

## Direct discourse expressing evidential values in Catalan Sign Language<sup>1</sup>

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### 1. Introduction

This paper provides a description of the linguistic realization of evidential functions in Catalan Sign Language (henceforth ‘LSC’), a topic that has barely received any attention in the literature. The focus is on evidential values expressed by an interactional structure, namely a direct discourse constituent. This is a frequently occurring means of expressing source of information across languages, spoken as well as signed, which nevertheless remains largely underexplored.

Our point of departure is that evidentiality constitutes a semantic domain realized by different linguistic devices across languages. It thus constitutes a *cross-linguistic gram type* in terms of Bybee and Dahl (1989) or Bybee et al. (1994), or a *functional category* in terms of Cornillie (2009). To use Cornillie’s (2009, 45) words, evidentiality is a “functional category that refers to the perceptual and/or epistemological basis for making a speech act.” Thus, semantically, we regard evidentiality as a multi-dimensional contextual category (Lampert and Lampert 2010), adopting a notional definition in terms of ‘source of knowledge’. Following Bermúdez, this includes three dimensions: (i) the epistemological (the modes of knowing), (ii) the locus of the information source (internal vs. external), and (iii) the status of knowledge vis-à-vis the subjectivity-intersubjective axis (unshared vs. shared). The epistemological dimension refers to the epistemological basis for a statement: the type of access to information or mode of knowing (usually referred to in the literature as *source of information*). This constitutes the focus of the vast majority of studies on evidentiality. The mode of knowing is defined as the process leading to the acquisition of the information, i.e. directly visual, indirectly through inferences, reports, etc. Additionally, the type of information access may be an axis with cognitive and sensorial poles (Bermúdez 2005). Take the examples from spoken Catalan in 0 below:

- (1) a. Vol ploure.  
Lit. ‘It wants to rain.’ / ‘It looks like it’s about to rain.’  
b. Plou.  
Lit. ‘It rains.’  
‘It’s raining.’  
c. Diria que plou.  
Lit. ‘I would say that it rains.’  
‘It looks like it’s raining.’

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<sup>1</sup> Both authors were supported by a Vidi grant from the Netherlands Organization for Scientific Research awarded to Esther Pascual, who also acknowledges generous funding from the ‘Hundred Talents’ program for the Humanities and Social Sciences at Zhejiang University, China. Maria Josep Jarque’s work for this paper was embedded in the research group *Grammar and diachrony* (AGAUR 2014 SGR 994) and the research project FFI2013-43092-P from the Spanish Ministry of Economy and Competitiveness. We are further greatly thankful to the 20 Catalan signers from whom we gathered our data. Informed consent was received from the signer from whom images are reproduced. Lastly a warm word of thanks is due to Roger Quevedo for the lovely drawings.

In (1a) the utterer has cognitive access to the information through inference, from the color, shape and amount of clouds, for instance; in (1b), the addresser has direct access to the information, for example by seeing the rain through the window or getting all wet. By contrast, (1c) has preferably an inferential reading, but is ambiguous: it can either mean that the utterer has seen, for instance, something that directly indicates that it is raining (water drops on the window glass or people coming in with wet umbrellas) or a more subtle indication, like hearing a soft sound of water falling. Across spoken languages, the distinction between direct and indirect experience accounts for the diverse distributional patterns of lexical items as opposed to grammatical forms (Squartini 2008).

The second dimension, the type of information source, refers to the locus where the information is acquired, i.e. in terms of subject-internal, when the addresser has directly seen or heard the information expressed in the utterance, versus external with respect to the utterer, when he or she has not directly experienced the information but has rather learnt about it from another source (Bermúdez; Squartini 2008). Compare the following spoken Catalan examples:

- (2) a. He vist que plou.  
Lit. 'I have seen that it rains.'  
'I saw (that) it's raining.'  
b. Es veu que plou.  
Lit. 'One sees that it rains.'  
'I learnt (that) it is raining.'

In (2a) the addresser expresses visual access to the event described, whereas in (2b), the information reported is presented as originating from somebody else. Finally, the shared or unshared status of evidence is expressed by some scholars as the continuum between the universal and exclusive access to information poles (Bermúdez) or dimensions, to use the terminology from the subjectivity and intersubjectivity literature (Cornillie 2007a, b). Consider these Catalan examples:

- (3) a. Se sap que a l'agost plou als Pirineus.  
Lit. 'It is (well-)known that it rains in the Pyrenees in August.'  
b. Sé/Sento que no vindran.  
Lit. 'I know/feel that they will not come.'  
'I feel/sense (that) they are not coming.'

In (3a) the clause with generic reference reports information that is well-known among the Catalan population (folklore evidentiality, in Willet's terminology). By contrast, in (3b) the utterer reports information whose source is a personal feeling (endophoric evidentiality). Thus, in (3a) the window of attention belongs to background knowledge shared by an entire community, whereas in (3b) its scope is restricted to the utterer.

The shared or unshared status of evidence is barely taken into account in most studies on evidentiality (but see Frawley 1992; Mushin 2001; Cornillie 2007b; Squartini 2008; Tantucci 2013). Evidentiality involves deixis and perspective, as it presents the source of evidence, as directly experienced by the addresser or presented by another individual. It thus expresses the addresser's viewpoint and is based on the enunciation

context, together with the relation between addresser, addressee, and conceptualized scene (Bermúdez; de Haan; Mushin).

