Evidentiality and the semantics–pragmatics interface
An introduction

Bert Cornillie, Juana Marín Arrese and Björn Wiemer
KU Leuven / Universidad Complutense de Madrid / JGU Mainz

1. Introduction

The focus of this special issue is on the semantics and pragmatics of evidentiality, and more specifically on the interface between the two levels of linguistic analysis. We think that there are several good reasons to deal with the challenge of delimiting the borderline between the semantics and the pragmatics of evidentiality. First, a clear view of the differences between the semantic meanings and the pragmatic meanings of evidential markers is useful for the lexicographic enterprise. For the sake of systematic research, a clear description of the core semantics of evidential markers would facilitate the work of a comprehensive database of these expressions in the languages of Europe (and the world) (cf. the Madrid based EUROEVIDMOD-project). Indeed, putting together such a database requires a high degree of comparability both within the realm of evidential values and with

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regard to the possible pragmatic meanings associated with them. Second, there are also sound conceptual reasons for distinguishing between the semantics and the pragmatics of evidentials. The debate on evidentiality and epistemic modality, for instance, can benefit from new insights deriving from the exercise of limiting ourselves to the primary meaning of the markers under examination. Third, from the methodological point of view, a better understanding of the semantic–pragmatics interface of evidentiality will be an incentive to refine criteria needed for (i) separating the core meaning from the contextual cues guiding the (pragmatic) interpretation, (ii) coming to grips with ambiguous evidentials with epistemic overtones and, vice versa, with epistemic markers carrying evidential overtones, and (iii) explaining the conventionalization of evidential/epistemic meaning.

In the remainder of this introduction, we will deal with the definition of evidentiality (Section 2) and discuss the relation between evidentiality and epistemic modality (Section 3). Moreover, the usefulness of Generalized Conversational Implicatures will be addressed in Section 4, which will be a basis for formulating new directions for future research (Section 5). Finally, we present an overview of this special issue in Section 6.

2. On the definition of evidentiality

Evidentiality has generally been considered as a conceptual notion, i.e. a substance domain, which refers to “information source” or “mode of knowledge” (cf. Chafe and Nichols 1986; Anderson 1986; Willett 1988; Squartini 2001; Aikhenvald 2004). The present-day debate on evidentiality is still very much concerned with exploring the contours of Anderson’s (1986: 274) seminal definition of evidentiality as “(…) a special grammatical phenomenon (…)” (see for instance the special issue of Discourse Studies on evidentiality, edited by González Condom 2014). Anderson (1986: 274–275) sets out the following conditions for identifying archetypal evidentials:

3a. Evidentials show the kind of justification for a factual claim which is available to the person making that claim, whether
direct evidence plus observation (no inference needed)
evidence plus inference
inference (evidence unspecified)
reasoned expectation from logic and other facts
and whether the evidence is auditory, or visual, etc.

2. Aikhenvald (2004) adopts a much narrower view than the other authors mentioned, in that she understands evidentiality as a grammatical category without, however, being very clear when it comes to defining ’grammatical’.
3b. Evidentials are not themselves the main predication of the clause, but are rather a specification added to a factual claim about something else [i.e. the propositional content of the utterance].

3c. Evidentials have the indication of evidence as in (a) as their primary meaning, not only as a pragmatic inference.

3d. Morphologically, evidentials are inflections, clitics, or other free syntactic elements (not compounds or derivational forms).

