



2/2024

---

## EVIDENTIALITY - CONCEPTUAL DELIMITATIONS AND INTERSECTIONS WITH OTHER LINGUISTIC CATEGORIES

---

**Adelaida-Maria-Evelina ȚIPLUICĂ**

“Constantin Brâncuși” University of Târgu Jiu

**Abstract:** *SOME SCHOLARS HAVE SUGGESTED THAT EVIDENTIALITY SIGNALS NOT ONLY THE SOURCE OF KNOWLEDGE ABOUT AN ASSERTED EVENT, BUT ALSO THE SPEAKER'S POSITION OR BELIEF ABOUT THE CERTAINTY OF THE EVENT'S OCCURRENCE (CHAFE, 1986; DELANCEY, 2001; PALMER 2001). THIS HAS LED TO A NUMBER OF CONTROVERSIES ABOUT THE STATUS OF EVIDENTIALITY AND ITS OVERLAP WITH VARIOUS CATEGORIES IN THE GRAMMATICAL AND/OR SEMANTIC DOMAIN. THE PRESENT ARTICLE AIMS TO SUMMARIZE THE MAIN THEORIES EXISTING SO FAR ON THESE ISSUES AND, AT THE SAME TIME, TRIES TO PRESENT OUR POSITIONING.*

**Keywords:** EVIDENTIALITY, EPISTEMIC MODALITY, WONDERINGNESS

**Contact details  
of the  
author(s):** Email: [evelinatipluica@yahoo.com](mailto:evelinatipluica@yahoo.com)

### 1. INTRODUCTION

One of the most frequently discussed issues in defining evidentiality is its scope in relation to epistemic modality, mediativity and wonderingness. Therefore, this article is devoted to explaining this type of overlap and, in particular, to defining *evidentiality* of the inferential type from a functionalist perspective. First, we will see what are the existing positions in the literature on this issue, then, we will outline the overlap between these categories at the level of the discursive functioning of their operators.



## 2. EVIDENTIALITY AND/OR EPISTEMIC MODALITY?

According to Aikhenvald (2004, p. 3), *evidentiality* is defined as a linguistic category whose essential role is to designate the underlying source of the information, and Portner (2009, p. 329) argues that *evidentiality* can be defined as an evaluation of the speaker's motives for conveying the message, while Timberlake (2009, p. 329) considers that *evidentiality* indicates an authority on knowledge.

In terms of *epistemic modality*, one of the most widely accepted definitions is that offered by Coates (1983: 18, apud Flowerdew 2002, p. 182), who considers it to denote the degree of confidence (or lack of confidence) in the truth of the propositional content expressed. Precht (2008) also defines *evidentiality* as a positional category; in the sense that it expresses how the speaker positions him/herself when expressing information. Precht considers that all categories that include person, especially first person, often have evidential meaning (Precht, 2008, pp. 89-111). In Mondada's (2013, 599) definition, epistemic status has to do with the distribution of knowledge and access to it of the participants involved in the realization of the situation/ event described in the utterance. In other words, epistemic status refers to how much speakers know about a topic. When speakers describe this epistemic status, they mark their epistemic attitude or realize epistemic positioning.

Palmer (2001, p. 1) defines *modality* as a semantic category in relation to the categories of tense and aspect, stating that while the category of tense describes the time of an event and aspect describes the nature of a process, modality is more concerned with the speaker's attitude towards the information put forward in the utterance. In Palmer's conceptualization, modality is structured into propositional modality, which refers to the speaker's attitude towards the truth value of the sentence, and event modality, which refers to events of a probabilistic nature. The two main types of propositional modality, according to Palmer, are evidential modality and epistemic modality, and the two main types of event modality are deontic modality and dynamic modality (Palmer, 2001, p. 8).

Thus, according to Palmer (1986, pp. 51-70), *evidentiality* refers to the evidence/proof provided to mark the speaker's connection with the source of knowledge, it is a subcategory of epistemic modality, but both categories indicate the degree of the speaker's commitment to the utterance expressed. In this author's view, there are at least four ways in which a speaker can identify that he or she is not presenting what he or she is saying as fact, but rather:

- (1) speculating about it;
- (2) that he presents it as an inference;
- (3) that he has been told of it;
- (4) that it is merely a matter of appearance based on the evidence of the senses.

All four types concern the speaker's indication of his or her commitment to the truth of what is asserted (Palmer, 2001, p. 51).

