

# The notional category of evidentiality: Day 2

## Evidential meaning and (not-)at-issueness

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# Status of the evidential requirement I

- (1) German *wohl* (Zimmerman 2008; Eckardt and Beltrama 2019)

Dort ist das Wetter **wohl** herrlich.  
there be.3SG.PRES DEF weather **INFER** gorgeous  
≈ 'The weather is **presumably** gorgeous there.'

► Terminology

- The scope proposition  $p$  = 'The weather is gorgeous'
  - The evidential requirement ER = 'The speaker infers  $p$ '
- Cross-linguistically robust pattern: the ER can't be cancelled (first noticed by Izvorski 1997 on Bulgarian; see Murray 2017:12-25 for an overview)

- (2) As a follow-up to (1)

- a. #In fact, I just went there and have seen it.
- b. #In fact, I have no evidence to say that.

## Status of the evidential requirement II

- ▶ Cancellability: hallmark of conversational implicatures  
(Sadock 1978 and much later work, though see Lauer 2014)

- (3)    a.    I tried **some** sorts of Oolong.  
               $\leadsto$  I did not try **all** sorts of Oolong.  
          b.    I tried **some** sorts of Oolong. In fact, I tried **all** of them.

- ▶ Want to learn more about implicature? Attend the workshop “Approaches to implicature” @ ESSLLI 32, Utrecht, 2021
- ▶ Non-cancellability of the ER  $\Rightarrow$  the ER isn’t an implicature
- ▶ Starting point of most approaches: the ER is hard-wired (see last slides for exceptions)
- ▶ Central question: what is the status of the ER?

## Status of the evidential requirement III

### (4) Non-challengeability in dialogues

A.    Dort ist                    das Wetter **wohl** herrlich.  
         there be.3SG.PRES DEF weather **INFER** gorgeous  
          $\approx$  'The weather is **presumably** gorgeous there.'

B.    Nein, das stimmt        nicht.  
         No    that be.correct NEG  
         'No, that's not true.'  
          $= \neg$  'The weather is gorgeous'  
          $\neq \neg$  'You have evidence for that'

[p]  
[the ER]

## Status of the evidential requirement IV

- ▶ Non-challengeability: hallmark of presuppositions

(5) A. **The** queen of the US visited Jupiter.

B. That's not true.

$= \neg$  [The queen of the US visited Jupiter] [assertion]

$\neq \neg$  [The US has a queen] [presupposition]

- ▶ (To challenge a presupposition, use *Hey, wait a minute*; von Stechow 2004)
- ▶ Izvorski 1997: the ER as a presupposition (also Matthewson et al. 2007; McCready and Asher 2006; Peterson 2010; Schwager 2010; Şener 2011; Lee 2013 a.o.)

# Status of the evidential requirement V

- ▶ Near consensus: the ER is not part of the assertion

## Agenda for today:

- ▶ evidential meaning in context of research on conversational dynamics
- ▶ scrutinize empirical diagnostics
- ▶ discussion largely follows Korotkova 2020

# At-Issue vs. Not-At-Issue I

- ▶ Recent research on conversational dynamics
  - ▶ at-issue (AI) content: main point of an utterance
  - ▶ not-at-issue (NAI) content: peripheral, “by-the-way” information
- ▶ Some readings: Potts (2005); Farkas and Bruce (2010); Simons, Tonhauser, Beaver, and Roberts (2010); Tonhauser, Beaver, Roberts, and Simons (2013); Anderbois, Brasoveanu, and Henderson (2015); Gutzmann (2015); Hunter and Asher (2016); Beaver, Roberts, Simons, and Tonhauser (2017)
- ▶ The AI-NAI distinction: a continuum rather than a binary divide (Tonhauser, Beaver, and Degen 2018)

## At-Issue vs. Not-At-Issue II

- ▶ Issues in discourse = questions
- ▶ Grammar sensitive to the AI-NAI distinction
- ▶ Case in point: prosodic focus in English

(6) Do Black lives matter?

- ✓Black lives matter.
- ✓Black lives [**MATTER**]<sub>F</sub>.
- #[**BLACK**]<sub>F</sub> lives matter.

(7) Which lives matter?

- #Black lives [**MATTER**]<sub>F</sub>.
- ✓[**BLACK**]<sub>F</sub> lives matter.

