of the main program hosts, asks a pre-emptive question formulated as a B-event statement (Labov and Fanshel 1977: 100) to the father ('it should be your first time to see (how your son behaves) this closely', lines 1-2). Earlier in the episode, the mother described the father as relatively less involved in the upbringing of their son. Aera's pre-emptive question gets confirmed by the father with the repetition of the word *cheum* 'first time' marked by the committal suffix *-ci* (Lee 1999) and followed by the *contaymal* 'yes'-type token *yey* (line 3).

However, since the father's response occurs in overlap with Aera's question, the father in his subsequent turn provides a repetition of his own statement to reassure that it is his first time observing his son's problematic behaviors and ends his statement with a *yey* token again (line 4). That the father places a *yey* token at the end of his reformulated turn makes it clearer that the use of *yey* in turn-final position is not accidental.

Finally, this leads Aera to continue with her main request, which gets the father to express how he feels after seeing the footage of his son (line 5). In response to this, the father expresses a feeling of regret or sadness. However, this time he does not produce a *yey* (or *ney*) token to conclude his turn. Unlike his prior turns that received an immediate uptake from the host Aera, the absence of a turn-final *yey* here leads to a 0.5-second gap (line 9) before the other host Youngran produces an elongated *um* to display affiliation (line 10).

As demonstrated above, the *contaymal* form of 'yes'-type token often occurs turn-finally to signal that the producer has finished his/her responsive turn to a request for confirmation in a pre-sequence in which the prior speaker builds common ground before proceeding with the main activity.

3.2 Sequence Closing Third

Another sequential environment in which 'yes'-type tokens regularly appear, in particular the two *panmal* forms, *ung* and *e*, is the third position in a question-response sequence. The two *panmal* forms occur when the questioner acknowledges the question-elicited informing in the preceding turn and proposes a sequence closure.

Excerpt 2 shows an occurrence of *ung* and *e* utilized as a sequence closure in the third position in a question-response sequence. This segment comes from a telephone conversation between two male friends, Hyunho and Taewoo. Prior to the segment below, Hyunho asked Taewoo to send him the photograph that Taewoo previously promised to send.

Excerpt 2. Photograph [LDC 4582]

- 01 Hyu: a phillum-ul pat-ass-e?
DM film-ACC receive-PST-IE
Ah you received the film?
- 02 Tae: °e° ani (0.2) sacin-ul ilehkey pwa-ss-e nao-n
yes no photo-ACC like.this see-PST-IE come.out-RL
03 ke-lul. =
thing-ACC
Yeah, (I mean) no, I saw the photograph that came out.
- 04** Hyu: = *E*.
yes
- 05 (0.1)
- 06 >kuntey kwaynchanh-a?<
but okay-IE
And it turned out okay?
- 07 Tae: *UNG*:.
yes
- 08** Hyu: *UNG*:. =
yes
- 09 Tae: =((smacks lips)) >ponay-cwu-lkey.<
send-BEN-will
(I) will send it to you.

As Taewoo mentions that he has seen the photograph (not shown in the excerpt), Hyunho makes a request for information as to whether Taewoo has received the film (line 1), which is interpreted as a pre-request prior to re-doing his request (i.e., sending him a copy of the photograph). In response, Taewoo provides a dispreferred response consisting of two type-conforming responses (Raymond 2003) *e* ‘yes, yeah’ and *ani* ‘no’, as well as the elaboration (‘I saw the photograph that came out’, lines 2-3). Hyunho produces an *e* token (line 4) to acknowledge Taewoo’s dispreferred, question-elicited informing response while also proposing a sequence closure.

Following a 0.1-second pause, Hyunho makes another request for information about the photograph (‘and (the photograph) turned out okay?’, line 6). To this request, Taewoo replies with the affirmative *ung* token (line 7). This receives another *ung* token by Hyunho (line 8), which also serves as a sequence closing third to close the question-response sequence. Taewoo then goes on to reassure that he will send the photograph to Hyunho (line 9).

As Excerpt 2 demonstrates, *ung* and *e* are often utilized by the initiator of a question-response sequence both to acknowledge the question-elicited response and to close the sequence.

3.3 Collaborative Sequence Initiating Action

The occurrence of *kulay* ‘right’ is common in a particular position of a sequence in multiparty interaction. As will be illustrated below, when one participant in a multiparty interaction initiates a sequence, such as offering (Excerpt 3) and teasing (Excerpt 4), their co-interlocutor often produces *kulay* to join the initiating action of a sequence.