Formally, evidentiality may be expressed through: (i) an obligatory inflection, as in the classical examples from Tuyuca (Barnes); (ii) suffixes, such as the Turkish *mis* (Slobin and Aksu); (iii) clitics, like the Makah *-wa:t* (Mushin); (iv) particles, such as the Cantonese *lol* (Wakefield); (v) grammatical morphemes that acquire evidential meanings, such as resultatives and anteriors or modals (Bybee et al. 1994) or the Mandarin experiential perfect *V-了过* ‘*guo*’ (Tantucci); (vi) adverbs, like the Spanish *por lo visto* (‘apparently’) (Cornillie and Gras Manzano), or adverbial constructions, like the Italian *secondo me* (Pietrandrea); (vii) adjectives, such as the Lithuanian *akivaizdu* (‘obvious’, ‘evident’) (Ruskan); (viii) verbal-periphrastic expressions, like the Spanish *amenazar* (‘to threaten’) + infinitive, expressing a prediction on the basis of some kind of evidence, (Cornillie 2007b; Cornillie and Octavio de Toledo); (ix) bigger sentential constructions, such as the subject raising construction, as in the difference between *Vi que (María) llegó* (‘I saw (that) she/María arrived’) and *La vi llegar (a María)* (‘I saw her arrive (, María)’ in Spanish and English (Bollinger; Bermúdez); or even (x) discourse constructions, like direct discourse in American Sign Language (Shaffer). We will deal with the last types of evidential constructions, namely those involving a direct speech construction, not always reporting prior discourse, in Catalan Sign Language (LSC).

We treat evidentiality from a combination of an onomasiological and a semasiological perspective. Starting from evidential semantic values or functions, we first search for linguistic devices showing that function in LSC, as in earlier studies (Bermúdez; Simon-Vandenberg and Aijmer 2007; Squartini 2007, 2008). Subsequently, we focus on those whose source is a constructed quote or fictive interaction structure in Pascual’s (2002, 2006, 2014) sense.

This paper deals with the possible set of semantic parameters that are characteristic for evidentiality as a universal grammatical category, such those in prominent works by Willett, Aikhenvald, and Plungian (2010). We will however not postulate an a priori taxonomy of evidential values for LSC. Drawing on Bermúdez, we assume that the semantic space of evidentiality can be characterized as a discursive and grammatical category expressing ‘source of knowledge’. This is thus not defined in terms of closed-categories (Jarque forth.), but rather as a mental visualization and understanding of the phenomenon as the result of the interaction of the dimensions discussed: the epistemological (the mode of knowing), the locus of the source (internal vs. external), and the status of knowledge vis-à-vis the subjectivity-intersubjective axis (unshared vs. shared).

## 2. Direct discourse as evidential

We focus on evidential LSC constructions in which the addresser’s perspective is expressed as a genuine or non-genuine conversation embedded in discourse. As it is, *verba dicenda* or complements or affixes derived from them are one of the most common sources for evidential quotative markers across the languages of the world (Aikhenvald; Jäger; and see overview in Pascual 2014, ch. 4).

However, little attention has been paid to the embedded conversations set up by these verbs of saying (but see Pascual 2014, ch. 4; Spronck forth.). Indeed, reported direct speech, that is the literal or paraphrased quotation of previously produced discourse, may function as an evidential (Philips; Mayes; Besnier). Consider the examples below from a jury deliberation in an American double-murder case (Pascual 2014, 133):

- (4) a. I agree that depression is terrible. When I had my knee done I went through a month and all I did was cry. In fact I asked the doctor *do I need an antidepressant?* That's how bad I felt, it wasn't me.  
 b. I mean I'll be honest with you. I said all week, I said *God please God I hope I do the right thing. Please God, I hope I do the right thing.*

In these two examples, the speech events presented, the utterer's question to her doctor in (4a) and a petition to a deity – even if produced in silence – in (4b), are introduced as indications of “how bad” the former felt at a particular point in her life and how concerned the latter is about doing the right thing. By anchoring tangible speech events to the particular emotional and mental states at issue, they are presented as true. By partially reproducing these previous communicative situations for their fellow jurors, the utterers of (4a) and (4b) are giving their interlocutors the necessary information for them to infer the type of emotional state that may have motivated these actual enunciations. In other words, in these cases direct discourse serves to present both that which is ultimately referred to (e.g. a particular emotion), and the means through which the individual referred to (e.g. the one experiencing such emotion) expressed it to others so that they are aware of it.

We provide a description of such linguistic resources in Catalan Sign Language, in which they have not yet been studied (but see Jarque forth.). In fact, evidential quotatives have to our knowledge not been described in any signed language to date. We devote especial attention to two constructions: (i) a predicate meaning ‘to call’, followed by a proposition expressing endophoric evidence; and (ii) a conversational scenario indicating an indirect source of information. These two constructions can set up an actual or a non-genuine – indeed fictive – kind of interaction (Pascual 2002, 2006, 2014). That is, the source of information may either be a previous discourse that occurred in actuality, as in (4a) and (4b), or one that never took place and serves to refer to or set up a kind of feeling, attitude or state of affairs that may be expressed through such a piece of discourse. Such embedded actual or non-genuine dialogues place the addresser in the same deictic sphere as the action or event object of evidentiality, and are thus deictic. The occurrence of direct discourse as an evidential strategy has only been reported for ASL, the only signed language in which evidentiality has been studied (Shaffer 2012).

### 3. Method

This study relies on a corpus of naturalistic discourse and elicited data in Catalan Sign Language. The informants are 20 deaf adult signers between 35 and 68 years of age, from Catalonia, in the North-East of Spain. They are all native signers, who are either from a family with LSC as the native language of two or three generations, or who belong to a hearing family but acquired LSC before the age of six. They all consider LSC as the first language, most frequently use LSC in their everyday life, and are active members of the Deaf community.

