The Korean Evidential Marker -Te- Revisited: Its Semantic Constraints and Distancing Effects

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INTRODUCTION

► KOREAN EVIDENTIALITY Marker –*TE*-

[1] A direct evidential marker targeting for an event in the past

[2] Periphrastic equivalence in English: *I remember that... [PAST EVENT]*, *I saw that [PAST EVENT]* etc.

(1) chelswu-ka pap-ul mek-ess-ta
    chelswu-Nom rice-Acc eat-Past-ending
    Lit. Chelswu ate rice (Chelswu had a meal).

(2) chelswu-ka pap-ul mek-te-la
    chelswu-Nom rice-Acc eat-te-ending
    Lit. Chelswu ate rice (I saw that Chelswu had a meal).
INTRODUCTION

OBSERVATION 1. SEMANTIC INCOMPATIBILITY?

[1] Direct evidentiality marking and Psychological distance marking at the same time

(2`) chelswu-ka pap-ul mek-te-la
chelswu-Nom rice-Acc eat-te-ending
Lit. Chelswu ate rice.

(I saw that Chelswu had a meal)
([Chelswu is supposed to fast his meal, the speaker saw him eat, and she didn’t stop him from eating, even though she knew that he is not supposed to eat] I saw that Chelswu had a meal (and that is not my responsibility))

Possibly with tonal contour?
INTRODUCTION

OBSERVATION 1. SEMANTIC INCOMPATIBILITY?

[2] Direct evidentiality marking and Deictic discontinuity at the same time

(3) [Seeing that it rains outside through window,]
*cikum pi-ka mani o-te-la
now rain-Nom heavily come-te-ending
Lit. Rain comes much now (It’s raining much now)

(3`) [After seeing it’s raining outside, the speaker came into a room which has no window,]
cikum pi-ka mani o-te-la
now rain-Nom heavily come-te-ending
Lit. Rain comes much now (It’s raining much now)
(4)a. ?? nay-ka kong-ul cha-te-la
   I-Nom ball-Acc kick-te-ending
   Lit. I kicked the ball (I saw that I kicked the ball).

b. Chelswu-ka kong-ul cha-te-la
   Chelswu-Nom ball-Acc kick-te-ending
   Lit. Chelswu kicked the ball (I saw that C kicked the ball).
OBSERVATION 2. CONSTRAINTS ON SUBJECT

(5)a. *nay-ka oylop-te-la
   I-Nom feel.lonely-te-ending
   Lit. I felt lonely (I remembered that I felt lonely)

b.* Chelswu-ka oylop-te-la
   C-Nom feel.lonely-te-ending
   Lit. Chelswu felt lonely (I remembered that Chelswu felt lonely)
INTRODUCTION

THIS PAPER AIMS..

[1] To revisit phenomena of the Korean evidential marker –te- in the previous formal approaches, and to show that they would not be able to explain the phenomena well without considering deep semantics of viewpoints first (counterarguing Chung’s (2007) argument),

[2] To show that within Mental Spaces Theory (Fauconnier 1997; MST, henceforth), the marker’s semantic properties that have been explained separately can be more appropriately accounted for in a uniform way,

☞ Especially, this paper proposes that we need theoretical assumption of a mental space presupposition in MST, rather than a mental space evocation, which has not been explicitly talked about in the MST literature.
PREVIOUS APPROACHES

1.1 Direct Evidential


(6) Chelswu-ka kong-ul cha-(e)ss-ta [Simple Past Declarative]
   Chelswu-Nom ball-Acc kick-past-ending
   ‘Chelswu kicked the ball.’

(7) Chelswu-ka kong-ul cha-te-la
   Chelswu-Nom ball-Acc kick-te-ending
   Lit. Chelswu kicked the ball ((I saw that) C kicked the ball)

☞ The information must be obtained through the speaker’s vision.
PREVIOUS APPROACHES

1.2 Psychological Distance

► ‘psychological distance,’ ‘weakened reliability’ (M. Kim 1980), and ‘lack of responsibility’ (Kim 1981)

(8)  \( pi-ka \quad o-te-la \)
     rain-Nom   come-te-ending
Lit: Rain came (I saw that it rained).