- ▶ See discussion of the issue by the Stanford Language Processing Lab  
<http://alpslab.stanford.edu/posts/blm/2020-06-23.html>



## At-Issue vs. Not-At-Issue III

- ▶ NAI: presuppositions, but also discourse-new information
- ▶ A number of constructions: vehicles for new NAI content  
appositives and non-restrictive relative clauses (Potts 2005, 2007; Anderbois et al. 2015) (though see Schlenker (2013) for a presuppositional analysis), connectives (Scheffler 2013), expressives (McCready 2008, 2010), honorifics (Potts 2005), *as*-parentheticals (Potts 2002), slifting parentheticals (Simons 2007)

- (8)
- a. Orcutt, **a spy**, lost his passport. [Appositive]
  - b. Orcutt lost his passport, **Ralph said**. [Slifting parenthetical]
  - c. That **damn** Orcutt lost his passport. [Expressive]

## At-Issue vs. Not-At-Issue IV

- ▶ The ER: a type of NAI, much like appositives
- ▶ Presuppositional vs. non-presuppositional nature
  - ▶ Presuppositions: preconditions on the common ground (Strong Contextual Felicity constraint; Tonhauser et al. 2013)
  - ▶ The ER: not necessarily (relevant data for Guaraní, Tonhauser 2013 and Bulagarian, Koev 2017)
  - ▶ Another analytical option: the ER as an easy-to-accommodate presupposition, cf. Schlenker 2013 on appositives
- ▶ What are the consequences for semantic theory?
- ▶ Big picture (see overview in Koev 2018)
  - ▶ NAI content is heterogeneous
  - ▶ different, non mutually entailing notions of at-issueness
  - ▶ different empirical diagnostics

## At-issueness and assertion I

- ▶ At-issueness is about updating the common ground: only the asserted content is AI (Potts 2005; Farkas and Bruce 2010; Anderbois et al. 2015)
- ▶ Assertion-based framework for evidential not-at-issueness: Murray (2010, 2014, 2017) (see also Lee 2011; Koev 2017)

(9) Cheyenne (Algonquian; Montana, US)

Éhótàhéva-~~Ø~~ Annie  
3.win-**DIR** Annie  
'Annie won, **I witnessed**'.

$q$  = 'Annie won'

the ER = 'The speaker has direct evidence for  $q$ '

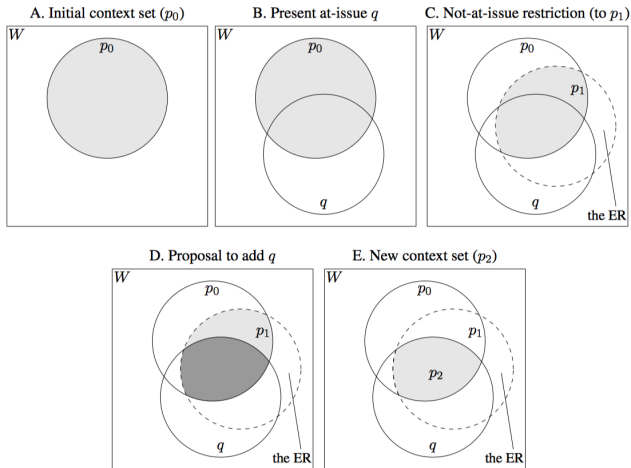
(adapted from Murray 2017:68)

## At-issueness and assertion II

- ▶ Explicit goal
  - ▶ place evidentials in a larger context of NAI content
  - ▶ parallels with appositives and slifting parentheticals
- ▶ AI updates
  - ▶ creation of a discourse referent for the at-issue proposition  $p$
  - ▶ a proposal to update the context set with  $p$ -worlds
- ▶ NAI update (including evidentials)
  - ▶ automatic, non-negotiable reduction of the context set to the ER-worlds (much like presupposition accommodation; von Stechow 2008)

## At-issueness and assertion III

- Declarative with a direct evidential (adapted from Murray 2014:8)



# At-issueness and the QUD I

- ▶ QUD-view on at-issueness (Simons et al. 2010; Beaver et al. 2017): general discourse principles and relevance to the current Question Under Discussion (QUD) (Büring 2003; Ginzburg 2012; Roberts 2012)
- ▶ A proposition is AI only iff the speaker intends to address the QUD with it
  - ▶ relevant to the QUD
  - ▶ entails a complete or partial answer to the QUD

- (10) *Question 1: Where did you go to grad school?*  
*Question 2: Where do you want to go on vacation?*

I like mountains.