In Excerpt 3, three male graduate students discuss the lunch prepared for the day. Earlier in their conversation, the three of them started to talk about the lunch menu for the next day, as well as the need to purchase a new bag for their lunchboxes. The bottom of their bag recently turned red due to some sauce from the food packed in the lunchboxes.

Excerpt 3. Lunchbox [Friends 01]

- 01 Seo: a:: cincca hyeng-un cincca taytanh-ay.
DM really older.brother-TOP really amazing-IE
Ah seriously, *hyung* (= Yunho), you are so amazing.
- 02 kapang hana sa. =
bag one buy
Buy a (new) bag (to contain the lunchboxes).
- 03** Jiy: = *KULAY*.
be.so:IE
- 04 Seo: kunyang sa ike [°han pen.°
just buy this.thing one time
Just buy (it), this once.
- 05 Jiy: [>ta sa ta sa<=
all buy all buy
Buy it all, buy it all.
- 06 Seo: = ta sa. (.) °e.°
all buy yes
Buy it all. E.
- 07 ((clicks tongue))

As Yunho, who is usually in charge of preparing the lunch, informs the others that he prepared the lunch for the day until 2AM the night before (not shown in the excerpt), Seojun produces a compliment in response (‘you are so amazing’, line 1). Seojun then goes on to launch an offer sequence, in which he offers Yunho the permission to purchase a new bag for their lunchboxes to replace their current bag (line 2).

Immediately after the end of Seojun’s TCU, Jiyong produces a *kulay* token (line 3) to join the offer sequence initiated by Seojun. As the initial offer does not receive any uptake from Yunho, Seojun and Jiyong continue to offer further by collaboratively redoing their offer in the subsequent turns. In line 4, Seojun reoffers, and this time makes it clear what he is offering by pointing

toward the lunchbox placed in front of his upper body. Jiyong then upgrades the offer using the extreme case formulation (Pomerantz 1986) *ta* ‘all’ (‘buy it all, buy it all’, line 5) while Seojun joins in Jiyong’s re-offering by partially repeating Jiyong’s utterance (‘buy it all’, line 6).

Excerpt 4 features another occurrence of *kulay* in the same triadic interaction as Excerpt 3. Prior to the segment, the three graduate students started a conversation about one of their colleagues, Bin, who recently had a procedure to have his appendix removed. In this segment, Jiyong and Seojun simultaneously tease Yunho about this incident, as Bin happened to have an acute appendicitis after eating Yunho’s food.

Excerpt 4. Appendectomy [Friends 01]

- 01 Seo: ani (.) hyung ↑ttaymwuney sa:lam-i
DM older.brother because.of person-NOM
- 02 tachy-ess hyung::. =
 hurt-PST older.brother
 Because of you, *hyung* (= Yunho), someone got hurt, *hyung*.
- 03** Jiy: = ***KULAY*.**
 be.so:IE
- 04 Seo: hyung cikum wus-ul il-i
 older.brother now laugh-ACC matter-NOM
- 05 ani-[ya::.
 be.not-IE
 ***Hyung* (= Yunho), you shouldn’t be laughing at this.**
- 06 Jiy: [°***KUNIKKA*.**
 be.so-because

In lines 1-2, Seojun starts the teasing sequence by pointing toward Yunho and verbally criticizing him. Although Seojun’s turn delivers serious content, the elements used in the design of his turn frames it as recognizably playful teasing rather than a sincere blaming. Specifically, the combination of multiple exaggerated prosodic cues (i.e., *hyung* ‘older brother’, ↑*ttaymwuney* ‘because of’, *sa:lam* ‘person’, *hyung::.*) and repetition (i.e., *hyung* ‘older brother’ to call out Yunho) contributes to the jocular frame and thus construes Seojun’s utterance as a laughable one (Ford and Fox 2010: 361).