The naturalistic data comprises various genres, including narratives, expository and argumentative discourse, as well as conversations. The narratives come from a literary contest (10 texts) and tales addressed to signing children (5 texts). The expository texts are pieces of news and documentaries from an institutional website addressed to the signing community in Catalonia (15 texts). The argumentative discourses consist of video posts on a personal blog from a second-generation signer and leader in the Deaf movement, regarded as a signing model by the LSC community (15 texts). The elicited

data includes three semi-structured interviews by a native signer to a friend and two relatives, three narratives of the Frog story (Mayer), two of the Pear Story (Chafe), five ‘narratives of personal experience’ following the topics proposed by Labov, and a spontaneous conversation between friends. Rarely as they are used in the sign language literature, we find such ecologically valid naturalistic data to be particularly valuable and revealing.

4. The encoding of evidential values in LSC

It should be pointed out that Catalan Sign Language has no formal category that is fully grammaticalized, as is the case for most of the signed languages studied so far, for that matter. Most grammatical meanings are expressed periphrastically in LSC. However, some meanings, such as aspect and person, are expressed through morphology, but these have a derivative rather than a flexive expression, since they are not obligatory.<sup>2</sup>

The formal expression of evidential values constitutes a largely unexplored area in the signed language literature. It has only been examined in American Sign Language (Shaffer) and addressed in a comprehensive way for Catalan Sign Language (see discussion and literary overview in Jarque forth.). Shaffer describes the use of reported discourse, in the form of constructed discourse, as a means to express the source of information in ASL. Jarque (forth.) shows that in LSC the semantic space of evidentiality is encoded through the use of markers whose source is a lexical item that developed an evidential semantic extension (see example 9 below). The main cognitive domains that may constitute the source of an evidential in LSC are: (i) the sensory domain, (ii) the body domain, and (iii) the communication domain. Table 1 lists the main evidential markers in LSC whose source is a lexical item from the sensory domain, indicating their original lexical meaning, their evidential value, and the semantic subdomain they emerge from (Jarque 2005, forth.).

Table 1. LSC manual evidential markers from the sensory domain

Gloss	Lexical meaning	Evidential meaning	Cognitive subdomain
AMBIENT ‘ambience’	context, environment	inferential	touch
CLAR ‘clear’	(color) to be light, clear	inferential	image
CAPTAR ‘to capture’	to guess	inferential	touch
DESTACAR ‘to be evident’	sharp definition	inferential	image
SER.FAMÓS ‘to be famous’	fame, to be famous, to be well-known	reported	ear/hearing
OLORAR ‘to smell’	to smell	inferential	smell
OLORAR.sospitar ‘to suspect’	to smell, to suspect	inferential	smell
OMBRA ‘shadow’	shadow, blurry	inferential	image
SENTIR.orella ‘to hear.ear’	to hear	mediated	ear/hearing
SENTIR.ASSABENTAR.SE.orella ‘to hear.find out.ear’	to hear recently	mediated	ear/hearing
SENTIR_ASSABENTAR.SE.ull ‘to hear.find out.eyeye’	to see recently	mediated	sight
TOCAR ‘to touch’	to touch	experiential	touch

<sup>2</sup> For a discussion on the grammaticalization of person in Australian Sign Language, see de Beuzeville et al.; for a review on the periphrastical expression of aspect in signed languages, see Jarque (in press).

VEURE ‘to see’	eye, to see	sensory inferential	sight
VEURE.MIRAR ‘to see.look at’	to see, to look at	sensory inferential	sight

Consider, for instance, example 0, in which the signer answers a question on the possibility that the Basque Country becomes politically independent from the Spanish state (Jarque forth., EJG 00:11:53 JG).



- (5) PRO.1 OLORAR + AMBIENT [INDEPENDÈNCIA]topic [NO]neg<sup>3</sup>  
 Lit. ‘I smell in the ambience that the independence is not.’  
 ‘It seems to me that (The Basque Country) is not going to become independent’

The signer expresses his opinion about the future of the Basque Country making reference to the source of information using a two-clause structure with a sensory verb from the smelling subdomain as the matrix predicate. Across spoken languages, olfactory perception verbs are often used to express suspicion. However, this it is not the case in (5), where it merely encodes an inferential function with a neutral value.

Another important domain in LSC is the body domain, whose lexical items grammaticalize to express evidential values (see Table 2).

**Table 2.** LSC manual evidential markers from the body domain

Gloss	Lexical meaning	Evidential meaning	Cognitive subdomain
SEMBLAR ‘to seem’	face	inferential	face
PRESENCIAR ‘to attend’	to be somewhere	experiential	legs
SENTIR.AL.COR ‘to feel.heart’	to feel, emotion	endophoric	heart
SENTIR.AL.TORS ‘to feel.torso’	to feel	endophoric	body

Note now example (6), where the signer uses the sign *SEMBLAR* ‘to seem’, from the lexical item ‘face’, to express reported information on the weather (EES 00:23:06 ES).

- (6) SEMBLAR FORÇA PLOURE p [SI MAL TEMPS.ATM]-cond PRO.1 ANAR CAMINAR IGUAL p  
 Lit. ‘It seems it rains a lot. If the weather is bad, I will go to walk.’

<sup>3</sup> Following the conventions for signed languages, lexical and grammatical signs are glossed in uppercase. Numbers indicate points in signing space. The signs ‘<>’ mark the scope of the report or demonstration and + indicates a lexical compound. ‘CA’ stands for *constructed action*, ‘PRO’ for pronoun, *cond* for conditional, and *neg* for negation.

