

At-Issue Variability with Evidentials: A Case Study from Korean

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1. Introduction

In this paper, we show that evidentials, at least in Korean, exhibit what we call at-issue variability between the proposition under the scope of an evidential (hereafter the prejacent), on the one hand, and the information content provided by *-ney*, reached by the speaker's direct perception, on the other hand. Then we also show that, with at-issue variability, we can explain apparently unique characteristics of *-ney* in terms of a direct perceptive evidential, without assuming a non-canonical lexical entry for *-ney*, such as a mirative marker (Park 2020, a.o.), or a non-canonical assertion marker (Chung 2014, 2016, a.o.).

This paper is organized as follows. In Section 2 we introduce several characteristics of Korean sentence final particle *-ney*. In Section 3 we present our puzzle: an apparently non-informative assertion with *-ney*. In Section 4 we propose that an utterance with an evidential marker shows at-issue variability, just like attitude predicates and their complements (Simons 2007, a.o.). Given this, In Section 5 we try to solve the puzzle. In Section 6 we discuss possible objections and how they can be refuted based on our proposal. In Section 7 we compare our proposal with previous proposals, and In Section 8 we extend our analysis to another direct perceptive evidential in Korean, that is *-te-*. In Section 9 we conclude the paper.

2. Korean direct perceptive evidential *-ney*

Korean *-ney* is a sentence final particle, and when it is used with unmarked falling intonation, it is used as a declarative marker with assertion, and introduces the implication that the speaker has directly perceived evidence regarding the prejacent (hereafter direct evidentiality). For example, (1c) is compatible only with (1a), where the speaker has direct evidence regarding the prejacent that it is raining (see also Lee 2013; Song 2014; c.f. Chung 2007). In contrast, (1b) is not compatible with (1c), because in (1b) the speaker does not have any direct perceptive evidence regarding the prejacent.

- (1)
- a. Tom is watching it raining outside through a window, and says to Mary...
 - b. In a café without any window, Tom thinks that it feels too humid. He soon remembers that a forecast in the morning said that it will rain today. So, Tom says to Mary...
 - c. Pi-ka o-ney.
Rain-Nom come-ney
'It is raining.' (Implication: I am directly perceiving the pouring rain)
=> OK under (1a) / # under (1b)

One unique characteristic of *-ney* is its temporal restriction. To understand this, first let us consider three time periods relevant to the interpretation of evidentials. First, we have the time period when the speaker utters the proposition with an evidential, or the Utterance Time (UT). Next, we have the time period when the speaker acquires the evidence, or the Evidence Learning Time (LT) (Lee 2013; Koev 2017). Finally, we have the time period when the event denoted by the prejacent occurs, or the Event Time (ET). Now, when *-ney* is used, LT should overlap with UT. Therefore, for example, (3) is felicitous

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under (2a), but not under (2b). This is because only in (2a) UT and LT overlap (see also Chung 2007; Lee 2013; Song 2014; Park 2020, a.o.).

- (2) a. Tom is watching it raining outside through a window, and saying... (LT ◦ UT)
 b. Tom watched it raining on the way home, and thought that it will be raining the whole day.
 At home, after washing himself, he entered a room without any window, and says...
 (LT<UT)
- (3) Cikum pakk-ey pi-ka o-ney.
 Now outside-Loc rain-Nom come-ney
 ‘It is raining outside now.’ (Implication: I am directly perceiving the pouring rain)
 => OK under (2a) / # under (2b)

3. Puzzle: apparently non-informative assertion

As pointed out in Section 2, with unmarked falling intonation, *-ney* is used as a declarative ending with an assertion. Then, to understand the puzzle, we need to first consider the general conditions on assertions. Following Farkas and Bruce (2010), Murray (2014), and AnderBois (2016), among others, we assume that the following three conditions should be met for an assertion to be made:

- (4) When a speaker *S* asserts a proposition *p* to an addressee *A*:
- S* commits to *p*
 - S* assumes that *A* does not believe *p*
 - The content of *p* is a negotiable proposal which waits for the acceptance from *A*

Furthermore, we also assume that an assertion is a proposal to add a proposition *p* to the common ground (CG), and after the addressee accepts *p*, it is added to CG (Stalnaker 1978, a.o.).