Type (1) refers to the pure epistemic modality, while types (2)-(4) refer to *evidentiality*, namely indirect evidentiality (inference, retelling) or direct evidentiality (evidence obtained through perception). However, Palmer (1986, p. 70) points out that it would be a futile exercise to decide whether a circumstance is evidentiality rather than judgment.

Although not all languages possess fully grammaticalized forms that encode *evidentiality* and *epistemic modality*, most languages have various ways (lexical or grammatical) of referring to these two domains. Evidentiality, long mistaken for modality, is now increasingly conceived as a domain in its own right, although in very many situations, operators marking either an external source of knowledge such as hearsay or inference often appear to be rendered by the same linguistic forms.

On the other hand, the provision of information/documentation about the speaker's judgment is quite difficult to trenchate, it being placed according to most scholars (Nuyts, 2001; Wiemer, 2018; Aikhenvald, 2021, etc.) at the intersection of two linguistic categories: *evidentiality* and *epistemic modality*.

Thus, a pertinent example is the English word *must* (and its Romanian equivalent, „trebuie”), which denotes that the speaker's reasoning about Kate's presence at home is based on the consideration of evidence that is found in the wider context of the communicative act:

- (1) *Kate must be at home now.* (Palmer, 2001, p. 7)  
[Kate **trebuie** să fie acasă acum.]

In other words, in the example below (1), the speaker comes to a conclusion (that Kate is already at home) on the basis of logical reasoning (he takes into account the following premises: 1. Kate usually gets home in that time interval/ 2. The speaker knows that Kate has no other prearranged schedule, etc.) In this utterance both the speaker's indirect connection with the source of knowledge and the attitude towards the truth value of the propositional content, an uncertain, unsure attitude, are actualized.

Thus, according to the way of interpreting the meaning of the utterance under (1), Palmer (2001, p. 7) does not seem to make a clear-cut distinction between the expression of objective evidence (the *evidentiality* zone) and the speaker's evaluation of the information in the utterance (the modality zone), emphasizing that evidentiality also implies some evaluation on the part of the speaker, which puts these two categories in a complementary relationship, without the two notions being considered overlapping.

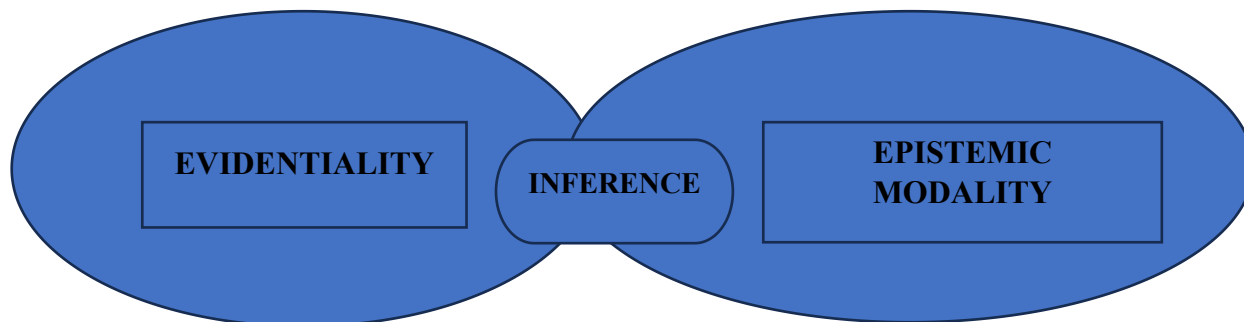


Fig. 1: The intersection between evidentiality and epistemic modality

The idea represented in the above figure is also illustrated in the example under (2), whose meaning can be interpreted binary both from the evidential perspective and under the epistemic modality umbrella:

- (2) *E întuneric afară și Ion nu a mai ajuns. S-o fi răătăcit.*  
*It's dark outside and Ion never arrived. He must be lost.*

Thus, in the example below (2), both the *indirect evidentiality* of the inferential type is marked, by the fact that the speaker comes to a specific conclusion (that Ion has lost his way), based



on a deductive reasoning that starts from the following contextual data: (i) - the darkness outside and (ii) - Ion's absence.

Also in the example below (2), in addition to the actualizations of a cognitive process, an aspect that belongs to the sphere of evidentiality, the speaker also expresses a probable propositional content (the probability that Ion has lost his way) - an aspect that belongs to the epistemic modality.