Moreover, what is noteworthy in this segment is the manner in which Jiyong joins Seojun’s initiation of the teasing sequence. In the middle of Seojun’s teasing turn, Jiyong turns his head toward Seojun and gazes at him. Then, immediately after the end of Seojun’s TCU, Jiyong produces *kulay* while simultaneously furrowing his eyebrows, which has been described as linked to negative emotions, such as anger, disgust, or displeasure (Kaukoma et al. 2014: 133). Jiyong’s use of eyebrow frowns therefore functions to upgrade his affiliation. As Yunho provides no response to the teasing initially launched by Seojun and conjoined by Jiyong, the teasing sequence becomes

expanded. That is, Seojun launches another teasing in an accusing manner, mentioning that Yunho should not be laughing at this matter (line 5). This receives another *kulehta*-type response token *kunikka* ‘right’ from Jiyong, which serves to indicate his affiliative stance toward Seojun’s proposition.

As shown in the two excerpts above, *kulay* often serves as a resource to indicate that a second speaker wishes to join a first speaker’s initiation of a sequence (e.g., offering and teasing) and to collaboratively accomplish the sequence initiating action.

4 Resources for Expressing Stances

This section analyzes the use of response tokens as interactional devices to express one’s epistemic and/or affiliative stance. In the sections below, I will demonstrate how the three particular response tokens in Korean, *kulehci*, *kulehnikka*, and *maca*, are utilized in response to an assertion, informing, or assessment. These three tokens are all translated roughly as ‘(that’s/you’re) right’ in English. The analysis below will also examine the additional turn component(s) (e.g., the same speaker’s additional comment) that each of these tokens routinely co-occurs with.

4.1 Epistemic Stance

In Korean conversation, the selection and production of a particular response token serves to display the speaker’s epistemic position in relation to the matter being discussed, asserted, or informed in the prior speaker’s talk. The two response tokens, *kulehci* and *maca*, appear frequently when the recipient of an informing turn claims knowing state, however, each has a distinctive use. As will be demonstrated in the following excerpt, *kulehci* is used to display its producer’s relatively less knowledgeable status, whereas the production of *maca* commonly signals its producer’s superior knowledge state. Both *kulehci* and *maca* as stand-alone utterances or accompany additional turn components, and the distinction between them is often noticeable in what precedes or follows them.

Excerpt 5 shows an instance in which the same speaker produces *kulehci* and *maca* as resources for displaying her epistemic stance to different degrees. Here, Jooan reveals to Chaeyeon what she has heard about the accuracy of prenatal ultrasounds when identifying a fetus as a boy. Jooan and Chaeyeon then discuss that the ultrasound is often inaccurate in predicting a girl.

Excerpt 5. Sonogram [LDC 6783]

01 Joo: ku choumpa-lo haykaci↑ko,
DM ultrasound-withdo because
If (the identification was) done with an ultrasound scan,

- 02 Cha: **UNG.**
yes
- 03 Joo: namca-ta kule-↑myen,
male-DC be.so-if
If it predicts a boy,
- 04 Cha: **UNG:.**
yes
- 05 Joo: ayey cincca namca-lay-yo.
at.all really male-HEARSAY-POL
It is a boy for sure.
- 06** Cha: ku-chi. >kuntey yeca-ay-ta kule-myen-↑un,<
be.so-COMM but female-kid-DC be.so-if-TOP
KUCHI. But if the ultrasound scan predicts a girl,
- 07 Joo: **YEY.**
yes
- 08** Cha: namca-ay-l swu-to iss-cyoꞵ
male-kid-can-also exist-COMM:POL
It can turn out to be a boyꞵ
- 09 Joo: yey ku:le-n kanungseng-i khu-[tay-yo.
yeah be.so-RL possibility-NOM big-HEARSAY-POL
YEY, I heard that that is highly possible.
- 10** Cha: [ung:: mac-a°yo°.
yes correct-POL
Yeah. MACA-yo.
- 11** ayki-ka ilehkey (0.4) [ung mwe-ya. wungkhuli-ko iss-nun
baby-NOM like.this DM DM-IE crouch-PROG-RL
- 12** wichi-ey ttalathulli-tay-yo poi-nun key::.
location-by different-HEARSAY-POL seen-TOP thing:NOM
How the fetus curls up affects what can be seen (on the sonogram).
- 13 Joo: [UNG.
yes
- 14 **YEY YYY YYY.**
yes yes yes

As Jooan completes her turn sharing the hearsay information about the accuracy of sonograms in predicting a boy (line 5), Chaeyeon expresses agreement by producing a *kuchi* (a shortened form of *kulehci*) token (line 6). The *kuchi* token is then followed by an additional comment that even if the ultrasound scan predicts a girl, the fetus could still turn out to be a boy (lines 6 and 8). Chaeyeon's comment here presents the other side (i.e., the case of female fetuses) of the same coin, which can be inferred from the basis of the proposition of Jooan's turn (i.e., the case of male fetuses). Similar to the *ci*-marked proverb in the prior excerpt, the use of the committal suffix *-ci* in Chaeyeon's reformulating practice appears to reflect a heightened degree of belief in the validity of the prior turn's talk.