Given this, to present our puzzle, we assume the scenario (5) where, with respect to the proposition that *Chris* is wearing a new shirt (say *p*), we can say that *Alice* believes *p*, *Bob* knows not *p*, and *Chris* is expected to know whether *p* or not *p*.

- (5) Alice, Bob, and Chris are at a party. Usually Alice does not notice other people’s change in clothes, and everybody at the party knows this. Today she unusually notices that Chris wears a shirt she has not seen before, so she thinks it is new. However, Bob knows that Chris bought that shirt three years ago.

Now, *p* can be uttered under (5) in various ways, with respect to whether the direct evidential *-ney* or a declarative ending *-e* is used, and who the addressee is. Note that, in all of these examples are supposed to carry canonical falling intonation, or the intonation assigned to a canonical declarative sentence. In other words, all the examples below are unmarked assertions.

First, suppose that the speaker is *Alice*, and the addressee is *Bob*. Here (6a), *p* with the declarative *-e*, is felicitous. This is expected, even though *Bob* knows not *p*, since asserting *p* as (6a) satisfies all the conditions in (4): *Alice* commits to *p*, *Alice* assumes that *Bob* does not believe *p*, and the content of *p* is a negotiable proposal which waits for the acceptance from *Bob*. Actually, *Bob* can, and actually will, deny *p*, since he knows that *Chris*’s shirt is not new, but as far as *p* is a negotiable proposal, it still satisfies (4c): (6a) is felicitous under (5). Furthermore, *Alice* can also utter (6b) to *Bob* felicitously: the only difference between (6a) and (6b) is that, unlike (6a), (6b) carries direct evidentiality introduced by *-ney*.

- (6) Speaker: Alice / Addressee: Bob
- Chris-ka say syechu ip-ko.iss-e.
 Chris-Nom new shirt wear-Prog-Decl
 ‘Chris is wearing a new shirt.’
 - Chris-ka say syechu ip-ko.iss-ney.
 Chris-Nom new shirt wear-Prog-*ney*
 ‘Chris is wearing a new shirt.’ (with direct evidentiality)

Then consider (7). Where the speaker is *Alice* and the addressee is *Chris*, the one who is expected to know that his shirt is new or not. Here, given (4), (7) is not felicitous, as expected: whether *Chris* is wearing a new shirt or not is not new information to *Chris* himself, and therefore it violates (4).

- (7) Speaker: Alice / Addressee: Chris
 #Ne say syechu ip-ko.iss-e.
 You new shirt wear-Prog-Decl
 ‘You (Chris) are wearing a new shirt.’

Now we have our puzzle. See (8):

- (8) Speaker: Alice / Addressee: Chris
 Ne say syechu ip-ko.iss-ney.
 You new shirt wear-Prog-*ney*
 ‘You (Chris) are wearing a new shirt.’ (with direct evidentiality)

(8) minimally differs from (7): unlike (7), (8) contains *-ney*, and can be uttered with plain falling intonation. This means that (8) does not express any mirativity. As in (7), the prejacent is not new to *Chris*, and therefore, like (7), (8) is expected to be infelicitous under (5). Still, unlike this expectation, (8) can be felicitously uttered to *Chris*. Now, if an assertion is a proposal to add new negotiable information to CG, how can (8) be felicitous? And what is actually asserted in (8)?

To solve this puzzle, in the next section, we extend the notion of at-issue variability (first proposed by Murray 2014 for slifting constructions), and argue that the similar at-issue variability can be found in Korean evidentials, such as *-ney* (see also AnderBois 2016 for attitude predicates).

4. Proposal: at-issue variability with *-ney*

The notion of at-issue variability was first suggested as main point variability by Simons (2007) (then later it is extended to at-issueness by Simons et al. 2010), for utterances with an attitude predicate and its propositional complement, depending on context. She argues that, when an attitude predicate is uttered with its propositional component, either the embedded proposition or the information provided by the attitude predicate can be the main point, and when the former becomes at-issue, the information provided by the attitude predicate just implies how the speaker obtains the commitment to the at-issue content. For example, in (9), depending on *Kim*’s question, in *Lee*’s answer, either the proposition that *Mary* is in Rome, or the proposition that *Lee* heard that information can be the main point of (9).