Over the last years, the question of whether evidentiality is restricted to grammatical marking, which would preclude considering lexical expressions as evidentiality proper, has received due attention (Aikhenvald 2007; Squartini 2007, 2009; Cornillie 2007, 2009; Wiemer 2010a). Many authors have argued that, given that evidentiality is a functional domain, from a functional-onomasiological perspective (cf. Wiemer 2010a) we cannot restrict the notion of evidentiality to cases of obligatory grammatical marking; rather we should explain those shared evidential meanings expressed by either lexical or grammatical means. In this vein, Lampert and Lampert (2010: 319) have also argued in favour of “the primacy of functional criteria” and have suggested including within the category “all linguistic representations that serve as cues for evidentiality in context”. Hence, it is not problematic to state that Anderson’s (a–d) requirements also hold for lexical means (“function words”) as well. Here, in line with criterion (3b), we need to be cautious not to take any reference to evidence as belonging to evidentiality. Perception verbs, for instance, have the indication of evidence as their primary meaning, but are themselves part of the main predication of the clause. Hence, evidentiality is not restricted to means conceived of as ‘grammatical’ (in the narrow sense), but evidential markers should qualify something else in an ancillary manner. In this way, in fact, one can accept them as being grammatical in the sense defined by Boye and Harder (2009, 2012), namely: units which are conventionally restricted to discursively secondary use (see Figure 1). This would include sentential adverbs, but exclude practically all complement taking predicates (CTPs).

In line with Boye and Harder (2009), we understand evidentiality as a conceptual domain, regardless of the grammatical vs. lexical status that the given linguistic device is ascribed to. However, lexical and grammatical means are likewise results of conventionalization and, in this sense, they are to be opposed to meanings which are only calculated/inferred “online” on the basis of the current discourse.

Yet, there remain several gaps in the literature. First, researchers do not have a satisfactory answer as to how to define the criteria of conventionalization (grammaticalization or lexicalization) and, even more so, how to apply them in the analysis of concrete data. Thus, the question arises how can conventionalization be captured (other than simply by token frequency). Second, there is the unsolved
problem of comparative (cross-linguistically applicable) categories (vs. descriptive language-specific categories), i.e. the question to which extent evidential markers and functions can be compared across languages and how tertia comparationis should be chosen (or defined). Third, the border region between semantic (i.e. coded) and pragmatic (i.e. inferred) meaning, in particular as evidential markers are concerned, is still an understudied topic. Many cognitive linguists – among them advocates of different brands of Construction Grammar figure quite prominently – deny that there is any sense in drawing such a line. Other approaches, which are otherwise divergent, do make a difference; compare, for instance, Neo-Gricean “pragmaticists” (Levinson 2007; Huang 2007), “relevantists” (Ariel 2008), adherents of an integrative conception of lexicon and grammar (e.g., Apresjan and other exponents of the Moscow Semantic School; cf. Apresjan 1995 and many subsequent publications) and formal semanticists such as Bogusławski (cf. Bogusławski 2008 and other), to name but a few.

3. **Evidentiality vs. epistemic modality, again**

We advocate a strict distinction between epistemic and evidential meanings from an onomasiological point of view (cf. Aikhenvald 2004; Cornillie 2009; Wiemer and Stathi 2010). Recently, Boye (2012), who also views epistemic modality and evidentiality as distinct domains, has proposed grouping them as subcategories of the conceptual domain of ‘epistemicity’ (rather in its etymologically primary sense of epistemologically relevant notions); under this heading epistemic (properly modal) meanings refer to ‘epistemic support’, while evidential meanings cover...
the region of ‘epistemic justification’. This does not preconceive any implicational direction between these two subdomains of epistemicity. In fact, before evidentiality became a topic in research on European languages (at the end of the 1980s), evidential functions (if mentioned at all) were presented as subordinate to epistemic ones (and in many lexicographic traditions philologies they still are). By contrast, Plungian (2001: 354) already pointed out that there is always some kind of knowledge involved in epistemic judgments, but that evidential qualifications do not necessarily involve epistemic evaluation (e.g. hearsay). This treatment actually inversed the relationship: epistemic meanings become dependent on evidential ones.

We now observe (at least) two kinds of “triangular relationships” between communicative-cognitive domains, relevant for the description of meanings related to epistemic support and epistemic justification. Within each of these triangles a dynamic (thus, changeable) interplay of semantic and pragmatic meanings has to be considered thoroughly. The first triangle concerns the relation between different bases relevant for epistemic justification (evidential values), the second triangle has to do with the relation between epistemic justification and epistemic support. Let us consider them one after another, before we discuss their mutual interaction.