As a sarcastic comment?
PREVIOUS APPROACHES

1.2 Psychological Distance

► Chung (2006): The pairing of two meanings—direct evidential marking and psychological distance marking—is unexpected since direct evidentiality indicates the speaker’s witness and should convey that the proposition in question is more reliable and trustworthy and hence the speaker feels certain about it (Willett 1988)

Counter: In fact, they can be predicted regardless of the direct evidential, if we consider interaction between its function of evidential marking and that of tense marking. What should be concerned here is the temporal/spatial gap between speech and the target event.
PREVIOUS APPROACHES

1.3 Deictic Discontinuity

► There should be spatial and temporal discontinuity between the past event in question and the temporal and spatial configuration where the speaker’s utterance takes place.

(9) [Seeing that it rains outside through window,]
*ci-ka  manhi  o-te-la
now  rain-Nom heavily  come-te-ending
Lit. Rain comes much now (It’s raining much now)
PREVIOUS APPROACHES

1.3 Deictic Discontinuity

(10) [Remembering that it rained outside yesterday,]

\textit{e}cey \textit{pi-ka} \textit{mani} \textit{o-te-la}

yesterday rain-Nom heavily come-\textit{te}-ending
Lit. Rain came much yesterday (It rained much yesterday)

If the evidential marker is in use, the speaker cannot access directly to the event that is talked about. The event should be deictically inaccessible.
PREVIOUS APPROACHES

1.4 Constraints on Pronoun Usages

► The need of separating temporal and spatial domains comes to be grammaticalized into some constraints, which are Equi-Subject-Constraint and Non-Equi-Subject-Constraint (Yang 1972)

1.4.1 Non Equi-Subject Constraint (NESC)

(11) Chelswu-ka kong-ul cha-te-la
    Chelswu-Nom ball-Acc kick-te-ending
    Lit. Chelswu kicked the ball ((I saw that) C kicked the ball)

(12) ?nay-ka kong-ul cha-te-la
    I-Nom ball-Acc kick-te-ending
    Lit. I kicked the ball ((I saw that) I kicked the ball)
NON EQUI-SUBJECT CONSTRAINT (NESC)

- Non Equi-Subject Constraint (NESC): the subject of the sentence with 
  –te cannot be the speaker and this applies to all predicates except for 
  sensory and psych predicates.

- Constraint Neutralized

(13) kkwum sok-eyse  nay-ka kong-ul  cha-te-la
    dream  inside-Loc  I-Nom ball-Acc  kick-te-ending
    Lit. In dream, I kicked the ball ((I saw in my dream that) I kicked the ball)

☞ The constraint is neutralized, when an explicit adverbial, which plays a role 
  of an explicit space builder in MST later, establishes a separate dream domain 
  where the speaker can observe herself objectively.
PREVIOUS APPROACHES

1.4.2 Equi-Subject Constraint (ESC)

(14) *ku ttay  nay-ka  oylop-te-la
    the time  I-Nom  be.lonely-te-ending.
    Lit. I was lonely at that time ((I remember that) I was lonely at that
time)  [cited in Suh (1993)]

(15) *ku ttay  yenghuy-ka  oylop-te-la
    the time  Yenghuy-Nom  be.lonely-te-ending
    Lit. Yenghuy was lonely at that time ((I remember that) Yenghuy was
lonely at that time)  [cited in Suh (1993)]

☞ As for events that the speaker can’t observe, i.e. inner mental state of
someone else, source of knowledge is restricted to the speaker’s own
memory.
PREVIOUS APPROACHES

1.4.2 Equi-Subject Constraint (ESC)

► Equi-Subject Constraint (ESC): the subject of a sentence with –te must be the speaker, and only applies to sensory or psych predicates (cited in Suh (1993))