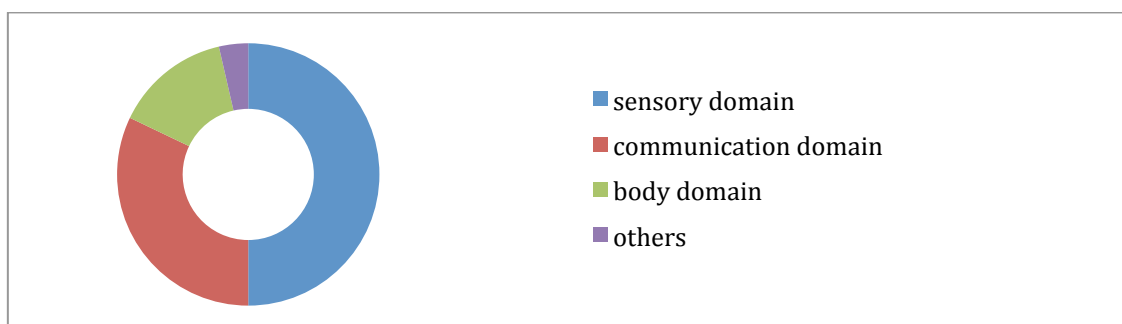
‘It seems/looks like it will rain a lot. Even if the weather is bad, I will go for a walk.’

Finally, the communication domain gives rise to a group of predicates that mostly express mediated evidential functions, namely reported and hearsay values. A notable exception is the predicate *AVISAR*, which may also encode endophoric meanings (see Table 3).

**Table 3.** LSC manual evidential markers from communication domain

Gloss	Lexical meaning	Evidential meaning	Cognitive subdomain
AVISAR ‘to call’	to call/warn	mediated endophoric	signed
DIR.1m ‘to say’	to say	mediated	spoken
DIR.IND ‘to tell’	to say, to tell	mediated	spoken
DIR.2m ‘to answer’	to say, to tell, to answer	mediated	spoken
DIR.SE.QUE ‘to be said’	to be said	mediated	spoken
ESCOLTAR_ORELLA ‘to listen.ear’	to listen attentively through the ear	mediated	spoken
ESCOLTAR_ULLS ‘to listen.eyes’	to listen, to pay attention through the eyes	mediated	signed
EXPLICAR ‘to explain’	to explain, to describe	mediated	signed
DIR.ESTENDRE ‘to say.spread out’	to spread a rumor/piece of information	mediated	spoken

In LSC, the sensory domain represents a proportion of 46.4% of all domains serving to express evidential values, followed by the communication domain, constituting as much as a 35.7%, the body domain, with 14.3%, and other domains (3.6%). Figure 1 shows the distribution of source domains for evidentiality.



**Figure 1.** Source domains for evidentiality in LSC

After the sensory domain, the communication domain is thus the largest source of evidence in LSC, even when only considering direct discourse introduced by an overt marker rather than also counting instances that appear as ‘free quotatives’. This is the domain we will focus on in this paper.

### 5. Mediated evidence: Evidential quotative constructions

Let us now turn to the encoding of interactional structures expressing evidential values in LSC. As mentioned above, all the nine constructions discussed here (see Table

3) encode indirect evidential values accessed through mediated evidence (Plungian 2001; Lampert and Lampert 2010). This has most commonly been known as *reportative evidence* and refers to cases in which the locus from where the information is acquired is external to the addresser. As for the epistemological dimension of the status of knowledge, they are located along the continuum between the universal and the exclusive access to information poles. The modes of knowing are sensory and they vary from the visual (in the signed modality or in writing), to the auditory (in the spoken), or the tactile (in the tactile signing modality of the deaf-blind).

When discussing *mediated evidence*, we distinguish between the following evidential values, as the prototypical members of the category: (i) quotatives, (ii) reportatives, and (iii) folklore. *Quotatives* (or second-hand evidence) highlight the source, but not unequivocally the type or mode of evidence, whereas *reportatives* (or *hearsay*, or *third-hand evidence*) specify the mode “but remain agnostic about the actual source of evidence called on” (Lampert and Lampert 2010, 311). *Folklore* appears on the universal pole vis-à-vis the dimension of access to information (Bermúdez 2005).

We will first discuss the evidential quotative function. The quotative category corresponds to a situation in which the signer was a receptor in the discourse event reported. It tends to be situated on the privative pole of the source of information continuum and the mode of access is thus sensorial. The main construction used to encode this function in LSC is direct discourse, so-called ‘constructed action’ or ‘constructed dialogue’ in the signed language literature.

### 5.1. Direct discourse in signed languages: Constructed action/dialogue

The use of reported speech as an evidential strategy, with a biclausal or monoclausal structure, has been described for different spoken languages families, such as Germanic and Romance languages (Clift; Cruschina and Remberger; Haßler; Jäger). In the sign language literature the direct discourse construction used for quotations has been labeled as *role shift*, *reference shift*, *role switching*, or *constructed action/discourse* (Lillo-Martin). Scholars from a cognitive/functional perspective prefer the term *constructed action*, since: (i) it refers to an enactment or demonstration in the sense of Clark and Gerrig, and (ii) what is set up does not need to equate what actually happened, it is considered an elaboration of it, as described for spoken languages by Tannen (1986, 1988, 1989) and others.

Constructed action has been characterized as “the reporting (usually via a demonstration) of another’s actions” (Quinto-Pozos). More specifically, constructed action is a grammatical construction and a discourse strategy, widely used in signed languages, in which signers use their own face, head, body, hands, and/or other non-manual cues to represent a referent’s actions, utterances, thoughts, feelings, and/or attitudes (Metzger; Liddell and Metzger; Cormier et al.; Ferrara and Johnston). Liddell and Metzger describe the various types of constructed action, listed in Table 4.

**Table 4.** Constructed actions (Liddell and Metzger 1998, 672)

Type of constructed action	Meaning
Articulation of words, signs or emblems	What the character says or thinks
Direction of head and eye gaze	Direction where the character is looking
Facial expressions of affect, effort, etc.	How the character feels
Gestures of hands and arms	Gestures by the character



Metzger distinguishes between *constructed action* (a signer's representation of a referent's actual or perceived action) and *constructed dialogue* in the sense of Tannen (1986, 1988, 1989), that is, a language user's (re)presentation of words ascribed to a referent, without these actually having ever been produced by that referent. We consider constructed action as the more abstract phenomenon and constructed discourse as a subtype or a specific function of it (see also Herrmann and Steinbach; Quinto-Pozos; Cormier et al.; Wilcox and Xavier; Ferrara and Johnston).