The first triangle rests on distinctions made rather vaguely (hence, often not consistently) by researchers interested in classifying evidential functions, either in a network or as a taxonomy. The following dimensions have been proposed in the literature: Chafe (1986) distinguishes four ‘Modes of Knowing’ (belief, induction, hearsay and deduction); Willett’s classification is based on a taxonomy of ‘Sources of Information’ (attested, reported, inference). More recently, Squartini (2008: 917) has argued for the need to distinguish between ‘Source of evidence’ (or the locus of information, internal or external to the speaker/writer, or: self vs. other) and the ‘Modes of Knowing” (which are similar, but do not entirely coincide with the same term as used by Chafe 1986), i.e. a dimension that distinguishes by which senses, or type of mental operation, information was accessed (e.g. visual, auditory, olfactory, or perception-based abduction vs. deductive reasoning). From this perspective, a...
reportive evidential, for instance, would then have an external source of evidence and **auditive** as mode of knowing.

Plungian (2001: 353) presents the following possibilities of clustering evidential values, illustrated in Figure 2, based on the oppositions ‘personal’ vs. ‘mediated’ access to the evidence and ‘direct’ vs. ‘indirect’ evidence, with ‘personal indirect [reflected]’ evidence occupying the central space.

![Figure 2](image)

**Figure 2.** Different types of evidential oppositions. From Plungian (2001: 353)

If we merge Squartini’s (2008) classification and Plungian’s (2001) proposal, we might want to restructure the three dimensions so as to disclose their more intricate interrelationship (see Figure 3). We can keep the concepts of ‘Modes of knowing’ (in Squartini’s use) and ‘Source of information’, and reserve type of evidence for the direct vs indirect opposition.

![Figure 3](image)

**Figure 3.** The three dimensions of evidentiality

It seems most plausible to assume that, in actual communication (at least), linguistic units (morphemes, words, constructions) will highlight only one of these dimensions, which can then be regarded as coded; the other two would then be backgrounded and, thus, implied as pragmatically inferable. When it comes to distinct linguistic units, the question is whether this relation between back- and foreground is stable or changes from utterance to utterance, i.e. whether it is dependent on conditions of the (linguistic or situational) context.

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6. Note that by ‘quotative’ Plungian refers to reportive meaning (not to quotative in the sense accepted now following either Aikhenvald 2004 or Güldemann 2008).
Such a view has a series of implications. First, these three dimensions are independent from each other, which can be seen from the fact that, although certain values of one dimension might be more closely associated with values of one of the two other, e.g. visual – direct, there is no one-to-one correlation between values of different dimensions. Second, one wonders why so little attention is paid to possible asymmetries (or restrictions) in the combinability between, for instance, certain ‘modes of knowing’ and ‘sources of evidence’. The following two common combinations witness interesting restrictions, indeed:

a. The relation between hearsay (= [− personal], [indirect]) cannot be linked to any sense other than the auditory one. Simultaneously, it is not auditory perception *per se* which counts, because we must reckon for the fact that hearsay implies the processing of propositional information (cf. Wiemer 2009:618–622, 2010b:132–134).

b. People can draw inferences (= [+ personal], [indirect]) from any kind of perception (and from information processed on the basis of perception). This makes them “appear” at several places in any kind of classification of evidential functions.

The other triangle has been brought to the fore by Cornillie (2009), where it is argued that the relation between epistemic and evidential functions may be (and often is) mediated by a third aspect of subjective (speaker-based) judgment, namely: an assessment of the reliability (or trustworthiness) of the source on which the speaker bases his/her judgment. See Figure 4:

![Figure 4. Evidentiality, epistemic modality and reliability](image-url)
Epistemic meanings are defined by Cornillie (2009: 46), in quoting Nuyts (2001: 21), as the “evaluation of the chances that a certain hypothetical state of affairs under consideration (or some aspect of it) will occur, is occurring or has occurred in a possible world”. Reliability, Cornillie argues, can be identified neither with reference to the cognitive-communicative basis of a speaker’s judgment, nor with an epistemic assessment, be it in terms of likelihood (as in logic) or of subjective certainty (as in cognitive-functional frameworks). Trustworthiness can vary independently from evidential and epistemic values. Whether, and to which extent, you believe – give trust to – somebody’s assertion being true (or other speech acts being sincere; see below) – its reliability – is not determined by any of the three dimensions pictured in Figure 3.