► Constraint Neutralized

(16) ku ttay yenghuy-ka oylop-e-ha-te-la
    the time Yenghuy-Nom be.lonely-Conn-do-te-ending
    Lit. Yenghuy was lonely at that time ((I remember that) Yenghuy was lonely at that time)

☞ If a light verb –e ha- is in use, which consequently converts the aspect of the verb from static to action one, and thus, the aspect of the event turns into the one that is observable, the constraint is neutralized.
PREVIOUS APPROACHES

► Grammaticality Revisited

(17) ?nay-ka oylop-te-la
    I-Nom be.lonely-te-ending.
    Lit. I was lonely ((I remember that) I was lonely)

(14) ku ttay nay-ka oylop-te-la
    the time I-Nom be.lonely-te-ending.
    Lit. I was lonely at that time ((I remember that) I was lonely at that time) [cited in Suh (1993)]

☞ Without an explicit space builder, the judgment on (17) is not clear.
    (Priming effect, [=Space presupposition, rather than space evocation])
PROBLEMS RAISED

2.1 NESC and Its Counterexamples

► The constraints do not provide a motivated reason why the morpheme requires its grammatical subject should or should not refer to the speaker.

► Some stipulation based on viewpoint semantics

(18) J.-S. Suh: What matters in NESC is not a person feature of a grammatical subject, but the speaker’s stance toward the proposition in question (1993: 294); objectification of a grammatical subject (1977: 109)

(19) H.-M. Sohn: The grammatical subject which refers to the speaker is objectified or separated as a target to observe as if it were a third person (1975: 93).

☞ However, they do not consider how the objectification function can be related to the direct evidentiality function.
PROBLEMS RAISED

▸ Arbitrary Nature of Constraints and Stipulations

(20) Y.-H. Kim: In order for NESC to work, interlocutors and events or proposition around them are considered, rather a grammatical subject and its surface meaning; NESC requires that a grammatical subject is different from the speaker because in the speaker’s perspective, it is easy to perceive or recollect other’s behaviors, but it is not easy to perceive or recollect the speaker’s own behaviors (1981).

Counter: It would be counter-intuitive to say that it is not easy for the speaker to perceive or recollect the speaker’s own behaviors, since the speaker knows her own behaviors best.
PROBLEMS RAISED

2.1 NESC and Its Counterexamples

(4a) ?nay-ka  kong-ul  cha-te-la
    I-Nom    ball-Acc  kick-te-ending
    Lit. I kicked the ball ((I saw that) I kicked the ball)

(21) na-man/cocha  kong-ul  cha-te-la
    I-only/even  ball-Acc  kick-te-ending
    (I remembered that) only/even I kicked a ball

(22) na-to  kong-ul  cha-te-la
    I-also  ball-Acc  kick-te-ending
    (I remembered that not anybody else, but) I kicked a ball

☞ Even though (21) and (22) violate NESC, they are licensed perfectly.
PROBLEMS RAISED

2.1 NESC and Its Counterexamples

(23) nay-ka kong-ul ceyil cal cha-te-la
   I-Nom ball-Acc most well kick-te-ending
   (I remembered that) I kicked the ball best.

[Epistemic Marking]

(24)? nay-ka hoycang-i toy-te-la
   I-Nom chairperson-Nom become-te-ending
   Lit. I became a chairperson (It seems that I became a chair person)

(24`) (nayil) nay-ka hoycang-i toy-keyss-te-la
   tomorrow I-Nom chairperson-Nom become-Epis-te-ending
   Lit. Tomorrow, I will be a chairperson (It seems that I would be elected as chair person tomorrow)

☞ Even though (23) and (24`) violate NESC, they are licensed perfectly.
PROBLEMS RAISED

2.1 NESC and Its Counterexamples

[Passivization]

(25) nay-ka phiano soli-ka tul-li-te-la
    I-Nom piano sound-Nom hear-Pass-te-ending
    Lit. To me, piano sound was heard ((I remember that) I heard the piano)