A position similar to Palmer's is also taken by Franjzynger (1985, 1987). He sees a direct correspondence between *evidentiality* and *epistemic modality* (Franjzynger 1985, p. 250), namely that different ways of acquiring knowledge correspond to different degrees of certainty. From this perspective, Franjzynger hierarchically groups evidence/proofs into direct evidence and indirect evidence, according to the degree of veracity expressed as follows: visual > auditory < auditory < non-visual < inference > citation. According to this assumption, direct evidence (e.g. visual, auditory evidence) is more credible than indirect evidence (e.g. inferences and hearsay).

There are languages in which *evidentiality* is a category necessarily associated with the verb. Franjzynger (1985, p. 250) thus clarifies all languages into two types, which he calls Type I and Type II languages. Type I languages are languages in which evidentiality is unmarked which indicates that the speaker believes in the truth expressed by the utterance, and Type II languages are languages in which each utterance indicates how the speaker has acquired knowledge. Franjzynger makes this distinction based, of course, on the assumption that evidentiality encodes epistemic modality.

In particular, an uncertain utterance, which indicates that the speaker has only indirect knowledge about the information in the asserted utterance, implies that the speaker is not fully committed to the truth of that sentence and, therefore, is placed in the epistemic modality.

In the Romanian linguistic literature, the overlapping of *evidentiality* with *epistemic modality* results primarily from the perspective of marking the two categories in the utterance by the same operators: verbal modals - the conjunctive, the indicative and the conditional-optative, adverbs and adverbial locutions, verbs with modal meaning.

Thus, in Romanian linguistics, Rodica Zafiu (GALR II, pp. 702-718) admits that *evidentiality* is a form that epistemicity takes in the language, so that the source mentioned in the statement implicitly indicates a high degree of subjectivity. A possible distinction of the two notions is determined by the different connotation of these operators: if the speaker wants to focus on the result/information presented, he derives their value as epistemic modalizers, whereas if the speaker rather expresses the cognitive or perceptual process in relation to the source of obtaining the information, these operators become evidential marks.

This hypothesis is also illustrated by the following examples proposed by F. De Haan (2001, p. 209), i.e. by their equalization in Romanian:

- (3) *John must be at home. The light is on.* (de Haan 2001, p. 209)  
[John **trebuie** să fie acasă. Lumina e aprinsă.]
- (4) *John is at home. The light is on.* (de Haan 2001, p. 209)  
[John **este** acasă. Lumina este pornită.]

In example (3), the English operator *must* and the Romanian equivalent „*trebuie*” are used to signal that the information is based on a logical assumption of the speaker, inferred from the fact that the light is on in John's house, therefore the speaker believes that John is at home; in example (4), the same reasoning is explicitly stated - the light is on, but there is no linguistic operator linking the information itself - that John is at home, to the existing evidence - the light is on.



In conclusion, the two categories can be linked by inclusion (epistemic modality as a subtype of evidentiality or evidentiality as a subtype of epistemic modality), by overlap, or they can be considered in identity relation (see Matthewson, 2008). In summary, these perspectives are thus as follows:

a) *Inclusivity* claims that one category is a subtype of the other (Dendale Tasmowski, 2001), namely:

1) *Epistemic modality* is a subtype of *evidentiality* - from this perspective, all modals are evidential, but not all evidentials are epistemic modals;

2) *evidentiality* is a subtype of *epistemic modality* - evidentials presuppose some degree of certainty about the situation being described, thus, all evidentials are modal, but not all modals are evidential.

b) *Overlapping* indicates that some operators may refer either to the category of *evidentiality* or to the *epistemic modality*, but others may have an ambiguous operation, as the example below shows:

(5) *Hoțul pare Ion.*

*The thief seems to be Ion.*

Below (5), the modal verb **seems** (*pare*) to refer only to the speaker's commitment to the identity of the thief, with little reference to the source of the information. In this case, although we can consider the evidential value of the **seems** (*pare*) operator as marking an inferential source of information, indirectly retrieved, the possible epistemic value is also present.

