Utterance-final *-ketun* and *-canha* in Korean:
Managing the flow of information management in conversation

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In this study, I show that *-ketun* and *-canha*, utterance-final particles in Spoken Korean, function to manage the information structure in conversational discourse. In Kim (2015), I described the basic function of *-ketun* in spoken Korean was to explicitly mark a piece of information which the speaker believes to be new for the hearer, however, in the speaker's perspective, that should have been shared, or should be shared before an upcoming new piece of information. And in Kim (to appear in 2018) I argued that the basic function of *-canha* is to explicitly mark pieces of information that the speaker believes to be shared with the hearer before the time of speech. Although the functions of both markers have to do with the sharedness of certain pieces of information between the interlocutors, they clearly imply the different types of assumption of the speaker. This difference can be seen in the example (1).

(1) (Context: P1 and P2 are talking about the benefits that you can get from membership cards provided by cellphone companies.)

1→	P1:	*mwe=*	*kheyi-thi-eyphu*	*pullwu*	*mwusun*	*phullaythinem*	*mwe=*
		DM	K-T-F	blue	DM	platinum	DM

        ile-n   *ke*   *mak*   *ttalwu*   *iss-ess-canha,*
        like.this-ATTR(RL) thing   DM   separately   exist-ANT-*canha*
        'Well=, the KTF Blue and the Platinum or something=, there used to be a lot of different types of card-*canha*,'

2   P2:   *um.*
             yeah
             'Yeah.'

3   P1:   *kuntey,*
             but
             'But,'

4→   *ku-ke-y*   *khatu*   *hana-lwu*   *ttak*
             that-thing-NOM   card   one-INSTR   DM
             thonghap-tway-ss-ketun?
             integrate-be.done-ANT-*ketun*
             'They all got integrated into one single card-*ketun*?'

5   P2:   *um=*   *al-a*   *al-a.*
             yeah   know-INDC   know- INDC
             'Yeah= I know, I know.'
             (P1 continues)

In the excerpt (1), speaker P1 uses different utterance-final particles in line 1 and 4, when conveying different pieces of information. After the use of *-canha* in line 1, the other interlocutor P2 simply shows agreement in line 2. However, after P1 uses *-ketun* in line 4, P2 does not just agree with P1 but also claims that that information is but also claims that he also knew the conveyed information by replying as 'Yeah I know I know' in line 5. The difference in P2's reactions in line 2 and 5 clearly reflects that there are different implications between the utterance-final particles *-ketun* and *-canha*. *-Canha* is an explicit acknowledgement of shared knowledge, and hence implies 'I know that you know it too'. On the other hand, the function of *-ketun*, is to signal the hearer that a certain information should be shared before an upcoming new piece of information, hence it implies 'this piece of information should be common ground so that you would be able to follow what I'm about to tell you'. This explains the different reactions of P2 in lines 2 and 5, and particularly P2's response in line 5 shows P2's belief that

that there has been an error in what the speaker P1 believes to be common ground.

The studies of *-ketun* and *-canha* have a number of important implications. Clearly, the flow of information in spontaneous interactional conversation is highly dynamic, messy, and disorganized, as what the speakers think to be common ground is incessantly renewed and negotiated every time an utterance is uttered within a conversation. The frequent use these two of interpersonal, intersubjective (Traugott 2003, 2010) markers reveals that the speakers are highly aware not only of their own information status, but also of the information status of their interlocutors, and that they are even aware of what changes their utterance could make to the information status of their interlocutors.

Selected references:

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