## At-issueness and the QUD II

- ▶ QUD-framework for evidential not-at-issueness: Faller (2019) on Cuzco Quechua (Quechuan: Peru)
- ▶ AI content
  - ▶ put on the Table (=QUD stack), discourse component for registering issues (Farkas and Bruce 2010)
  - ▶ AI content  $\neq$  asserted content (relevant for hearsay; Day 4)
  - ▶ putting a proposition on the Table *may* result in an assertion, but does not have to

## At-issueness and the QUD III

(9) Cheyenne

Éhótàhéva-∅ Annie

3.win-DIR Annie

'Annie won, I witnessed'.

$q$  = 'Annie won'

the ER = 'The speaker has direct evidence for  $q$ '

(adapted from Murray 2017:68)

Commitments (speaker)	Table	Commitments (addressee)
$DC_{SPEAKER} \cup \{q\}$	$q$	$DC_{ADDRESSEE}$
Common Ground		

- ▶  $q$ : conventionally marked as QUD relevant, on the Table
- ▶ The ER: conventionally marked as QUD-irrelevant, always off the Table
- ▶ No explicit comparison between evidentials and classical NAI entailments



## Evidential not-at-issueness

- ▶ Different definitions rely on different diagnostics, which may yield contradictory results
- ▶ Bottom line: important to scrutinize empirical tests for evidentials

# Negation I

- ▶ Projection: escaping the scope of entailing-canceling operators (the Family of Sentences test; Chierchia and McConnell-Ginet 2000)
- ▶ Recent research (starting with Potts): projection as a hallmark of NAI content more generally (Simons et al. 2010; Tonhauser et al. 2013)

(11) Orcutt, **a spy**, didn't lose his passport.

LF:  $[ \neg \text{Orcutt lost his passport} ] \wedge [\text{Orcutt is a spy}]$

- ▶ Slifting parentheticals resist embedding altogether (Ross 1973; Rooryck 2001; Potts 2005)

## Negation II

- ▶ A recurring pattern: evidentials escape the scope of clause-mate negation (de Haan 1997:146-170; Murray 2017:28-31)

(12) sup'-i      ar    **gauk'etebia**      [Georgian]  
soup-NOM NEG make.**IND.PST**  
'S/he didn't make soup, I hear/infer.'

(13) Surface syntax:  $[\neg [Ev\ p]]$

(i) Narrow scope of the evidential: **not attested**

LF:  $[\neg [Ev\ p]]$

'It is not the case that I hear/infer that she made soup';  
not attested

(ii) Projection: **not attested**

LF:  $[\neg p] \wedge [Ev\ p]$

'S/he didn't make soup, and I hear/infer s/he made soup';  
not attested

(iii) Wide scope of the evidential:

LF:  $[Ev [\neg p]]$

## Negation III

- ▶ Example such as (12): support for the NAI-as-ER view
- ▶ Murray (2010, 2014, 2017); also Koev (2017) (Faller (2019) does not discuss negation)
  - ▶ NAI content: semantically exempt from the scope of propositional operators
  - ▶ Negation: selectively targets constituents in its syntactic scope (cf. Stone and Hardt 1999)
- ▶ Evidentials: narrow scope with some operators, e.g. tense or modality, just not negation
- ▶ Scopal interaction may have nothing to do with at-issueness
  - ▶ Positive polarity and deontic modals (Iatridou and Zeijlstra 2013)
  - ▶ Movement of adjectival *only* (Sharvit 2015)
  - ▶ Pure syntax: negation has a fixed position (Horn 1989; Zeijlstra 2004 and later work), evidentials are high on the clausal spine (Bhadra 2018; Korotkova 2019)

## Negation IV

- ▶ External negation: can cancel presuppositions (Horn 1989), does not affect appositives (one of Potts's (2005) empirical arguments for treating conventional implicatures as a separate class of meaning)

(14) **It is not the case** that Orcutt, **a spy**, lost his passport.  
LF:  $[ \neg \text{Orcutt lost his passport} ] \wedge [\text{Orcutt is a spy}]$

## Negation V

- ▶ Prediction of Murray 2017: the ER would behave like appositives
- ▶ Not tested systematically, not borne out for Japanese

(15) Japanese (isolate; Japan)

[ konya ame-ga furi-**soo** ] janai  
[ tonight rain-NOM fall.INF-**IND** ] COP.NEG.PRES  
'It is not the case that it looks like it will rain.'