Imagine, for instance, the different possible effects on the conviction of the speaker (and his/her interlocutors) who utters an innocent simple sentence like

(1) The victim was poisoned with arsenic.

If this utterance follows after a report on the findings of forensic physicians who investigated the victim, speaker (and interlocutors) would rather trust that this statement corresponds to reality. If however (1) is uttered by an unknown pedestrian who saw the victim fall and die on the pathway, this utterance would certainly raise surprise as a first reaction of those who heard it. They might ask “How do you know?” or “Why are you so convinced?”, i.e. they may ask questions about the evidential basis.

Notice that an analogous point holds for performative utterances, i.e. for utterances which cannot be described in terms of truth-conditions, but only be judged in terms of sincerity or felicity conditions. If someone produces utterances such as the one in (2) and (3), assessment of reliability (on the side of the hearer) may vary.

(2) I beg your pardon.

(3) I confess my sins.

Trust on the side of the addressee (or those who accidentally overhear such an utterance) will vary considerably depending on (i) who utters it, (ii) under which occasion, (iii) with respect to which deeds: a close friend, a family member whom I do not esteem, Mother Teresa, or Adolf Hitler (or Iosif Stalin, for that matter).

7. Note that this definition is reminiscent of the manner epistemic modal values used to be defined in formal semantics (logic, philosophy of language); it is not a properly cognitive definition. For an argument of defining epistemic values (epistemic support) not in terms of truth, but in terms of certainty cf. Boye (2012: 195–197, and elsewhere).
In the same line, reliability of knowledge (or, by analogy, the assessment of someone’s sincerity) does not reduce to, or subordinate under, evidentiality or epistemic assessment. On this basis, Cornillie (2009: 57) concludes that “equating the evaluation of the reliability of the evidence with the epistemic evaluation of likelihood leads to the current confusion between the two categories” (EVID and EPIST). Moreover, “when speakers report on a state of affairs, they necessarily express some kind of commitment to it, albeit a rather undetermined one” (Cornillie 2009: 56). Thus, it does not seem to be possible to do without reliability in any kind of judgment (assertion); we can only change its relation to EVID and EPIST. And we may surmise that it fulfils the role of a mediating element between epistemic support and epistemic justification (as indicated in Figure 4).

In addition to commitment as credibility or entitlement, the question still remains, as Marín-Arrese (2015) points out, that speakers/writers may make conscious choices to either enhance or mitigate the force of their assertions or to specify or mystify the source and mode of access to the evidence in order to exercise epistemic control in discourse, thus attempting to manipulate the perceptions of hearers/readers regarding the degree of assertional commitment and/or defeat their epistemic vigilance (Sperber et al. 2010).

4. Generalized Conversational Implicatures

In this section we will focus on the role played by Generalized Conversational Implicatures in the “epistemic overtones”. It has been claimed that it is possible to determine whether an evidential marker carries epistemic overtones or, the other way around, that an epistemic marker has acquired (or switched to) an evidential function (cf. Hennemann 2011, 2013; Wiemer and Kampf 2012, among others). Rarely, however, are such claims substantiated by an explicit indication of the diagnostics used, other than relying on one’s intuitions about the language and context, most often on the basis of corpus data. In this context, Lampert and Lampert (2010) ask themselves whether corpus analyses and the collocational properties found therein allow us to draw conclusions about the semantic load of propositional modifiers.