- (9) I heard from Chris that Mary is in Rome.
- (10) a. Kim: Where is Mary?
 Lee: I heard from Chris that she is in Rome.
 b. Kim: How do you know that Mary is in Rome?
 Lee: I heard it from Chris.

Now, here is our proposal. We extend this kind of main point variability to evidentials. Specifically, we propose that, when *-ney* is used, the at-issueness can vary between the prejacent and the information content introduced by *-ney*. A more schematized version of this proposal is given in (11):

- (11) When *-ney* is uttered with its prejacent *p*, the at-issue content can be either *p* or *q*:
 a. *p*
 b. *q*: (given the evidence acquired at LT via her direct perception,) the speaker notices that *p*

According to (11), when an utterance is made with the prejacent *p* and *-ney*, the at-issueness can vary between *p* and the information state reached by the speaker’s direct perception (*q* in 11). Note that, *q* is what we assume as the role of *-ney* as a direct evidential, in addition to indicating the speaker’s direct perception as information source. This is because of the following reasons. Before the speaker earns the evidence at LT, if she were already in the position to have a strong commitment to *p*, the use of *-ney*

would be redundant (c.f. Krawczyk 2012). That is, when an evidential with its prejacent p is used, the speaker can make a commitment to p only when she acquires the evidence regarding p . In addition to this, the evidential *-ney* only has the implication that the way in which the speaker acquires the evidence is her direct perception. Note that, in this analysis, *-ney* is still a direct perceptive evidential, different from an epistemic modal (for a detailed argument for this, see Lim et al. to appear). Now, suppose that two information contents, p and q in (11), appear in a single utterance, and potentially either p or q can get at-issue status. Then, the informativeness of that information content with respect to CG plays a crucial role to determine which of the two information contents, p and q , should be at-issue. That is, the information content which is negotiable with respect to CG becomes at-issue, and that which is not, becomes not-at-issue.

Furthermore, we also propose that this at-issueness is what Koev (2018: 5) calls Proposal-at-issueness (henceforth P-at-issueness). The definition of P-at-issueness is given in (12), where we can see that this definition is closely related to the conditions on assertions we saw in (4):

- (12) A proposition p is P-at-issue in a context c iff
 - p is a proposal in c and
 - p has not been accepted or rejected in c . (Koev 2018: 5)

Koev (2018) also proposes the peripherality test to identify whether a proposition is P-at-issue or not. According to this test, if an information content can be challenged with the specification as peripheral, that information is not-P-at-issue. For example, see (13):

- (13) A: Steve, who is Amy's husband, wrote this book.
 B₁: Wait. This is peripheral to your point, but Steve isn't Amy's husband.
 B₂: ?Wait. This is peripheral to your point, but Steve didn't write this book.

Since the information that Steve is Amy's husband is not-P-at-issue, this information can be challenged like B₁, explicitly pointing out that the parenthesized proposition, that is *Steve is Amy's husband*, is peripheral and not-P-at-issue. However, B₂ does not sound natural, since the proposition that Steve wrote this book is P-at-issue, and therefore cannot be said to be peripheral.

5. Analysis

Now let us see how our proposal explains our puzzle of apparently non-informative assertion. Under our scenario (5), where the prejacent p is the proposition that *Chris* is wearing a new shirt, *Alice* believes p , *Bob* knows not p , and *Chris* is expected to know whether p or not p . Under this scenario, suppose that *Alice* utters to *Bob* the proposition that *Chris* is wearing a new shirt is asserted with *-ney*, as in (14).

- (14) Speaker: Alice / Addressee: Bob
 Chris-ka say syechu ip-ko.iss-ney.
 Chris-Nom new shirt wear-Prog-*ney*
 'Chris is wearing a new shirt.' (with direct evidentiality)

In (14) there are two propositions we need to consider: the prejacent of *-ney* that *Chris* is wearing a new shirt, and the proposition that the speaker notices this prejacent via her direct perception, as shown in (15):

- (15) p : Chris is wearing a new shirt.
 q : (given the evidence acquired at LT via her direct perception,) the speaker notices that p

When *Alice* utters (14) to *Bob*, *Alice* supposes that *Bob* does not believe that *Chris* is wearing a new shirt. Therefore, here p becomes P-at-issue, and q becomes not-P-at-issue. Therefore, *Bob* can respond to (14) with (16b), where q is indicated as peripheral but p is not. In contrast, he cannot respond to (14) with (16a), since here p is pointed out as not-P-at-issue, contrary to the context.