Similarly to the situation illustrated in sub (5), the meaning of perceptual evidentials also often shifts towards an epistemic meaning, as follows from the statement below:

(6) *Văd că n-ai prea învățat.*

*I see you haven't learned much.*

Below (6), the evidential **I see** (*văd*), the prototypical mark of *direct perceptual evidentiality* that refers to the source of information, here indicates the idea of presupposition.

b) *Identity* refers to the fact that all evidentials are epistemic modals and that all epistemic modals are evidential (cf. Matthewson 2008), which is shown to the contrary in example (9), which contains an evidential operator with no epistemic value.

(7) *Văd un hoț pe fereastră.*

*I see a thief through the window.*

From our point of view, the two notions should be more clearly distinguished, as there are important differences between them. *Evidentiality* is, as we said before, a property of language that variously (grammatically or lexically) marks the source of information in an utterance, which can be direct source (the information was personally taken in, the speaker being a witness - sensory evidence) and indirect source (the speaker inferred or was in turn informed by someone else). *Epistemic modality* is a grammatical category by means of which the degree of the speaker's commitment to the utterance is rendered, as well as the speaker's attitude towards the asserted propositional content. Thus, we distinguish the epistemic modality as an attitude, a judgment or even a commitment of the speaker towards the situation exposed by him in the utterance, which may also express a degree of certainty (or not) towards the information presented.

These differences can also be observed in the domain of operator meanings through which these two notions manifest themselves in language: evidentials actualize the nature of the evidence about the information in the sentences, whereas epistemic modals evaluate the speaker's commitment to the information conveyed.

The distinction we start from is the following: the epistemic modality estimates the evidence and, on the basis of this estimate made by the speaker, the speaker assigns a degree of certainty to the information in the utterance (which can be strong, medium or weak), and evidentiality reflects the nature of the source from which the information in the utterance derives.

This way of disambiguation is also seen in the example below:

- (8) *Un individ cumpără un pepene și îl analizează. Apoi afirmă:*  
*An individual buys a melon and analyzes it. He then states:*
- (8a) - *Pepenele **se simte** moale în mâna mea (evidențialitate)*  
*-The melon **feels** soft in my hand (evidentiality)*
- (8b) - *Pepenele **trebuie** să fie copt. E moale. (modalitate epistemică)*  
*-The melon **must** be ripe. It's soft. (epistemic modality)*

The example below (8a) expresses a direct perception, where the qualifier soft refers to a tactile quality of the fruit, which is directly perceived by touch. Therefore, the use of the verb denotes a direct sensory perception. In contrast, example (8b) does not express a tactile quality of the watermelon, since the quality of being ripe is inferred from the way the melon looks. The example in sub (8b) is based on the observation that there is a correlation between the ripeness of a melon and the sound it makes when struck: if it feels soft, it is usually ripe. Comparing (8a) with (8b), in contrast to (8a), the verb in (8b) does not express the kind of sensory evidence from which the specified property of being ripe is inferred, and therefore the sentence can be considered to have epistemic value.

Thus, in terms of the discursive functioning of the operators of the two categories, the encoding of *evidentiality* and the encoding of *epistemic modality* are distinguished. Thus, the epistemic modalizers are linguistic means that allow the speaker to manifest the way in which he views his own utterance, while evidential operators are elements through which the speaker refers to the source of his message, so the two encode different things: attitude towards information vs. the source of information.

According to Nuyts (2001, p. 29), the *epistemic modality* is often marked by adverbs (surely/ probably/ maybe), verbs expressing mental processes (cognitive verbs such as believe/ assume/ suspect) or modal auxiliaries (must).

Cappeli (2008, p. 535), who analyzes in detail the evidential and epistemic properties of such verbs, considers that they are epistemic rather than evidential, since their meaning rather indicates the cognitive process used to deduce or make inferences on the basis of evidence pointing to an inferential source.

Therefore, *modals* or *modalizers*<sup>1</sup> such as adverbs *may/probably*, cognitive verbs may include or imply extensions to *evidentiality*. *Evidentials* in the perceptual sphere (sensory evidence) and citation exclude a potential epistemic input on the assertion, whereas *evidentials* in the *inferential* area express an inference and may transfer epistemic value to the statement. In any case, the source

<sup>1</sup> *Modalizers* are the linguistic units that carry meanings in the area of *modality*: modal verbs, exclusively lexical marks of derivational type (modal suffix - *bil*), adverbs and adverbial locutions (DSL 1997, p. 221).



of knowledge is implicit, and the mode of knowledge corresponds either to the speaker or to the speaker's general knowledge, as follows in the examples given in sub (9), (10) and (11):