Notwithstanding this problem, there seems to be convergent insight among evidentiality researchers that epistemic overtones can often be captured as (generalized) conversational implicatures (cf., for instance, Faller 2012; Wiemer and Kampf this issue; Korta and Zubeldia 2014). An extreme position is held by Faller (2012: 300), who claims that a speaker using the reportative, as in (4), “does not convey anything about their belief regarding p”.
(4) a. Es ist ein guter Film. > b. Es soll ein guter Film sein.
   ‘It is a good movie’ > ‘It is supposedly a good movie’
   (Faller 2012: 306)

With regard to the reportative in (4b), Faller (2012: 306) states that the speaker’s assessment of the proposition is not relevant: “Since the proposition level is not at play (the two members of the relevant scale < Dir s(p), Rep s (P)> have the same propositional content), the speaker’s competence with respect to the proposition expressed is also not relevant”.

Wiemer and Socka (in print) show how hearsay adverbs can display epistemic readings contextually. Assuming that the speaker is trying to be adequately informative, the evidential encoding of a concept lower in the scale typically gives rise to the inference that the speaker was not in a position to offer a higher ranked term (Horn 1972; cf. Urmson 1963). A sentence such as the one in (5) indicates pragmatically that the speaker has had no direct visual access to the event, i.e. s/he hasn’t seen that it’s raining.

(5) I hear that it’s raining.

Similar interpretations arise with other evidential values and cross-linguistically (cf. Papafragou et al. 2007: 257). In the following lines we will discuss the inferential and the reportative markers. We claim that in all these cases distinguishing between semantic (coded) and pragmatic (inferred) meaning contributes to a better understanding of the epistemic and evidential dimensions (and their interplay in communication). Look at the example in (6):

(6) There is a wounded dog lying on the other side of the street. It must be in pain.
   (Cornillie 2009: 50)

From the semantic point of view, the auxiliary must encodes that there is indirect evidence, which in this case is compatible with an inference on the basis of perceptual access to evidence. Pragmatically, the evidential sincerity condition associated with the bare assertion that the speaker has adequate evidence may lead to the epistemic implicature of high likelihood. Moreover, Wiemer and Kampf (this issue) claim that there are contexts where the inferential knowledge and epistemic assessment cannot be disentangled: “when the speaker cannot base his/her judgment on data accessible for him/her at the moment of speech (cf. Squartini’s 2008 generic inferences and so-called “conjectures”)”. In other words, if the cognitive (or communicative) basis of the evidence leading to an inference (intended by the speaker) cannot easily be reconstructed, the evidential function remains in the background and the epistemic function acquires more prominence.

As for the reportative, Wiemer and Socka (in print) analyzed the possible implicatures with allegedly-units in Polish, German and Russian. They show that
with Polish *podobno* the implicature of hearsay as epistemic agnosticism (Imp1), of hearsay as doubt (Imp2) or hearsay as rejection of the truth (Imp3), respectively, can best be characterized as a GCI, while Russian *jàkoby* has (Imp3) as a conventionalized part of its meaning.

Apart from the notion of implicature there might be other concepts and tests that can account for an operative distinction between stably encoded (entrenched) meaning components and pragmatically inferred ones. We should remain open to other objectifiable analytic procedures that can operationalize notions such as semantic encoding and pragmatic inference. More generally, it is important to take into account that what counts as adequate evidence differs from context to context, from speaker to speaker (von Fintel and Gillies 2010). It remains to be discussed what kind of empirical evidence such procedures need: questionnaires, corpora, or just some sort of the researcher’s intuition? Finally, the question arises as to the extent to which evidential markers and functions can be compared across languages and how *tertia comparationis* should be chosen.

Here a principled problem appears time and again in research: are tests with sentential or cross-sentential contexts conclusive? Or do they show what investigators want them to show? Putting it otherwise: is it justified to conclude from the (in)compatibility of a unit A with some context C implying meaning M that A has incorporated (or not incorporated) meaning M? The mirror image to this fundamental methodological question is: how can types of contexts be distinguished and classified? For both directions of this fundamental question we need a principled approach, unless we want to run the risk of becoming circular, or remain just intuitive (hermeneutic). In fact, we need an approach similar to what Haspelmath (2010) proposed with respect to grammatical distinctions such as alignment, argument structure or TAM-marking so that we can account for markers scoping over higher-level units, such as propositions.