- (16) Bob: (after 14)
- a. #Camkkan, iken pwuchaceki-ntey, Chris-nun ku syechu-lul
 Wait this peripheral-but Chris-Top that shirt-Acc
 3 nyen cen-ey sa-ss-e.
 3 year before-Loc buy-Past-Decl
 ‘Wait, this is peripheral, but Chris bought it 3 years ago.’
- b. Camkkan, iken pwuchaceki-ntey, ne kukel ettehkey alachali-ess-e?
 Wait this peripheral-but you that how notice-Past-Q
 ‘Wait, this is peripheral, but how did you notice that?’

In contrast, consider (17), where *Alice* is the speaker and *Chris* is the addressee. After (17), *Bob* can interrupt and felicitously utter (18a), but not (18b).

- (17) Speaker: Alice / Addressee: Chris
 Ne say syechu ip-ko.iss-**ney**.
 You new shirt wear-Prog-*ney*
 ‘You (Chris) are wearing a new shirt.’ (with direct evidentiality)

- (18) Bob: (after 17)
- a. Camkkan, iken pwuchaceki-ntey, Chris-nun ku syechu-lul
 Wait this peripheral-but Chris-Top that shirt-Acc
 3 nyen cen-ey sa-ss-e.
 3 year before-Loc buy-Past-Decl
 ‘Wait, this is peripheral, but Chris bought it 3 years ago.’
- b. #Camkkan, iken pwuchaceki-ntey, ne kukel ettehkey alachali-ess-e?
 Wait this peripheral-but you that how notice-Past-Decl
 ‘Wait, this is peripheral, but how did you notice that?’

Let’s see why (18b) is infelicitous under our scenario. Given that *Chris* is supposed to know whether he himself is wearing a new shirt or not, from *Alice*’s point of view, *p*, or the prejacent of (17) is not negotiable, and not new to CG, and *Bob* knows this as well. Therefore, even though *Bob* is interrupting, this information can be regarded as not-P-at-issue. In contrast, *q*, or the information content that *Alice* notices *Chris*’s shirt she hasn’t seen, is still a novel proposal, even though *Chris* is the addressee. Therefore, *q* should be P-at-issue: hence the infelicity of (18b).

In the next section we discuss possible objections against our proposal and present our responses.

6. Possible objections and our responses

6.1. The source of information

Note that, no matter whether *p* or *q* in (15) is P-at-issue, (19) does not seem felicitous after (17):

- (19) Bob: #Camkkan, iken pwuchaceki-ntey, ne kukel po-ass-e?
 Wait this peripheral-but you that see-Past-Decl
 ‘Wait, this is peripheral, but did you see that?’

To address this issue, we assume that there are three types of information contents in an utterance with an evidential marker: (i) the prejacent of the evidential, (ii) the information content reached by the acquisition of evidence, and (iii) the information source indicated by the evidential. Specifically, comparing (16b) and (18b), on the one hand, with (19), on the other hand, we distinguish between the information source indicated by *-ney* and the information content introduced by *-ney*. In (16b) and (18b), the target of the question is the information content reached by the acquisition of evidence. In contrast, in (19), the target of the question is the information source, which we speculate is inherently non-at-issue: it cannot be the target of the at-issue variability (c.f. Murray 2014). That is, to make an assertion, the speaker should have some information from some source, anyway. Or, it is without any doubt that the

speaker has some source regarding the prejacent. Therefore, it is not felicitous to ask a question about information source, even peripherally.

6.2. So-called (non-)challengeability

One might cast doubt to our proposal by pointing out that, when (17) is uttered, the not-at-issue content can be challenged as in (20a), by directly denying it, while the at-issue content cannot, as in (20b). This does not seem to fit to the well-known challengeability test.