LF:  $\neg [ \text{Ev } p ]$  (adapted from McCready and Ogata 2007:170)

(16) Interpretations not attested for (15)

(i) Projection

LF:  $[ \neg p ] \wedge [ \text{Ev } p ]$

(ii) Wide scope of the evidential

LF:  $[ \text{Ev } \neg p ]$

## Negation VI

- ▶ Data on clause-mate negation do not support the ER-as-NAI view
- ▶ Systematic data on external negation are lacking

## Non-challengeability I

- (17) A. kalifornia-s k'anonieri **gauxdia** marihuan-is  
California-DAT legal make.**IND.PST** marijuana-GEN  
gamoq'eneba  
usage.NOM  
'California legalized marijuana, *I hear/infer.*'
- B. ar aris martali  
NEG be.3SG.PRES true  
'That's not true.'  
scope proposition: ✓ [ California didn't legalize marijuana ]  
the ER: # [ You didn't hear/infer that ]
- (18) A. Ortcutt, **a spy**, smiles.
- B. That's not true.  
main clause: ✓ [ Ortcutt doesn't smile ]  
appositive: # [ Ortcutt isn't a spy ]



## Non-challengeability II

- ▶ Often used in drawing the AI-NAI line (Amaral et al. 2007, Diagnostic 1 in Tonhauser 2012)
- ▶ Motivation: one can only agree or disagree with the main point of an utterance
- ▶ (17): robust cross-linguistic pattern (Korotkova 2016a,b; Murray 2017)
- ▶ The ER has been argued to be NAI based on this test
- ▶ Non-challengeability vs. constraints on propositional anaphora

## Non-challengeability III

- ▶ *That's not true*
  - ▶ *that*-anaphora,  $\neq$  disagreement (Jasinskaja 2016)
  - ▶ disagreement,  $\neq$  *that* (Korotkova 2016a)
- ▶ When the two come apart, the ER may be targeted by *that*-anaphora
- ▶ Evidentials, like other types of first-person content, ban disagreement regardless of its linguistic shape (Day 3)
- ▶ *That*-anaphora: no difference between *That's not true*, *That's surprising*, *That's unfortunate* (Jasinskaja 2016; Snider 2017)
- ▶ If evidentials are allergic to disagreement rather than anaphora, non-denying anaphora should be allowed

## Non-challengeability IV

- Borne out for Bulgarian

(19) Bulgarian

A. Ana se ozheni-**l**-a.

Ana REFL marry-**IND**-F

'Ana got married, *I hear/infer*'.

B. Tova e stranno. Tja mi kaza da go  
that be.3SG.PRES weird she me say.PST COMP it

pazja v tajna.

keep in secret

'That's surprising. She told me to keep it as a secret.'

(Korotkova 2016a:72)

- Surprise is about the ER
- If anaphoric potential is indicative of at-issueness, then the ER in (19) is AI
- Such data indicate at-issueness only in some definitions

## Non-challengeability V

- ▶ Availability for anaphora isn't a blanket diagnostic of at-issueness (Snider 2017; Koev 2018)
- ▶ Constructions typically associated with NAI content are challengeable
- ▶ Response particles: propositional anaphors (Krifka 2013; Roelofsen and Farkas 2015; see also Wiltschko 2018)

- (20) a. Ellen is a passionate cook, **her fiancé claimed**.  
b. No, he didn't. (Koev 2018:11)
- (21) a. He took care of his husband, **who had prostate cancer**.  
b. No, he had lung cancer. (Anderbois et al. 2015:115)
- ▶ If anaphoric potential is indicative of at-issueness, then slifting parentheticals and sentence-final appositives are AI