There are divergent viewpoints on how to treat seemingly contradictory findings on scope phenomena involving epistemic and evidential markers: under conditions yet to be clarified either type can include the other one, or they may display identical scope (e.g. Kehayov 2008). Within the framework of Functional Discourse Grammar, Hengeveld and Mackenzie (2008) even propose three different positions in their model of functional layers, splitting up evidential expressions into those indicating direct perception and located on an inner level in comparison to epistemic and inferential ones, which are, in turn, included into the scope of reportative expressions. Recently, Boye (2012: 236) argued that, instead, all epistemic and evidential expressions “should be assigned *en bloc* to one and the same position in a universal ordering of grammatical expressions”, the different (and often variable) scope properties being conditioned by pragmatic implicatures. In other words, Boye (2012) also advocates a “division of labour” between semantic (coded) and pragmatic (inferred) meaning in the domain of propositional markers.
5. Prospects for future research

As far as the prospects for future analyses are concerned, the pragmatics of evidentials can be taken one step further if we take into account cultural and interactional factors. We will mention three of them here: (i) extending context, (ii) (inter)subjectivity, (iii) discourse and control, and (iv) discourse organization. (i) Wiemer and Socka (in print, p. 30 of ms.) suggest that researchers on evidentiality deal with “higher-order routines rooted in attitudes to communicative situations and cultural background, including knowledge about discourse genres” so as to come to grips with the full meaning potential of expressions used for indicating information source. Hence, the notion of context can no longer be seen as purely linguistic context. Such a refined description on the basis of a broader understanding of context is another challenge for lexicographic approaches. (ii) As for the expression of subjectivity and intersubjectivity, referring to shared knowledge is an important pragmatic dimension of social interaction, although it is not part of the traditional typology (cf. Cornillie 2008). Evidentials are indexical of the speaker/writer’s subjective vs intersubjective positioning, though so far the subjective vs intersubjective reading does not seem to be the core meaning of evidentials. Yet, the possibility of semanticization always exists (cf. conventionalization argument of Traugott 2010). (iii) The notion of epistemic control in the discourse has been discussed by Langacker (2013) from a Cognitive Grammar perspective. From a Critical Discourse perspective, in the specific case of evidentials, Hart (2011) has highlighted their role as strategies deployed by speakers in order to overcome hearers’ potential critical defences and overcome hearers’ cognitive mechanisms for epistemic vigilance (cf. Sperber et al. 2010). The study of discursive constructions involving the strategic use of ‘justificatory support’ for assertions, thus seeking to legitimise their claims of knowledge and the validity of the information, has been approached by Marín-Arrese (2015). (iv) In the broader field of pragmatics in society, the interactional functions of evidentials as part of the discourse organization (e.g. turn-taking) receive increasing attention (cf. Nuckolls and Michael 2012). Discourse use adds one more layer to the semantics and pragmatics, as it is clear that the discourse potential varies from one meaning to another. Hence, correlations between semantic/pragmatic elements of expressions and their specific discourse functions deserve more attention in the field of evidentiality.
6. Overview of the special issue

The papers in this volume deal with the semantics–pragmatics interface in that they discuss how commitment or epistemic modal interpretations arise as secondary meanings related to but different from the traditional evidential values. In “Hearer-oriented processes of strength assignment: a pragmatic model of commitment”, Kira Boulat distinguishes four kinds of commitment: speaker commitment, communicated commitment, attributed commitment and hearer commitment. She shows that the last two types of commitment are influenced by three main factors: linguistic markers, the hearer’s appraisal of the speaker and the salience of the communicated assumption in his cognitive environment. Her proposal echoes the current debate on epistemic evaluation of information and aims to account for individuals’ commitment in terms of the relative strength of stored assumptions in their cognitive environment.