- (9) *Mai mult ca sigur e un film bun.*  
*More than likely a good movie.*
- (10) *Bănuiesc că e un film bun.*  
*I guess it's a good movie.*
- (11) *L-am văzut, e un film bun.*  
*I have seen it, it's a good movie.*

The utterance below (10) denotes that the speaker does not fully assume the content of the sentence and, regardless of how he got to the information conveyed, directly or indirectly, places the source of knowledge in the zone of *doubt* at the same time as he also proposes an evaluation of the information in his utterance. On the other hand, in the example under (9), the speaker marks an epistemic modal evaluation, since through the modalizing adverb he *more than likely* (*mai mult ca sigur*) expresses his own attitude towards the message conveyed, which denotes a certain degree of subjectivity. Although the source of information is not explicitly rendered, it may be implicit, from the speaker's certainty about the quality of the movie. At the opposite pole, the utterance in sub (11) presents information only from the perspective of the direct connection the speaker has with the source of knowledge, namely his own senses. In this case, we speak of *direct evidentiality*, marked by the operator *I have seen it* (*l-am văzut*) - the mark of visual perception, without any other overlap with the *epistemic modality*.

In conclusion, some operators in the area of *epistemic modality* (such as *cognitive verbs* or *modalizing semi-adverbs*) are also found in the area of *indirect evidentiality*, they can determine both the two coordinates: the source and the attitude or commitment of the speaker. In this sense, it is the context that can distinguish between the dominance of one value or the other.

### 3. EVIDENTIALITY AND/OR MEDIATIVITY?

Another dichotomous opposition analyzed in the literature is that between *evidentiality* and *mediativity*. After the publication of Chafe and Nichols (1986), the English term *evidentiality* was also borrowed in French-speaking linguistics, in the version *évidentialité*, which Co Vet (1988) had proposed in his review of Chafe and Nichols (1986). The French equivalent of the term *evidentiality* (fr. *évidentialité*) has, however, been contested by some specialists because of its connection with the terms *évidence* ('evidence') and *évident* ('evident') which, in their meaning, have nothing to do with the notion of *evidence/proof/evidence*.

In this case, the term proposed by some French linguists is *mediatif* (its Romanian equivalent is *mediativ*). Also, G. Lazard (1956) introduced the term *mediativité*, which gained ground thanks to the conferences organized in 1994, namely: *La catégorie grammaticale du médiatif à travers les langues* and, in 2000, *La médiation: marquages en langue et en discours*. Later, in the 1960s, the term *médiatif* became quite widespread in French-speaking linguistics and even created a lexical family of related terms, namely: *mediativity* or *mediation*.

Zlatka Guentchéva (1994) is the one who typologizes the notion of *mediativity* in French, illustrated with the operation of two verbal paradigms: *the journalistic conditional* - as a mark of reporting and the *perfect indicative* - as a mark of inference. The proposed typology is a tripartite



typology of the following type: *facts reported*, *facts inferred* and *facts of retelling* (Guentchéva, 1994, pp. 8-23).

At the same time, Guentchéva (1994) proposes the following definition of the notion of *mediativity*, which, in her opinion, expresses a set of processes of marking different degrees of *distance from* information whose source is not directly taken by the speaker, but belongs to generally accepted or traditionally transmitted knowledge, either coming from a third person or hearsay, or as inferred, thus as a result of reasoning (Guentchéva, 1994, p. 8).

Therefore, the concepts of *mediativity* or *mediation*, initially proposed as French equivalents of the English term *evidentiality*, do not expressly express the marking of the source of information, but rather refer to the speaker's attitude towards the *certain/uncertain* status of the propositional content asserted by him in the utterance, while also marking the epistemic distance.

However, Patrick Dendale (1991, 1993) was among the first scholars in French-speaking linguistics to devote numerous studies to the issue of evidentiality, without, however, using the term *médiatif* (Dendale, 1993, pp. 165-176).

#### 4. EVIDENTIALITY AND/OR WONDERINGNESS?

The concept of *wonderingness* is relatively new in linguistics, having been introduced by DeLancey (1997, 2001), who used it to denote a grammatical category, independent of *evidentiality*, that encodes *the speaker's surprise* or indicates the unpreparedness of his or her mind for the information presented, regardless of whether the source of the information is first- or second-hand. DeLancey points out that there are languages that grammatically encode the expression of *surprise*, such as Tibetan. At the same time, the author suggests that the notion of *wonderingness* could also be used to explain some phenomena in various other languages in which *evidentiality* is not grammatically marked, but only manifests itself at the lexico-semantic level.