- (20) After Chris heard (17) from Alice, he directly responds to her...
- a. √Ani, kuken sasil-i aniya.
No, that fact-Nom is.not.Decl
'No, that is not true (it is not new).'
- b. #Ney-ka alachay-ess-ul li eps-e.
you-Nom notice-Past-Adn possibility nothing-Decl
'It is not possible for you to notice it.'

Tentatively, we suggest that, at-issueness or not-at-issueness is not the sole factor in determining the challengeability or non-challengeability of a certain implication in an utterance. To see what this means, recall our proposal about two information contents in an utterance with *-ney* in (11), repeated as (21).

- (21) When *-ney* is uttered with its prejacent *p*, the at-issue content can be either *p* or *q*:
- a. *p*
b. *q*: (given the evidence acquired at LT via her direct perception,) the speaker notices that *p*

As to (20a), (21b) shows that the information about *p* is included in *q* as the complement of the verb *notice*. Thus, there is a bite to appeal that the denial in (20a) comes indirectly from the way in which the complement of the at-issue content is questioned. In contrast, with respect to (20b), we adopt Korotkova's (2016) proposal: the source of information of an evidential is subjective to the speaker. It is because of this subjectivity, not because of its status of (not)-at-issueness, that it cannot be directly challenged. In this sense, the challenging part in (20b) shares subjectivity. As roughly depicted in (21b), its attitudinal status is attributable to the speaker's own acquired evidence. Hence, it cannot be directly challenged.

The implication of this analysis would be that, challengeability or non-challengeability may not be a good diagnostic to distinguish between at-issue contents and not-at-issue contents, given that subjective contents may not be able to be directly challenged, either. In our view, Koev's (2018) peripherality test may be a better diagnostic to distinguish between two types of contents.

7. Comparisons with previous studies

Here we compare our proposal with other previous proposals, where *-ney* is not analyzed as a (canonical) direct perceptive evidential, but something else, such as a mirative marker or a declarative ending introducing a non-canonical assertion.

The first previous proposal (Park 2020) is that *-ney* is not a direct perceptive evidential, but a mirative marker. Since DeLancey (1997, 2001), mirativity is defined as a linguistic category indicating the speaker's unexpectedness or surprise. Given this, Park (2020) argues that *-ney* is not an evidential but a specialized mirative marker. Park's argument is based on the example like (22), which he calls *deferred realization*. According to Park, (22) can be felicitously uttered when the speaker has some direct perceptive evidence at UT and based on that realizes that the prejacent is the case. Park (2020) argues this kind of deferred realization cannot be found in mirativity with canonical evidentials, and therefore *-ney* should be distinguished from run-of-the-mill evidentials.

- (22) John-i pemin-i-ess-ney!
John-Nom culprit-Cop-Past-ney
'John was the culprit! (I have just noticed)'

However, (22) is not a canonical case (see also Chung 2012, Song 2014, a.o., for arguments that *-ney* is not a mirative marker). In (22), *-ney* should appear with rising intonation, different from our examples where *-ney* appears with canonical falling intonation. This suggests to us that the canonical cases where *-ney* introduces direct evidentiality should be analyzed in a different way. This line of reasoning is also supported by the example like (23), where *yeychukhaysstusi* ‘as expected’ indicates that the prejacent is not surprising or unexpected with respect to the addressee. This shows that *-ney* does not necessarily require that the speaker expect the prejacent is not the case, especially when it is used with canonical falling intonation.

- (23) Yeychukhaysstusti, pi-ka o-ney.
 As.expected rain-Nom come-ney
 ‘As expected, it is raining.’ (implication: I am directly perceiving the pouring rain)

This said, let us return to (22). As far as we can see, (22) can also be uttered with canonical falling intonation. One might argue against our finding, saying that even with canonical falling intonation, a sense of mirativity remains in (22). We tentatively analyze this in the following way. In (22), regardless of the intonation patterns, there is a temporal gap between ET and LT. This means that only at UT, the speaker can eventually make a commitment to the prejacent due to what she directly perceives. Before UT, she was not able to expect that the content of the prejacent is true. In this sense, it can be said that the ‘supposed’ mirativity is just the result of the speaker’s late ‘noticing’ the evidence, given the temporal gap between ET and LT and the temporal overlap between UT and LT.¹ Accordingly, we further speculate that even the mirativity in (22) with rising intonation, the late noticing of some event as evidence play a crucial role to yield the mirativity (c.f. Rett and Murray 2013), although further research is required.