(25`) ?nay-ka phiano soli-lul tut-te-la
    I-Nom piano sound-Nom hear-te-ending
    Lit. I heard piano sound ((I remember that) I listened to the piano)

☞ However, to my intuition, both of the sentences sound marginal, since
Korean does not employ passivization tactic frequently.
PROBLEMS RAISED

2.1 NESC and Its Counterexamples

The previous approaches open a way to detour the counter arguments:

☞ "[an utterance can be made] in a detached way as an observer of his or her own action or appearance […] So even if the speaker is the agent of the event, there is allowed as long as a speaker's own action is unconscious or involuntary so that the action can be a target of his or her passive perception." (Chung 2006)

☞ MST? The counterexamples are all related to topicalizing or focusing tactics and to anchoring the speaker’s viewpoint to a separate domain, presupposing, evoking, or building a separate mental space where a participant directly perceive an event in question.
PROBLEMS RAISED

2.2 Absence of Spatial Semantics and Its Consequence

- Chung’s (2007) argument that the marker is not an evidential marker

First, since the marker has seemingly incompatible semantics such as direct evidential function and psychological distancing function, it might not be a direct evidential marker.

Within MST, we can account for the seemingly incompatible subfunctions and the person asymmetry of the morpheme by setting up separate spaces. It is an evidential marker that is based on the speaker’s direct perception.

Thus, this morpheme is not an evidential morpheme, but triggers an environment where an evidential marker can be used.
EVIDENTIALITY

[1] The grammatical category whose primary meaning is information source (Aikhenvald 2004: 1)

[2] Not easy to distinguish evidential markers from modal markers, since in general, they might also encode degree of the speaker’s certainty or validity of the knowledge when they are paired with tense and other pragmatic inferences.

Thus, this morpheme is an evidential marker.
The various semantic functions of the marker stem from its core functions of direct evidentiality marking and retrospective tense marking.

Viewpoint shift and spatial semantics enable the core functions of the marker to yield the seemingly various functions.

Counter-arguing Chung (2007), this paper argues that this morpheme is an evidential morpheme which is colored by its tense related semantic property.
REPRESENTATIONS

This section aims to show that

✓ the separately described properties of the evidential marker can be accounted for in a unified fashion, using space presupposition in Mental Spaces Theory rather than space evocation (Fauconnier 1997).

✓ the previously claimed characteristics of the evidential marker (Chung 2007) is not relevant, by showing that every instance contains a direct evidentiality function in terms of space presupposition and space building, and

✓ distancing effects in MST theory can account for the exceptional cases that were not fully accounted for in previous approaches.
Representations

3.1 Space Building vs. Space Presupposition

e.g.) [Lakoff 1996: 91]
(26) I hire myself.
(27)*I hire me.

(26`) If I were you, I would hire myself.
(27``) If I were you, I would hire me.

*If*-conditional makes an example of space builders: It establishes or evokes a separate domain or a separate mental space so that referents denoted by *I* and *me* are not referring to the same referent cognitively any more and thus, the binding effect is neutralized.
3.1 Space Building vs. Space Presupposition

**Space Building**
“(…) The competing mechanism of mental space evocation consists in a kind of ‘echoing’, or re-introduction, of a space set up elsewhere in the shared discourse context, where the evoked space retains its form and stance, but is incorporated into the current discourse...” (Vandelanotte forthcoming).