The linguistic elements that encode the category of wonderingness are called by him *miratives* (DeLancey, 1997, pp. 33-52). Descriptions of *wonderingness* and of phenomena that fall under the umbrella of *wonderingness*<sup>2</sup> (even if not specifically labeled as such) can be found in the literature going back several decades.

Broadly speaking, *wonderingness* describes the utterances that speakers use to express their surprise at an unexpected state, event, or activity they experience. The range of meanings of *wonderingness* includes (i) *sudden discovery*, (ii) *surprise* and the idea of (iii) *unpreparedness* of the speaker's *mind* in the face of an event/action, and the grammatical and lexical operators of this category nuance the context with *counter-surprising* effects and *new information*.

---

<sup>2</sup> DTG (2023, p. 391) defines *wonderingness* as a semantic category close to *modality* and *evidentiality*, which is based on the expression of surprise at a situation, at information received in an unexpected way. S. DeLancey found, for example, that Albanian has grammaticalized means of expressing *wonderingness* ("Albanian wondering manner"), but in general most languages have lexical means of encoding it. In general, 'mirative value' is shaped by exclamatory constructions and/or interjections. In the case of Romanian, the conjunctive used, for example, in interrogative-exclamatory utterances is considered a grammaticalized mark of *wonderingness*: "He's leaving?" „El să plece?" (DTG, 2023, 391).





To illustrate, let's imagine the following scenario: snow is a rare occurrence in England, and the weather forecast predicts another period of shower-free weather. Alina and Rudolf are planning an outdoor outing that day. Familiar with the typical English climate, often rain, almost never snow, they go out in the heavy snow. This causes surprise to Alina: based on the weather forecast and coupled with her background knowledge, snowfall is an unexpected event. Consequently, Alina has a number of linguistic options to express her surprise to her colleague in our example in sub (12):

- (12) a) *Wow, ninge!*  
*Wow, it's snowing!*  
b) *Vai! Ninge!*  
*Oh! It's snowing!*  
c) *Nu-mi vine să cred că ninge!*  
*I can't believe it's snowing!*  
d) *Se pare că ninge! Uită-te!*  
*It looks like snow! Look!*  
e) *Ninge? Nu pot să cred!*  
*Is it snowing? I don't believe it!*  
f) *Măi să fie! Ninge!*  
*My goodness! It's snowing!*

The utterances below (12) provide a sample of the various lexical and grammatical strategies that a speaker, regardless of the language spoken, has to express surprise at an unexpected event. These include expressive particles such as *wow*, *oh* (*wow*, *vai*), intonational contours represented orthographically by the exclamation mark (!), rhetorical questions, expressions of disbelief and various verbal structures. Mirative utterances often have the function in conversation of drawing the attention of the interlocutor to the surprising event.

Generally speaking, in romanic languages in particular, this category materializes in the language through verbal affixes, nominal predicates, interjections or various free associations marking surprise. Evidential markers, whose major function is to express the source of information, can acquire extensions in the field of *wonderingness* in the context where the subject appears used in the first person, as can be seen in *infra* below (13):

- (13) *La cină, Speranța, mama Adelaidei, îi pregătește acesteia o friptură de iepure. Atunci când gustă, Adelaide afirmă:*  
- ***Se pare că am mai mâncat acest tip de carne!***  
*At dinner, Speranța, Adelaide's mother, makes her a rabbit roast. When she tastes it, Adelaide says:*  
- ***Looks like I've eaten this kind of meat before!***

Utterance (13) expresses evidentiality of the inferential type, the verb seems to function, first of all, as an evidential marker, suggesting the speaker's non-assumption of the information put forward, transferring the whole content into the zone of uncertainty, and, on the other hand, as an operator of *wonderingness*, whose meaning can be glossed as follows: I realize to my surprise that I have eaten this kind of meat. However, the interpretation of the statement from the perspective of evidentiality remains in the foreground, the analysis from the perspective of *wonderingness* remains



in the background. The example raises the following question: which of these meanings, *wonderingness* or evidentiality, is the primary one and whether they derive from each other.