As described for other signed languages (Lillo-Martin; Herrman and Steinback), the formal marking of constructed discourse in LSC may include a constellation of non-manual markers co-articulated with the (re)presented utterance (cf. Quer; Jarque and Pascual forth.):

- (i) Eye gaze change towards the locus of the addressee of the quoted utterance, and thus temporal interruption of eye contact with the interlocutor in the here and now.
- (ii) Body lean including a sideward movement of the upper part of the body towards the locus of the quoted individual and a midsagittal body shift towards the locus of the addressee of the reported utterance.
- (iii) Change of head position towards the locus of the addressee of the reported utterance.
- (iv) Facial and bodily expression associated with the individual being quoted, conveying affective and attitudinal components.

Further constructed action/dialogue in LSC may be used as evidential strategy to express source of knowledge (Jarque and Pascual forth.). Note for instance the constructed dialogue in (7), in which the signer presents his thoughts on the future of the Basque Country. The interviewer contrasts his own position on the issue in the past, with his present view. He does so by appealing to the founder of the Catalan Federation for the Deaf, who is long deceased, with whom he no longer agrees on this issue (EJG 00:11:22 JG).

- (7) ABANS PRO.1 JOVE CALAFELL PRO.31 CA:Calafell<PAÍS.BASC  
RECONEXIMENT SEGUR>  
IND.PaísBasc] CA:iadressr[gestural.expression:no saber PRO.1  
escoltar.amb.incredulitat]  
PRO.1 IND.ara PRO.1 VEURE PRO.1 CONFIANÇA ABANS PENSAR  
PAÍS.BASC TENIR.DRET PROPI CULTURA p PROPI POLÍTICA  
TENIR.DRET p PRO.1 VEURE-ASP. p FINAL PRO.1 VEURE PUNT JA  
IND.País.Basc PERDRE IMATGE PRIMER p SEGON PERDRE ACTITUD  
ESPANYA TOTA.ZONA p TERCER PRO.1 VEURE UNA.MICA INTERÈS  
DEIXAR FORA

Lit. 'Long ago as a young man (I listened/paid attention to) Mr. Calafell say: "The Basque Country should be acknowledged." Now I observe/look at it [the issue] and I do not believe in it.' Now I see that I used to trust this could happen. I used to think the Basque country had the right to its own culture, its own politics. I used to look at it attentively. In the end, I see the Basque Country has lost a bit of image, in the first place. In the second place, its attitude towards Spain has worsened. In third place, I've lost interest.'

The narrator presents himself as a young man first ‘listening’ to mister Calafell’s discourse and then stopping to do so. This does not refer to an actual situation of communication, involving speaking and listening (or not, as the case may be), since both the narrator and the character referred to are deaf and signers. Also, note that mister Calafell had long passed away at the time (7) was produced, and thus could not engage in a debate with other citizens. This non-genuine act of exchanging conversational turns first and ceasing to do so later does not occur for its own sake. Rather, it is a means to describe the narrator’s change of opinion on the topic on which Calafell is quoted, Calafell metonymically standing for supporters of that particular political view. The disagreement between the narrator and this icon in the Catalan deaf community is thus a fictive rather than actual one and it is introduced in order to express evidentiality. It is also worth pointing out that in (7) the signer takes responsibility for the content of the information and not for aspects of the quote presentation itself (intonation, style, register), as would be the case with an actual quotation (Clark and Gerrig). This characteristic may serve to distinguish quotative evidential constructions from generic ones (cf. Jäger).

### 5.2. Framed direct discourse as reported evidential

LSC direct discourse, or constructed action/dialogue, may be framed by different *verba dicenda* predicates, for instance *AVISAR* ‘to call’, *DIR* ‘to say’, *DIR + INDEX* ‘to tell’, or *EXPLICAR* ‘to explain’. The most common communicative verbs with an evidential functions are *DIR* ‘to say’ (Figure 2) and *EXPLICAR* ‘to explain’ (Figure 3).



Figure 2. DIR ‘to say’



Figure 3. EXPLICAR ‘to explain’

According to Morales’ et al. typology of LSC, *DIR* ‘to say’ (Figure 2) is a simple verb. This means that it can only add grammatical information that is both internal to the lexical form and related to aspect (imperfective, perfective, etc.), as well as to mode or manner of information (intensity of action, faster or slower quality of movements, etc.). Consider the piece of discourse in (8), in which the signer explains how she found out that her arm was broken (EES 00:07:00 ES):

- (8) CONÈIXER ANAR RADIOGRAFIA p DIR<sub>CA: doctor</sub> <TRENCAR> / CA:  
interviewed < [PRO.1 TRENCAR]q >exp.fac.estranYESa p DIR<sub>CA: doctor</sub> < SEGUR  
CL.PROF.braç.esquerre-MOV.IMIT.aixecar >  
(PRO.1/ CA: interviewed < CL.PROF.braç.esquerre-MOV.IMIT.aixecar >  
CAPACITAT(2h) DIR<sub>CA: doctor</sub> [IMPOSSIBLE]neg >  
Lit. ‘It so happens, I went to get an x-ray. (And the doctor) told me: “It (your  
arm) is broken.” “Broken?!” [I answered with a facial and corporal expression of  
surprise]. (He) said: “I’m sure. Come on, raise your arm.” (But) I could raise my  
arm. (And then) he said to me: “(This is) impossible.”’