**Space Presupposition** (in case of the Korean evidential marker –te) What the speaker intends to articulate with –te- is not about the shared information, but about new information to the addressee which is presupposed within the context by the speaker and thus, believed to be decoded by the addressee.
3. REPRESENTATIONS

3.1 Space Building vs. Space Presupposition

- The dashed line from Base to Perception indicates that Perception space is set up relative to Base (it is subordinate to Base in the lattice of discourse spaces; Fauconnier 1997: 43)
3.1 Space Building vs. Space Presupposition

Presupposed Space

Base

Daughter

- Presupposition in this paper is schematized with a projection from a role x in Base space. It is noted that there is no subordination link between the spaces.
3.2 Direct Evidentiality

(28) Chelswu-ka kong-ul cha-ess-ta
    Chelswu-Nom ball-Acc kick-Past-ending
    Lit. Chelswu kicked a ball (Chelswu kicked a ball)

Black bolded = a space builder
3.2 Direct Evidentiality

(28) Chelswu-ka  kong-ul  cha-ess-ta
    Chelswu-Nom  ball-Acc  kick-Past-ending
    Lit. Chelswu kicked a ball (Chelswu kicked a ball)

Black bolded = a space builder
3.2 Direct Evidentiality

(29)  Chelswu-ka  kong-ul  cha-te-la
Chelswu-Nom  ball.Acc  kick-te-ending
Lit. Chelswu kicked a ball ((I saw that) Chelswu kicked a ball)
[The speaker saw that Chelswu kicked a ball at the different place from the current one]

Black bolded = a space builder
Red bolded = a space presupposition
3.4 Deictic Discontinuity

(30) *cikum pi-ka manhi o-te-la
    now rain-Nom much come-te-ending
    Lit. Now rain comes much ((I saw that) It rains much)
3.4 Deictic Discontinuity

(31)  

\textit{ecey} \textit{pi-ka} \textit{manhi} \textit{o-te-la}  

yesterday rain-Nom much come-\textit{te}-ending  

Lit. yesterday, rain came much ((I saw that) It rained much)  

[The speaker recollects that it rained much at that time]  

☞ Discontinuity in temporal condition (deictic discontinuity)
3.4 Deictic Discontinuity

(32) cikum pakk-ey-nun pi-ka manhi o-te-la
    now outside-Loc-Top rain-Nom much come-te-ending
Lit. Now rain comes much outside ((I saw that) It rains much outside)
[After seeing it’s raining outside, the speaker tells the hearer that it’s raining outside now; this utterance should be made indoors where the interlocutors don’t have visual access to the event]

Discontinuity in spatial condition (deictic discontinuity)
3.5 Subject and (N)ESC
3.5.1 Non Equivalent Subject Constraint (NESC)

(33)  Chelswu-ka kong-ul cha-te-la
       Chelswu-Nom ball-Acc kick-te-ending
Lit. Chelswu kicked a ball ((I saw that) Chelswu kicked a ball)
[The speaker saw that Chelswu kicked a ball at the different place from the current one]

*Perception space cannot contain the speaker himself.
3.5.1 Non Equivalent Subject Constraint (NESC)

(34)  \(?nay-ka  kong-ul  cha-te-la\)
I-Nom    ball-Acc    kick-te-ending
Lit. I kicked a ball ((I saw that) I kicked a ball)
3.5.1 Non Equivalent Subject Constraint (NESC)

(35) *kkwum sok-eyse* *nay-ka* *kong-ul* *cha-te-la*

dream inside-Loc I-Nom ball-Acc kick-te-ending

Lit. In dream, I kicked a ball ((I saw in my dream that) I kicked a ball)
3.5.2 Equivalent Subject Constraint (ESC)

(36) **ku ttay nay-ka oylop-te-la**

the time I-Nom feel.lonely-te-ending
Lit. At that time, I felt lonely ((I remember that) I felt lonely at that time)
[The speaker recollect that at that time, the speaker herself felt lonely]

☞ The only participant who can access to “I’s” inner state is the speaker (S`). Thus, it can be licensed, free from the constraint. This self-generating domain is only for psych-predicates.
The only participant who can access to Chelswu’s inner state is himself. Thus, the speaker’s access to him is blocked.
3.5.2 Equivalent Subject Constraint (ESC)

(38) **ku ttay Chelswu-ka oylop-e-ha-te-la**

the time Chelswu-Nom feel.lonely-Conn-do-te-ending

Lit. At that time, Chelswu felt lonely ((I remember that) Chelswu felt lonely at that time)