After Jooan confirms the possibility of incorrect gender prediction in the case of female fetuses (line 9), Chaeyeon produces the ‘yes’-type token *ung* and then *maca* marked with the polite ending *-yo* and goes on to give a new piece of information (‘the posture of a fetus affects what can be seen on the sonogram’, lines 11-12). Unlike Chaeyeon’s comment preceded by *kuchi* in her earlier turn (lines 6 and 8), her additional unit of talk produced after *maca* displays her ability to contribute to the discussion of ultrasound scans by adding a new piece of information.

The above excerpt demonstrates clear differences in the additional unit of talk which co-occur with *kulehci* and *maca* within the same turn. In sum, *kulehci* precedes a comment which does not contribute new information or opinions to the ongoing talk, therefore, the *kulehci* producer remains in a recipient role. On the other hand, *maca* is followed by a new piece of information or opinion, showing its producer’s ability or rights to elaborate and add something new to the ongoing conversation.

4.2 Affiliative Stance

This section examines the ways in which the two *kulehta* ‘be so’-type response tokens, *kulenikka* and *kulehci*, are employed in a responsive turn to an assessing action, which Couper-Kuhlen and Selting (2018) describes as involving “evaluating persons, objects, states of affairs, and situations positively or negatively (p. 283).” Couper-Kuhlen and Selting (2018) notes that the object being assessed in the talk (referred to as *assessable*) can be present in the here-and-now of talk-in-interaction or part of a past experience (p. 285).

In the data, the *kulenikka* tokens mostly occur in response to an assessing action in the context of the former case, in which what is being assessed is here-and-now accessible to all the participants engaged in the conversation. Excerpt 6 illustrates an instance of *kunikka* (a contracted form of *kulenikka*). Prior to the segment below, which comes from the three graduate students’ face-to-face conversation, each of them was provided with a cup of Starbucks coffee by the researcher and started drinking the coffee.

Excerpt 6. Coffee [Friends 01]

- 01 Seo: pyengso-pota nemwu ssu-ntey(h) °ike°.
 usual-than too bitter-CIRCUM this.thing
(It tastes) so much more bitter than usual, this.
- 02 an-ya saykkkal-i kuntey way (.) khephi-ka i
 be.not-IE color-NOM but why coffee-NOM this
- 03 saykkkal-i ani-canh-a wonlay.
 color-NOM be.not-you.know-IE originally
No, what’s with the color then, the color shouldn’t be like

this for coffee.
 04 ani-n-ka?
 be.not-PRS-Q
Maybe not?
 05 (1.4)
 06 ikey te cinha-n ke kath-[untey,
 this.thing:NOM more dark-RL thing like-CIRCUM
I think this one looks darker.
 07 Jiy: [KU(h)NI(h)KKA.
 be.so:because
 08 [ani-keyss-ci?
 be.not-CONJ-COMM
It can't be, right?
 09 Seo: [>hyeng ike mek-e pw-a.<
 older.brother this.thing eat-try-IE
Hyung (= Yunho), try this one.

After tasting his coffee, Seojun goes on to complain about the bitterness of his coffee by making a comparison with the usual taste of an iced americano ('(it tastes) so much more bitter than usual, this', line 1), and then proceeds to talk about the color of his coffee which also seems different from that of the usual coffee. However, in his subsequent turn, Seojun expresses uncertainty about what he has just claimed about the color of the coffee ('maybe not?') and simultaneously takes a close look at the coffee. This leads the other two co-interlocutors, Yunho and Jiyong, to pay attention to the color of Seojun's coffee as well as that of Yunho, as it is supposed to have a darker color with extra shots of espresso added. For 1.4 seconds, no additional talk is exchanged, but Yunho lifts his cup and all three of them look back and forth between Yunho's coffee and Seojun's coffee to make a comparison.