The locus of the source of information is external (i.e. the addresser learnt about her broken arm through the doctor's words); the access to the information is privative (the patient was told by the doctor); and the mode of access is sensorial (through seeing the lip movements of the doctor's spoken words). In addition, these predicates can be used in indirect discourse in LSC. In this section we addressed mediated values that refer to utterances of a concrete person, known as evidential quotatives. These constructions are different from those referring to utterances of a person who is unknown or whose identity is unimportant. This, known as reportative (or hearsay), will be dealt with in the following section.

## 6. Mediated evidence: reportative constructions

The grammaticalization of evidential constructions with a reportative function from a verba dicenda predicate has been documented in a significant number of languages (e.g. Travis; Pietrandrea; Jäger). There is further cross-linguistic evidence of the use of particles and evidential suffices, which are highly grammaticalized from predicates translatable as 'to say' (Jäger).

Several LSC constructions indicate the source of information as well as the recipient in a diffuse manner. This is the case for several predicates related to the act of 'listening', namely *ESCOLTAR.ORELLA* 'to listen through the ear' and *SENTIR.ORELLA* 'to hear through the ear', as well as the act of 'speaking', namely *DIR.SE.QUE* 'to be said', and *DIR.ESTENDRE.RUMOR/INFORMACIÓ* 'to say.spread out'. These are undoubtedly calques from the dominant spoken language in the larger Catalan hearing community.

### 6.1. 'Listening' predicates

In LSC, the predicate *ESCOLTAR.ORELLA*, 'to listen.ear' (Figure 4), refers to a state of being alert while perceiving through the ear (noise, sounds, words, etc.) or paying attention to what somebody communicates linguistically (Ferrerons, 392).



**Figure 4.** *ESCOLTAR.ORELLA* 'to listen.ear'

When used as an evidential, *ESCOLTAR.ORELLA*, 'to listen.ear', may encode a specific mode of evidence (through the spoken word) and a generic form of communication (through the spoken or signed modality). This polysemy may have emerged through a semantic extension from spoken communication or via a calque from spoken Spanish ("*He oído/escuchado que,*" lit. 'I have heard/listened that'). In both senses, it highlights reception, leaving the source unexpressed. More recently, a derived sign, glossed as *ESCOLTAR.ULL* 'to listen.ey', has started to be used to refer exclusively to the signed mode of communication (Figure 5). This new sign has been created through the modification of the location parameter: from the location in the ear

(listening through the auditive channel) to the location in the eye ('listen' through the visual channel') (Ferrerons).<sup>4</sup>



Figure 5. ESCOLTAR.ULL 'to 'listen.ey'

This modification is the product of what Stokoe referred to as *semantic phonology*. The sublexical units in signed languages may have a meaning of their own and the signers take advantage of this in order to create new lexical items. This may be a reflection of their new awareness as a linguistic community and the resulting empowerment process of defending the own values of deaf culture (the significance of linguistic information accessed through the visual modality only).

A second predicated marker that expresses that the proposition content has been acquired through a perceived piece of discourse is *SENTIR.ORELLA* 'hear.ear', meaning 'I was told' (Figure 6). See an example of this use in (9) below (EJG 00:15:26 JMS).



Figure 6. SENTIR.ORELLA 'to hear.ear'

(9) AHIR SENTIR.ORELLA MOVIMENT ÀUSTRIA p PROBLEMA  
IMPORTANT

Lit. 'Yesterday I heard/learn about disturbances in Austria. (There are) important problems'

'Yesterday I was told/heard/learnt about the disturbances in Austria, there are important problems'

Moreover, there is a derivate form that includes an aspectual meaning, which is glossed as *SENTIR.ASSABENTAR.SE.orella* 'to hear.to find out.ear' (Figure 7). This form originated from the use of a morphological constructional schema in order to lend a perfect aspect to the *SENTIR.ORELLA* 'to hear.ear' predicate. The perfect aspect refers to the so-called *perfect of recent past* or *hot news* (Comrie; Givón; Dahl; Bybee et al. 1994). This schema consists of a sharp movement, as in an increase in tension and

<sup>4</sup> The evidential use of the LSC sign for 'to listen through the .eye' does not occurs in our corpus. At this point in time it only seems to appear as a lexical item.

speed with respect to the citation form of the predicate (see Jarque forth.b, in press). This predicate may therefore express a combination of evidential and aspectual values ('I heard' or 'I just heard').



Figure 7. SENTIR\_ORELLA 'to find out.ear' 'I heard/ I just heard'

This construction seems equivalent to the English *hearing* or *being told* and its equivalent in Spanish (*enterarse*). Recently, a new form has emerged, from a modification of the location parameter of *SENTIR.ASSABENTAR.SE.orella* 'to hear.find out.ear'. The location in the ear has been replaced by a location in the eye (see Figure 8), in the same way as *ESCOLTAR.ORELLA* was modified (see Figure 4), giving rise to *ESCOLTAR.ULL* (Figure 5).



Figure 8. SENTIR\_ASSABENTAR.SE.ORELLA 'to hear.find out.ear'

These predicates serve to express discourse distance (*distancing devices*) (Jäger). Referential information on the source of emission remains unspecified. As for hearing verbs, our tenet is that no semantic change has occurred, and thus that they merely constitute a calque from spoken Spanish and/or Catalan.

## 6.2. Evidential 'speaking' predicates

Two LSC predicates expressing a reportative evidential value have their origin in the act of speaking: *DIR.SE.QUE* 'to be said' and *DIR.ESTENDRE* 'to say.spread out'. *DIR.SE.QUE* 'to be said' (Figure 9) is derived from the sign *DIR* 'to say' (Figure 2). Phonologically, this sign exhibits different features, related to the non-manual parameter, namely, shrugging the shoulders, tilting one's head up and to a side and raising the eyebrows (Figure 9).<sup>5</sup>

<sup>5</sup> This construction does not appear with evidential value in our corpus, but we have observed it in the language use of native LSC signers.