# Non-challengeability VI

- ▶ Snider (2017)
  - ▶ Anaphoric potential = at-issueness only in salience-based definitions (Hunter and Asher 2016; Jasinskaja 2016)
  - ▶ Two notions are separate elsewhere
- ▶ The assertion-based proposal in Murray (2010, 2014, 2017)  
(same for Anderbois et al. (2015))
  - ▶ Current form
    - ▶ At-issueness and anaphoric potential linked
    - ▶ Only AI contributions have a discourse referent
    - ▶ Either data (19-21) are not predicted, or those contributions are AI
  - ▶ Modification (Snider 2017:279)
    - ▶ Each contribution assigned a discourse referent
    - ▶ Data in (19-21) accounted for
    - ▶ At-issueness modeled in terms of updates

## Non-challengeability VII

- ▶ The question-based proposal in Faller (2019)
  - ▶ Disagreement argued to be about the QUD resolution
  - ▶ Only QUD-relevant propositions are on the Table and can be (dis)agreed with
  - ▶ The ER is off the Table
  - ▶ Nothing in the formalism linked to propositional anaphora, diagnostic can be discarded

- ▶ Bottom line: anaphoric potential needn't be derived from at-issueness in assertion-based or question-based frameworks

## Non-challengeability VIII

- ▶ Anaphora with evidentials not tested systematically, data may not be available
  - ▶ No counterpart of *that*-anaphora due to constraints on over pronouns (Georgian, Turkish)
- ▶ NB: evidence possibly available for anaphora in English

- (22)    a.    You guys, Ana got married.  
         b.    That's weird, she told me to keep it a secret.

- ▶ If so, it is an argument for the inclusion of evidential commitments into the discourse model for any language (Northrup 2014; Faller 2019)

## Answerhood I

- ▶ Answerhood: the ability to address the QUD via answering explicit or implicit questions (Diagnostic 2 in Tonhauser 2012)

- (23) *What did she do next?*  
# Her husband was a real sweetheart, **she announced.**  
(Koev 2018:11)
- (24) *Who is Margaret's cousin?*
- a. #Pauline, **who is Margaret's cousin**, was interviewed by Food Network.
  - b. #Food Network interviewed Pauline, **who is Margaret's cousin.**  
(Snider 2017:255)
- ▶ NB: appositives can answer *why*-questions (Syrett and Koev 2015) and coordinated questions (Esipova 2018), but that may not indicate at-issueness (Snider 2017)



## Answerhood II

- ▶ Rarely used for evidentials (Georgian below; see also Lee 2011 on Korean, Bary and Maier 2019 on Gitksan, Faller 2019 on Cuzco Quechua)

(25) Georgian

*#Question 1: What makes you think there is a new metro line in LA?*

✓ *Question 2: Any news on public transportation in LA?*

los-angeles-*fi* metro-*s*    axal-*i*    haz-*i*    **gauxvaniat**  
LA-in                    metro-GEN new-NOM line-NOM construct.3PL.**IND.PST**  
'They built a new metro line in Los Angeles, *I hear/infer*'.

- ▶ The ER in (25): cannot address the QUD, therefore NAI

## Answerhood III

- ▶ The question-based proposal in Faller (2019)
  - ▶ explicitly appeals to the QUD structure
  - ▶ the data in (25) fall out naturally
- ▶ The assertion-based proposal in Murray (2010, 2014, 2017)
  - ▶ the AI-NAI distinction: a difference between updates of the common ground
  - ▶ no formal reference to the QUD structure
  - ▶ no straightforward way to reconcile the proposal- centric and the question-centric notions of at-issueness (Koev 2018)
  - ▶ the data in (23)-(25) not accounted for (the diagnostic mentioned, but not applied to evidentials; Murray 2017:16)

## Answerhood IV

- ▶ QUD-definition: ultimately pragmatic
- ▶ Case in point: the veracity entailment of factives
  - ▶ traditionally analyzed as a lexical presupposition
  - ▶ can be argued to arise due to the reasoning about the QUD and disappear sometimes (Simons et al. 2017; though see Anand and Hacquard 2014; Djärv 2019)

## Answerhood V

- ▶ If the ER is QUD-NAI at least in some languages, it could also be AI sometimes
- ▶ Borne out for Dutch

(26) Dutch (Germanic; Netherlands)

*Question: What makes you think it will rain?*

- a. #Het **schijnt** te regenen.  
this **seem:REP.3SG.PRES** INF rain  
Intended: 'It's said that it will rain.'
- b. ✓Het [**SCHIJNT**]<sub>F</sub> te regenen.  
this **seem:REP.3SG.PRES** INF rain  
'It's [SAID]<sub>F</sub> that it will rain.'