The second proposal (Chung 2014, 2016) is that *-ney* is a non-declarative marker, or an unusual declarative marker. The motivation of this is our puzzling example, where the prejacent is not expected to be new information to the addressee. Specifically, Chung (2014, 2016) argues that *-ney* is a sentential mood marker expressing an assertive speech act, and the assertion introduced by *-ney* is not a run-of-the-mill one, in the sense that it publicizes new information relative to the speaker, not to the addressee. Obviously, this idea is *ad hoc*: except evidentials like *-ney*, there is no reason why we need to assume such an unusual mood marker. Our proposal provides a much simpler picture: (26) is simply an example where the prejacent is not at-issue, whereas the information content of the speaker expressed by *-ney* is at-issue.

8. A prediction: Korean direct perceptive evidential *-te-*

Before concluding our paper, we discuss a prediction that our proposal makes: if an utterance with an evidential shows at-issue variability, as we have shown with *-ney*, other evidentials, at least in Korean, may also show this kind of at-issue variability. As far as we can see this prediction is borne out: and here we show that Korean direct perceptive evidential *-te-* (Song 1998, Lee 2013, Lim et al. 2022, a.o.: c.f. Chung 2007 for a different claim) exhibits the same kind of at-issue variability.

Just like *-ney*, *-te-* is also a direct perceptive evidential in Korean, but *-te-* is different from *-ney*, in the sense that whereas *-ney* requires that LT overlap with UT, *-te-* requires that LT precede UT. Therefore, among two scenarios we saw in (2), repeated below as (24), only (24b) is compatible with (25), where *-te-* is used instead of *-ney*. This is because in (24b), unlike (24a), LT precedes UT.

- (24) a. Tom is watching it raining outside through a window, and saying... (LT ◦ UT)
 b. Tom watched it raining on the way home, and thought that it will be raining the whole day. At home, after washing himself, he entered a room without any window, and says... (LT < UT)

¹ Lim et al. (to appear) point out that *-ney* can introduce the implication that the speaker infers the prejacent from her direct perception. Furthermore, in our view, Park’s (2020) deferred realization seems very similar to Koev’s (2017) late realization, where the speaker directly perceived an event and later realizes that the event is the evidence for the prejacent. All of these studies strongly suggest that Park’s (2020) deferred realization is not evidence for *-ney* as a separate mirative marker, but it can be derived from *-ney*’s direct evidentiality. We leave this issue for future research.

- (25) Pakk-ey pi-ka o-te-la.
 Outside-Loc rain-Nom come-*te*-Decl
 ‘It is raining outside.’ (Implication: I perceived the pouring rain)
 => # under (27a) / OK under (27b)

To see *-te-* shows at-issue variability, consider (26). Like (5), in (26), *Alice* believes that *Chris* was wearing a red shirt (say *p*), *Bob* knows not *p*, and *Chris* is expected to know whether *p* or not *p*. The only difference is that in (5) LT overlaps with UT, whereas in (26) LT precedes UT.

- (26) *Alice* usually does not easily recognize other people’s changes in their clothes, and her friends know this well. Yesterday she saw *Chris* was wearing a red shirt. She thought it was new, but actually it was *Chris*’s only red shirt, and he bought it three years ago. *Bob*, *Chris*’s closest friend, also knows this. Today, *Alice* went to a party to which *Bob* and *Chris* were also invited.

Now, suppose that *Alice* says *p* to *Bob*. Like *-ney*, the utterance with *p* is felicitous, no matter whether *-te-* is employed (as in 27a) or not (as in 27b). Again, this is expected. Under (26), both utterances in (27) satisfy the general conditions on assertions: *Alice* commits to *p*, assumes that *Bob* does not believe *p*, and the content of *p* is a negotiable proposal which waits for the acceptance from *Bob*.