Figure 9. DIR.SE.QUE ‘to be said’

The construction *DIR.SE.QUE* ‘it is said that’ expresses that the access of information may be either universal or restrictive to a group. That piece of information is however not known to the receiver. Even though it formally makes reference to the spoken communication modality, semantically the construction does not include any reference to the mode of knowing. In other words, it may be spoken, signed, written down, etc. Consider example (10), in which the signer is narrating her failed attempts to stop smoking. In (10) she answers a question by the interviewer about whether she had tried acupuncture (EMS 00:16:53 MS).

- (10) [ACUPUNTURA]<sub>topic</sub> DIR.ESTENDRE PER.A EVITAR p DIR.SE.QUE  
FRACÀS TOT RES.MÉS  
‘The use of acupuncture to quit smoking is widespread. (But) it is said not to work at all.’

DIR.ESTENDRE ‘to say.spread out’ for ‘it is well-known that’ is a verbal compound made of the sign DIR ‘to say’ (Figure 2) and the predicate ESTENDRE ‘to spread out’ (Figure 10).

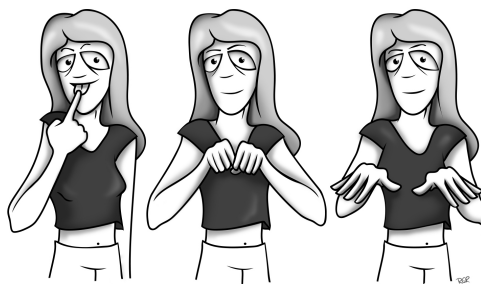


Figure 10. DIR.ESTENDRE ‘to say.spread out’

Both constructions highlight the fact that the information has been told and spread, signaling an external source, the mode of knowing (spoken, signed, written, etc.), remaining unspecified, as well as the fact that it had not previously been shared between the addresser and addressee.

#### 7. Mediated evidence: The *SER.FAMÓS* ‘to be famous’ construction

The last evidential resource addressed in this piece of work is the construction with the sign *SER.FAMÓS* ‘to be famous’ (Figure 11).



**Figure 11.** SER.FAMÓS ‘to be famous’

The sign *SER.FAMÓS*, ‘to be famous’, is a compound consisting of the aforementioned sign *SENTIR.ORELLA* ‘to listen.ear’ (Figure 6) and the sign *TOTHOM/QUALSEVOL* ‘anybody’. Semantically, it conveys a folklore evidential value. It is situated at an intermediate point in the access to information dimension, between the universal and the restricted poles (Bermúdez 2005). With regard to the subjective-intersubjective axis, it is generally used to refer to a shared piece of information between the addresser and addressee. Consider example (11) below (EES 00:23:50 ES).

- (11) DESPRÉS VEURE QUINZE AGOST PLOURE /FAMA INDEX.aquí p  
 SECTOR SANT MARIA DE DALT SEMPRE  
*Lit.* ‘After seeing August fifteen, It is well known that it rains here in Santa Maria de Dalt always.’  
 ‘It is well-known that after August fifteen it always rains here in Santa Maria de Dalt.’

The interviewee had been asked about the weather during her vacation. After explaining that she would spend the summer in a foreign country where it rains a lot in July and August, the signer says that she will spend some time in an area closed to the Pyrenees, where it usually rains after the second week in August. Folklore is a type of knowledge that is shared and thus to which all members of a community have access (Willet 1988; Lazar 2001; Bermúdez 2005). The *SER.FAMÓS* ‘to be famous’ construction is characterized by the neutralization of inferences and reports. Specifically, *SER.FAMÓS* ‘to be famous’ only affects generic circumstances or general knowledge, but not circumstantial inference. Critically, this use cannot be accounted for by either Frawley’s or Aikhenvald’s models of evidentiality (Bermúdez; Squartini 2008).

## 8. Fictive discourse for source of information

### 8.1. Direct discourse with the AVISAR ‘to call/warn’ construction

In addition to mediated evidence, the conversational structure with the LSC predicate *AVISAR* ‘to call/warn’ serves to encode endophoric values. This kind of evidence involves a situation in which the locus of knowledge is internal, the status privative, and the source is not directly accessible through the senses. Examples are desires, intentions, and mental states in general. These are cases in which the addresser adduces direct evidence, but where sensorial access is not possible (Tournadre; Plungian 2001; Bermúdez). Endophoric evidence is not included in classical evidentiality taxonomies, as in Willet. Other scholars do not consider it to be a form with an exclusively evidential value, but an extension of it (Aikhenvald).

In LSC, three constructions may serve to express endophoric evidence: *SENTIR.AL.COR* ‘to feel at the heart’, *SENTIR.AL.COS* ‘to feel at the body’, and *I-AVISAR-I* ‘to call/warn’ oneself’, a specific verbal form of that verb (Jarque forth.b). We will mainly focus on *AVISAR-I* ‘to call/warn’ (12).



Figure 12. AVISAR-1 ‘to call/warn oneself’

AVISAR ‘to call/warn’ is a predicate from the category of regular deictic predicates, following the typology provided by Morales et al.<sup>6</sup> The construction attains evidential value when it is used in a reflexive pattern, glossed as *I-AVISAR-I*, in which the verb has a first person morpheme indicating the agent and patient of the action. That is, the signer’s own body stands both for the agent and the patient, or, alternatively, for a ‘part’ of the experiencing signer (mainly the heart or the mind), which metonymically stand for the whole individual. This is illustrated by example (12). This fragment appears embedded in a piece of discourse in which the narrating signer engages in a debate with herself about her attitude and behavior towards a wide range of world problems, from the environment and animal cruelty to drug addiction and wildfires. The discourse starts with the signer’s will to contribute to a better world, and then proceeds to discuss eleven individual world problems, like abandoning pets (CM08 MP 00:01:29 VV).