And F. de Haan (2012, p. 1038) characterizes *wonderingness* as marking unexpected information, information that shocks or somehow surprises the speaker, while Peterson (2016, pp. 1327-1357) argues that all previous concepts invoked to define the category boil down to surprise. For Peterson, among others, *wonderingness* is a semantic rather than a typological category. In this respect, it is important to note that *wonderingness* is related to the domain of epistemic modality, since to be surprised by the occurrence of an event usually implies having previously considered its probability of occurring to be very low. This explains the interference of categories in languages that use the same operators for evidentiality, epistemic modality, *wonderingness*.

Thus, *evidentiality* refers to the grammatical or lexical marking of the sources of knowledge related to a piece of information, while *wonderingness* refers to the marking of a sentence as representing new information for the speaker. Controversial views have been advanced in the literature on the intersection of the two categories, namely *wonderingness* is considered to be an integral part of *evidentiality*. Under this aspect, that of the overlap between the two categories, we mention two existing perspectives in the literature:

- a) DeLancey (1997, p. 34) observes that the utterance represents new information for the speaker, not yet integrated into his or her worldview;
- b) Aikhenvald (2012, p. 437) argues for the attribute of utterances denoting:
  - 1) sudden discovery, revelation or realization (as is the case with the example below (14) when we gloss it);
  - 2) surprise;
  - 3) unprepared mind;
  - 4) counter expectation;
  - 5) new information.

Adelaar (1977, pp. 70, 73) brings a new perspective which, in our opinion, can settle the dichotomy mentioned above: *wonderingness* should be interpreted as a punctuated transition from the epistemic state of *ignorance* (unknowing) to that of *awareness* (knowing). Building on this argument, Mexas (2016) argues that *sudden realization*, understood as a punctuated change of the epistemic state, is the basic semantic meaning of *wonderingness*. In contrast, additional interpretations, such as *surprise*, *unprepared mind*, and *counterexpectedness*, should be viewed as pure conversational implicatures, they constitute additional interpretations that occur in specific contexts and are computable, cancelable, uncanceled, and variable (Mexas, 2016) which can lead to defining *wonderingness* as a linguistic phenomenon at the intersection between the cognitive and affective universals of the speaker.

Defined, therefore, only as a cognitive process of becoming aware of an action/process, *wonderingness* is closer to the area of *evidentiality*, defined, in turn, as a form of expression of the source of knowledge. Both categories can thus be seen as implying a change in the epistemic status of the speakers, their common denominator can be considered as knowing an event by indirect means. In other words, indirect knowledge of an event that applies to a broader set of indirect processes, allows one to obtain information about the event, only the category of *indirect evidentiality* supports attitudes tangential to *wonderingness*.



## 5. CONCLUSIONS

Therefore, *evidentiality* has been presented as a semantic as well as a grammatical category, depending on the individual particularities of each linguistic system. In fact, the narrow definition summarizes *evidentiality* as a linguistic category concerned with marking the source in the message, while the broad definition describes *evidentiality* as a grammatical or semantic category that renders the source of the message, but also the degree of speaker's engagement with the propositional content, hence the overlap of *evidentiality* with *epistemic modality*, *mediativity* and *wonderingness*. *Epistemic modality* is understood here as a semantic category concerned with marking the speaker's attitude towards the asserted propositional content.

In fact, the semantic category of *evidentiality* intersects with *epistemic modality*, in the zone of actualization of *inference*, and with the *category of mediativity*, in the zone of actualization of *distanced narration*.