- (27) Speaker: *Alice* / Addressee: *Bob*
 a. Ecey, Chris-ka say ppalkan syechu ip-ko.iss-te-la.
 Yesterday Chris-Nom new red shirt wear-Prog-*te*-Decl
 ‘Yesterday, *Chris* was wearing a new red shirt.’ (with direct evidentiality)
 b. Ecey, Chris-ka say ppalkan syechu ip-ko.iss-ess-e.
 Yesterday, Chris-Nom new red shirt wear-Prog-Past-Decl
 ‘Yesterday, *Chris* was wearing a new red shirt.’ (without direct evidentiality)

Next, suppose that *Alice* utters (28) to *Chris*, not *Bob*. Since *Chris* is expected to know that his red shirt is not a new one, uttering (28) does not satisfy the general conditions on assertions, and therefore is not felicitous, as expected:

- (28) Speaker: *Alice* / Addressee: *Chris*
 #Ecey, ne say ppalkan syechu ip-ko.iss-ess-e.
 Yesterday, you new red shirt wear-Prog-Past-Decl
 ‘Yesterday, you were wearing a new shirt.’ (without direct evidentiality)

When *-te-* is used, the utterance becomes felicitous, even though the prejacent is not new to *Chris*.

- (29) Speaker: *Alice* / Addressee: *Chris*
 Ecey, ne say ppalkan syechu ip-ko.iss-te-la.
 Yesterday you new red shirt wear-Prog-*te*-Decl
 ‘Yesterday, you were wearing a new red shirt.’ (with direct evidentiality)

This is the exactly same pattern as *-ney*, which we believe shows at-issue variability: in (27a), the prejacent becomes at-issue, whereas in (29), the information content introduced by *-te-* becomes at-issue. This is further supported by the peripherality test. When the prejacent is at-issue, only the information content introduced by *-te-* can be indicated as peripheral and not-at-issue, as shown in (30). In contrast, when the prejacent is not-at-issue, it can be indicated as peripheral, as shown in (31).

- (30) *Bob*: (after 27a)
 a. #Camkkan, iken pwuchaceki-ntey, Chris-nun ku syechu-lul
 Wait this peripheral-but Chris-Top that shirt-Acc
 3 nyen cen-ey sa-ss-e.
 3 year before-Loc buy-Past-Decl
 ‘Wait, this is peripheral, but *Chris* bought it 3 years ago.’

- b. Camkkan, iken pwuchaceki-ntey, ne kukel ettekey alachali-ess-e?
 Wait this peripheral-but you that how notice-Past-Decl
 ‘Wait, this is peripheral, but how did you notice that?’
- (31) Bob: (after 29)
- a. Camkkan, iken pwuchaceki-ntey, Chris-nun ku syechu-lul
 Wait this peripheral-but Chris-Top that shirt-Acc
 3 nyen cen-ey sa-ss-e.
 3 year before-Loc buy-Past-Decl
 ‘Wait, this is peripheral, but Chris bought it 3 years ago.’
- b. #Camkkan, iken pwuchaceki-ntey, ne kukel ettekey alachali-ess-e?
 Wait this peripheral-but you that how notice-Past-Decl
 ‘Wait, this is peripheral, but how did you notice that?’

These examples show that our prediction is borne out: at-issue variability occurs not only with *-ney* but also with *-te-*. We believe that this variability can be found in evidentials in other languages (see also Murray 2014, a.o.), but further research is required.

9. Conclusions

In this paper, we argue that there is at-issue variability in Korean direct perceptive evidential *-ney* between the prejacent of *-ney* and the information content introduced by *-ney*. This variability can be identified in terms of the peripherality test, suggested by Koev (2018). To account for some apparent counterexamples, we also propose that information content should be distinguished from information source: the latter is what we assume as inherently not-at-issue, and therefore cannot be challenged, anyway. The mirativity of *-ney*, as well as the apparent non-informativeness of *-ney*'s prejacent in certain cases, can be explained in terms of the at-issueness of the information content introduced by *-ney*. We think at-issue variability can also be found in other evidentials in Korean, including *-te-* (Lee 2013, Lim et al. 2022, a.o.), as well as in evidentials in other languages. Anyway, at least in languages like Korean, where an assertion is explicitly marked by sentential endings, we can identify at-issue variability more clearly, depending on which information content can be regarded as new to the addressee.

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