## Answerhood VI

- ▶ Possible pragmatic, rather than semantic, underpinnings of the infelicity of (25) and (26a)
- ▶ Question-based approaches to information structure (see Velleman and Beaver 2016)
  - ▶ focus marks question/answer congruence
  - ▶ content addressing the QUD must be focused (but not all focused content addresses the QUD; Esipova 2019)
- ▶ Possible explanation: evidentials are focally backgrounded by default, contrastive focus overrides it
- ▶ Similar behavior: co-speech gestures and some presuppositions, but not appositives, which remain NAI even when focused (Esipova 2019)
- ▶ No systematic data on slifting parentheticals

## Answerhood VII

- ▶ Easy to accommodate in question-based approaches to at-issueness
- ▶ QUD at-issueness related to information structure and may change as the discourse change
- ▶ In theories where information structure reflects the architecture of discourse, the ER may be construed as NAI or AI depending on its information-structural properties

## Wrap-up I

- ▶ Evidentials: consistently analyzed as conventional triggers of NAI content
- ▶ Diagnostics
  - ▶ **Negation**: wide-scope wrt clause-mate negation does not indicate at-issueness
  - ▶ **Non-challengeability**: may not be related to at-issueness in the frameworks under discussion
  - ▶ **Answerhood**: the most reliable test, little attention so far, best explained in question-based approaches (Faller 2019)

## Wrap-up II

- ▶ More research needed for ...
  - ▶ scope taking
  - ▶ responses to evidential statements
  - ▶ interaction of evidentiality and information structure



## Wrap-up III

- ▶ Possible outcome: evidentials are NAI due to a pragmatic calculation
- ▶ Discourse relations that introduce justification for previously made claims do not push the discourse forward
- ▶ Information introduced by those relations: pragmatically NAI (Hunter and Asher 2016; Hunter and Abrusán 2017)
- ▶ Grammatical evidentials may be backgrounded by default

## Wrap-up IV

- ▶ Parallel: attitude reports that function parenthetically (Simons 2007; Hunter 2016)

(27) ✓ *Question 1: Where are Ana and Maria?*

✓ *Question 2: What does Miriam think?*

**Miriam thinks** they moved to Massachusetts.

(28) ✓ *Question 1: Where are Ana and Maria?*

#*Question 2: What does Miriam think?*

They moved to Massachusetts, **Miriam thinks**.

- ▶ Unlike slifting parentheticals (28), no dedicated syntax/prosody in (27): what is AI depends on context

## Wrap-up V

- ▶ Previous claim: evidentials do not exhibit the AI variability (Murray 2017; Faller 2019)
- ▶ (26) suggests otherwise

(26) Dutch

*Question: What makes you think it will rain?*

✓Het [SCHIJNT]<sub>F</sub> te regenen.  
this seem:REP.3SG.PRES INF rain  
'It's [SAID]<sub>F</sub> that it will rain.'

- ▶ Contrast
  - ▶ Attitude reports: answerhood without contrastive focus
  - ▶ Possibly some pragmatic defaults that only affect evidentials
- ▶ If on the right track, this hypothesis can significantly simplify the semantic theory of evidentiality

# Nature of the evidential signal

- ▶ Most approaches: the ER is hard-wired
- ▶ Exceptions: the ER as an implicature
  - ▶ Most commonly proposed for temporal markers with indirect evidential effects, indirectness derived from causality and/or event ontology (Northern Ostyak, Nikolaeva 1999; Cuzco Quechua *sga*, Faller 2004; Matses, Fleck 2007; Japanese, Davis and Hara 2014; Bulgarian, Koev 2017; Tatar, Bowler 2018)
  - ▶ Indirectness of *must* as a non-cancellable implicature (Mandelkern 2019)
- ▶ Those proposals (except Mandelkern): respective markers as non-modal operators
- ▶ Any relation between hard-wiring the evidential signal and dealing with possible worlds?

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