## REFERENCES

- Adelaar, W. F. H. (1977). *Tarma Quechua, grammar, texts, dictionary*. Lisse: Editura The Peter de Ridder Press.
- Aikhenvald, A., Y., Dixon Y./R. M. W. (2003). *Studies in evidentiality*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company.
- Aikhenvald, A., Y. (2012). *The Languages of the Amazon*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Aikhenvald, A. Y. (2021). *Grammaticalization of evidentiality*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Cappelli, G. (2008). Antonymy and verbs of cognitive attitude: when know is the opposite of think and believe. In M. Bertuccelli Papi, A. Bertacca & S. Bruti (ed.): *Threads in the Complex Fabric of Language*. Pisa: Pisa University Press, pp. 529–546.
- Chafe W. & Nichols J. (Eds.). (1986). *Evidentiality: The Linguistic Coding of Epistemology*. Norwood: Ablex Publishing Corporation.
- Coates J. (1983). *The Semantics of Modal Auxiliaries*. London and Canberra: Croom Helm.
- de Haan, F. (2001). The relationship between modality and evidentiality. In *Linguistische Berichte*, 9, pp. 201-216.
- de Haan, F. (2012). Evidentiality and Mirativity. In *Oxford Handbook of Tense*, pp. 36 – 57.
- DeLancey, S. (1977). Mirativity: The grammatical marking of unexpected information. In *Linguistic Typology*, 1, pp. 33-52.
- DeLancey, S. (2001). The mirative and evidentiality. In *Journal of Pragmatics*, 33(3), pp. 369-382.
- Dendale, P. & Tasmowski L. (2001). Introduction: evidentiality and related notions. In *Journal of Pragmatics*, 33(3), pp. 339-348.
- Dendale, P. (1993). Le conditionnel de l'information incertaine: Marqueur modau ou marqueur évidentiel?. In H. Gerold (Eds.), *Actes du Xxe Congrès International de Linguistique et de Philologie Romanes*, Université de Zurich, Tübingen/ Basel, Francke Verlag, I, pp. 165-176.
- Flowerdew, J. (2002). Genre in the classroom: A linguistic approach. In A. M. Johns (Ed.) *Genre in the classroom: Multiple perspective*, pp. 91-202.
- Frajzyngier Z. (1985). Truth in the Indicative Sentence. In *Language*, 9, pp. 24-54.
- Frajzyngier Z. (1987). Truth and the Compositionality Principle: A Reply to Palmer. In *Language*, 11, pp. 7-211.
- Guentchéva, Z. (1994). Manifestations de la catégorie du médiatif dans les temps du français. In *Langue française*, 102, pp. 8-23.
- Lazard, G. (1956). Caractères distinctifs de la langue tadjik. In *Bulletin de la Société de linguistique de Paris*, 52, pp. 117-186.
- Matthewson, L., Davis, H. & Rulman, H. (2008). Evidentials as epistemic modals: Evidence from St'at'imcets. In J. Van Craenenbroeck (Ed.), *Linguistic variation yearbook*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins, pp. 201-254.
- Mexas, H. (2016). *Mirativity as realization: A cross-linguistic study*, MA dissertation, Leiden University: [https://www.academia.edu/3087582/Mirativity\\_as\\_realization\\_marking\\_A\\_cross\\_linguistic\\_study](https://www.academia.edu/3087582/Mirativity_as_realization_marking_A_cross_linguistic_study).
- Mondada, L. (2013). Displaying, contesting and negotiating epistemic authority in social media interaction: Descriptions and questions in guided visits. In *Discourse studies*, 15, pp. 597-626.
- Nuyts, J. (2001). *Epistemic modality, language and conceptualization: A cognitive-pragmatic perspective (Human Cognitive Processing 5)*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company.
- Palmer, Frank R. (2001). *Mood and Modality*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Peterson, T. (2016). Mirativity as surprize: Evidentiality, information, and deixis. In *Journal of Psycholinguistic Research*, 45, pp. 1327-1357.
- Portner, P. (2009). *Modality*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Precht, K. (2008). Sex similarities and differents in stance in informal American conversation. In *Journal of Sociolinguistics*, 12 (1), pp. 89-111.
- Timberlake, A. (2002). *Aspect, Tense, Mood*. In *Language Typology and Syntactic Description*, Vol. 3, Shopen, Timothy, Cambridge University Press, pp. 280-333.
- Wiemmer, B. (2018). *Catching the elusive: lexical evidentiality markers in Slavic languages: (a questionnaire study and its background)*. New York: Peter Lang.

## DICTIONARIES

DSL 1997/ 2001 = Bidu-Vrânceanu, Angela/ Călărașu, Cristina/ Ionescu Ruxândoiu, Liliana/ Mancaș, Mihaela/ Pană Dindelegan, Gabriela, *Dicționar de științe ale limbii*, Editura Nemira, București.



DTG 2023 = *Dicționar de termeni gramaticali și concepte lingvistice conexe*, coord.: Gabriela Pană Dindelegan, Editura Univers Enciclopedic Gold.  
GALR 2008 = Guțu-Romalo, Valeria (coord.), *Gramatica limbii române*, vol. I.: *Cuvântul*, vol. II: *Enunțul*, București, Editura Academiei Române.