[When the speaker saw, for example, Chelswu’s abnormal behaviors and inferred that he felt lonely]

☞ The light verb –e ha- ‘do’ encodes a direct source of information based on which the interlocutor can infer the inner state of the third party.
3.5.2 Equivalent Subject Constraint (ESC)

(39) ?nay-ka oylop-te-la
    I-Nom feel.lonely-te-ending
    Lit. I felt lonely ((I remember that) I felt lonely)
    [The speaker recollect that, the speaker herself felt lonely]

☞ Without the explicit space builder ‘at that time,’ the judgment would be on the edge, because it would be less likely that the speaker can objectifies her observation of herself.
Without the explicit space builder ‘at that time,’ the judgment would be on the edge, because it would be less likely that the speaker can objectifies her observation of herself.
Generalization

✓ In order for it to be in use, the evidential marker –te- needs to presuppose at least one separate space from Base so that it objectifies the speaker’s observation of the event by layering.

  e.g.) if the speaker tries to access to the event objectively, then she needs to indirectly access to it (S → S’ → E), rather than directly access to it (S → E)

✓ The layering might contain any kind of distancing strategy in conversation making a contrast, focusing, passivizing, including epistemic stance etc., which will be shown in the following slides.
3.5.3 Exceptions and Distancing Effects

(40) \textit{na-man kong-ul cha-te-la}

I-only ball-Acc kick-te-ending

Lit. Only I kicked the ball \textit{((I saw that) only I kicked the ball)}

[The speaker expected that everyone kicked the ball, but she found that she was the only one who did]
3.5.3 Exceptions and Distancing Effects

(41) *nay-ka kong-ul ceyil cal cha-te-la*
I-Nom ball-Acc most well kick-*te*-ending
Lit. I kicked the ball best ((I saw that) I kicked the ball best)
[The speaker noticed that he/she kicked the ball best comparing with other who kick the ball]
3.5.3 Exceptions and Distancing Effects

(42) \textit{na-cocha/-to kong-ul cha-te-la}

I-even ball-Acc kick-\textit{te}-ending

Lit. Even I kicked the ball ((I saw that) even I could kick the ball)

[The speaker expected that kicking the ball is so hard that no one, including herself, can make it, but in fact, unexpectedly, it was too easy even for the speaker to kick the ball]
3.5.3 Exceptions and Distancing Effects

(43) [Epistemic Distancing]

\[ nay-ka \ hoycang-i \quad toy-keyss-te-la \]

I-Nom chairperson-Top become-Epis-te-Ending

Lit. I would become a chairperson (It seemed that) I would be elected as chairperson
4. Conclusion

✓ The Korean evidential marker conveys three major semantic properties: Direct evidential marking, psychological distance marking, and cognitive discontinuity marking. And these can be accounted for in a uniform fashion within MST framework.

✓ Chung’s (2006) claim that the marker is not an evidential marker is not plausible, since within MST, we can account for the marker’s seemingly irregular properties, which has been claimed as evidence for Chung’s argument and in fact.

✓ The marker is an evidential marker and that the related semantics of the marker can be accounted for within MST framework, especially with identity-accessibility mappings and distancing effects via layering.
4. Conclusion

✓ The formal constraints, which restrict usage of personal nouns in subject position of a sentence which contains the marker, can also be accounted for:

  - If we assume that the marker presupposes, not firmly set up a separate mental space and that the speaker’s cognitive accessibility can be controlled by a predicate’s inherent semantics, which was represented by the predicate’s inherent formability of its own domain, we can cover the examples in a uniform manner.

✓ The exceptional cases in the previous approaches can be adequately accounted for within MST, by showing that the grammatical devices that are included in the exceptional cases are designed to express informative asymmetry, which is related to distancing effects.
References


References (Cnt’d)
Suh, Jeong-Soo. 1977. ‘te’nun hoysanguy kinungul cininunka [Does ‘te’ have a function of retrospection?]. ene [language] 2-1.