After taking the time to visually compare the color, Seojun expresses his opinion (line 6), and Jiyong responds to this with a *kunikka* token accompanied by embedded laughter (line 7). Jiyong's production of *kunikka* here after visually comparing the color of the two coffees indicates his affiliation with Seojun's opinion about the color of his coffee (i.e., darker than Yunho's coffee). After this, Jiyong continues to express disbelief that the coffee Seojun drank was Yunho's customized coffee, which further leads Seojun to request that Yunho taste his coffee.

Unlike *kulenikka*, which was described as mostly deployed to express affiliation with the prior speaker's assessment of a referent that is here-and-now available to the participants, *kulehci* in most cases is produced to affiliate with how a past situation or event has just been assessed by the prior speaker, of which both the *kulehci* producer and the prior speaker have knowledge. Consider Excerpt 7 as an example, which is taken from another one of the three graduate students' face-to-face conversations. Yunho, who is in charge

of cooking the meal for their packed lunches, brings up grilled pork belly as an option for the next day's packed lunch.

Excerpt 7. Pork Belly [Friends 02]

- 01 Jiy: ku-lay kuttay wuli (.) hakkyo-ey
 be.so-IE at.that.time we school-LOC
- 02 wa-se hyung-i calla-cwe-ss-ul
 come-and older.brother-NOM cut-BEN-PST-RL
- 03 ttay >kuttay-ka ceyil masiss-ess-e.<
 when at.that.time-NOM the.most tasty-PST-IE
KULAY, that time, when *hyung* (= Yunho) cut (the grilled whole pork belly) into pieces at school, that time (the pork belly) tasted the best.
- 04** Yun: a ku(.)-[chi yukcup-i kutaylo iss-u[ni(h)kka(h)
 DM be.so-COMM juice-NOM as.is exist-because
Ah *KUCHI*. Because the juices (of the pork belly) would be preserved inside.
- 05 Jiy: [E E.
 yes yes
- 06 [
 >ceyil
 the.most
- 07 masiss-ess-ki-n hay-ss-e<
 tasty-PST-NML-TOP do-PST-IE
(The pork belly) tasted the best (that way).
- 08 (1.1)

As they talk about grilled pork belly, Jiyong recalls a past event and begins to talk about a previous occasion on which Yunho grilled pork belly whole at home and brought it to school for their lunch boxes. As Jiyong initiates the talk about this previous event, he frames the event as a shared one by gazing directly toward Yunho and also pointing toward him while producing the pronoun *wuli* 'we' to refer to himself and Yunho (line 1).

After the proffering of a topic of which both Jiyong and Yunho have knowledge, Jiyong adds an evaluative comment about the grilled whole pork belly that Yunho and Jiyong ate at this prior event (line 3). In response, Yunho produces an *a*-prefaced *kuchi* (a contracted form of *kulehci*) token that expresses his knowledgeable state regarding the event and his affiliation with Jiyong's comment about the deliciousness of the whole pork belly (line 4). Yunho's epistemic primacy is further expressed in his additional (*u*)*nikka* 'because'-marked comment, which retroactively serves to account for Jiyong's prior comment, explaining why the pork belly they ate at that time turned out to be delicious ('because the juices (of the pork belly) would be preserved inside'). In the middle of Yunho's turn, Jiyong produces a duplicated *e* token (line 5), which serves to display his knowledgeable state, and

proceeds to reinforce his prior assessment by repeating the modifier (*ceyil* ‘the best’) and descriptor (*masiss(ta)* ‘delicious’) (lines 6-7).

In this study’s conversational data, it was observed that Korean speakers regularly employ both of the two *kulehta*-type response tokens, *kulenikka* and *kulehci*, to respond to assessing actions of various types in a way that expresses their affiliative stance toward the prior speaker’s stance; albeit each token is used distinctively.

5 Discussion and Conclusion

Adopting an interactional linguistic approach, this study qualitatively analyzes the use of the eight most frequently occurring response tokens (*ung*, *e*, *ney*, *yey*, *kulay*, *kulehci*, *kulenikka*, and *maca*) in various interactional environments. The analysis of naturally occurring conversational excerpts has shown how the recipient of a turn utilizes the eight response tokens distinctively to respond to various types of initiating actions implemented in a prior turn. These can include a request for confirmation/information, informing, assertion, and assessment. As has been shown in previous studies on response tokens in the Korean language and other languages, response tokens in this study’s data serve a variety of interactional roles and functions as resources for managing a turn or sequence and/or expressing one’s stances toward the prior turn’s talk.

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