Kepa Korta and Larraitz Zubeldia discuss the relation between evidential values and epistemic commitment in their paper titled “The evidential and doxastic dimensions of the Basque particle *bide*”. This inferential particle has been taken to point to indirect evidence and has also been associated to the expression of a certain degree of belief or certainty on the truth of the proposition. The authors compare *bide* with the Basque reportative particle *omen* and find two main differences. First, *bide* encodes a doxastic dimension that is absent from the semantic meaning of *omen*. Second, *bide* can be taken to be an illocutionary force indicator that does not contribute to the proposition expressed, while *omen* does contribute to the truth-conditions of the utterance.

In their paper “Metarepresentation and Evidentiality in Spanish Tense and Mood: a cognitive pragmatic perspective”, Aoife K. Ahern, José Amenós-Pons and Pedro Guijarro-Fuentes describe how metarepresentational and evidential content are expressed and interpreted in *if*-conditional and *although*-concessive clauses. On the basis of evidence from a written multiple choice interpretation task in L2 Spanish as well as from an L1 task in Spanish, they show that the ability to efficiently integrate linguistic and non-linguistic cues is particularly costly for non-native speakers and also difficult for native speakers when it comes to the syntax-discourse interface.

Axelle Vatrican deals with “Evidentiality and Epistemic Modality in the Rumor/Journalistic Conditional in Spanish”. She accounts for the fact that rumor conditionals are epistemic as well as evidential whereas conjecture conditionals in Spanish are epistemic but not evidential, as they convey uncertainty and do not encode the source of information. It is shown that, in a rumor conditional, the epistemic operator operates on the illocutionary force of an embedded proposition *p* (enunciation) and the situation *p* is anchored in the present or in the future. In a conjecture conditional, by contrast, the modal epistemic operator
allows for the realization of an embedded proposition \( p \) (fact) and the situation \( p \) is anchored in the past.

In “Between evidentiality and epistemic modality: the case of the future and the conditional in European Portuguese”, Teresa Oliveira describes the (synthetic and compound) forms of the two tenses as both inferential and reportative markers. Her corpus analysis indicates that different categories (evidentiality, modality, tense, and aspect) contribute to the construction of the evidential values in question and that these values are particularly sensitive to textual genre: the reportative uses emerge in news reports, while the inferential uses appear more frequently in opinion texts.

Marion Weerning, in her paper on “The translatability into Italian of the German stance marking modal particles wohl, eben and ja: between epistemicity and evidentiality”, analyses the complex meaning of these particles in specific discourse settings. She argues that they arise from the intertwined relations between speaker – hearer – state of affairs as the three key entities of stance they mark and the textual or situational context. Weerning shows that the modal particles she studies have only covert epistemic and evidential features.

Finally, in “The evolution of the marker comme qui dirait ‘as one would say’ in French”, Sonia Gómez-Jordana describes how the marker stems from a hypothetical comparative meaning and evolves into a reformulative marker ending up as a polyphonic mitigation marker. Her polyphony-based analysis pays special attention to the role of the speaker and the enunciators in the enunciation of the marker.

Wiemer and Kampf discuss the meaning potential of evidential markers in Bulgarian and distinguish stable semantic meanings from pragmatic meanings taking into account specific discourse conditions. It is shown that evidential (inferential or hearsay) and epistemic meaning components are related to each other on the basis of implicatures. A crucial factor favoring the inferential meaning is a perceptual basis of the inference. By contrast, a more complicated reconstruction of the cognitive (or communicative) basis leading to an inference often causes the epistemic function to emerge, downplaying the evidential function. The study is corpus-based and also includes an attempt at classifying micro- and macro-contextual conditions that (dis)favor a highlighting of the evidential function.

Finally, Stef Spronck examines the participant structure inherent in evidential meanings, starting from Jakobson’s (1957) analysis of mood. In his discussion on participant structures in multiple-perspective constructions and in reported speech, Spronck claims that Jakobson (1957) enables us to systematically address phenomena that are typically assumed to arise in evidential expressions as pragmatic effects, particularly ‘distancing’ and evidential interpretations of modals. Spronck also explains these effects in terms of Du Bois’s (2007) stance triangle. Such an approach offers a principled account of the semantic and pragmatic interaction between modal and evidential meanings, based on their semantic structure.
References