- (12) PERSONA-PLU VOLER ABANDONAR<sub>LOC:center to left</sub> ANIMAL p CA:persona < [...] MIRAR MARXAR<sub>loc:center.to.right</sub> CAMINAR> MENT [CANVIAR]<sub>loc:ment-1</sub> CA:ment<NO NO NO > CA:persona<SENTIR.AL.COS 1-MIRAR-3.animal > INDEX ANIMAL CA:animal<TRIST> [...]  
 Lit. ‘Some people want to abandon animals. [...] They turn around and leave. My/Their mind reconsiders it and warns me/them. And it tells me/them: “Don’t do it, don’t do it, don’t do it.” I/They feel I/they have to look at it [the pet] and it looks very sad.

Note that the signer starts introducing a behavior she disapproves of by referring to those who commit it in the third person. She then takes the perspective of the people whose behavior she condemns, as they become aware of their actions. This occurs through a split of the self (e.g. Fauconnier and Turner) into the mind and the entire thinking person. The perpetrators’ mind, enacted by the signer, warns them – through the signer now representing an animal abandoner –, telling them/her not to leave their/her pet behind.

Each of the eleven issues addressed by this signer in her argument are equally discussed in three parts: (i) description of the nature of the problem through enactment, the signer taking the perspective of the kind of individuals responsible for the

<sup>6</sup> AVISAR ‘to call/warn’ corresponds to an indicating verb, in Liddell’s typology for ASL.



reproachable behavior in question; (ii) the signer/individual's realization of the negative consequences of such behavior, leading to a change of attitude; and finally (iii) the positive situation resulting from this change of attitude. Within this pattern, the discourse structure of each sequence varies slightly. In particular, the process through which the individual (the type of perpetrator, enacted by the narrating signer) becomes aware of the problem is expressed through three kinds of formal expressions. First, a conceptual split self in which the inner voice (the mind) addresses the thinker in direct discourse (i.e. constructed action/dialogue) without an overt introductory framing structure. This strategy is used in (12), discussed above, as well as in other fragments in that signer's discourse.

The second strategy involves the *I-AVISAR-I* construction 'to call/warn oneself', ascribed to one's mind, which warns the thinker against the behavior dealt with through the use of direct discourse. This strategy can be observed in (13a), on forest fires, as well as in the fragments condemning alcohol abuse wild, flower picking, and the overconsumption of water (CM08 MP 00:03:00 VV).

- (13) BOSC PERSONA IGNORAR p FUMAR ACABAR.CIGARRETA  
BURILLA.LLENÇAR p CALAR.FOC VEURE RIURE p MENT  
CANVIAR.IDEA AVISAR.1-INSISTENT <sub>CA:ment</sub>< NO.2m NO.2mNO.2m  
pBOSC SALUT> p PERSONA NECESSITA OLORAR RESPIRAR PODER  
VIURE CONTINUAR

Lit. 'Some people disrespect the forest. They smoke, finish, and throw away the cigarette butt and set fire to the forest. They see it and laugh. Their/my mind changes. (The mind) calls them insistently: "Don't, don't, don't." The forest means health, people need to smell and breath to keep on living.'

A third device consists of using a verb of emotion, like *SENTIR.AL.COS* 'to feel in the body', followed by direct discourse. This strategy is used in the fragment on abandoning pets in (12) above, as well as in this signer's discussion of ill-treatment of the elderly and fellow citizens in general, as shown in (14) below (CM08 MP 00:04:00 VV).

- (14) [...] PEGAR-ASP.INCOATIU SENTIR.AL.COS 1-MIRAR.1 CANVIAR.IDEA  
<sub>CA:mind</sub><NO NO NO> [...] SENTIR.AL.COS <sub>CA:mind</sub>< NO NO NO >  
Lit. '[...] (They) are about to verbally abuse (the elderly) when they have a feeling, they looked at themselves and (then) they change their mind. "Don't, don't." They feel "Don't, don't."

Here, the signer alternates the two strategies related to an endophoric source of information. This construction may also be used with the signer's own body as the patient. Both constructions serve to express that the signer performed an action or experienced a mental or emotional state that was entirely unintentional. Hence, it has a non-volitional component. This construction occurs with predicates referring to internal states, such as *AGRADAR* 'to like', or *ATRAURE* 'to feel attracted to', for instance.

## 8.2. Fictive discourse

The last structure to be discussed is the use of direct discourse from more than one perspective as a strategy to present information from different sources. This is illustrated in (15), a fragment from a news coverage in a webpage for the Catalan signing community. There, a news anchor reports on a demonstration against social

exclusion organized by the deaf community, which took place in Barcelona on World Deaf Day. The news anchor presents the contradictory report on the number of attendees independently provided by the organizers and by the police. He does so by setting up a fictive argument between these two groups, which naturally never took place (Jarque and Pascual forth., WV 01:49-02:00).

- (15) a. [ORGANITZACIÓ DE FEDERACIÓ.DE.SORD ENTITAT]<sub>i</sub>-topic <CA:Federació.de.Sords 1<sub>contral-</sub>MIRAR-INDEX<sub>manifestació</sub> DIR<sub>i</sub> COMPTAR DIR<sub>i</sub> APROXIMADAMENT I 2-MIL PERSONA-PLU PARTICIPAR.1 MANIFESTACIÓ INDEX>  
Lit. ‘The Catalan Federation for the Deaf looked at the demonstration and said: “*we count (and) two thousand people participated at our demonstration.*”’
- b. [PERÒ]<sub>advers.</sub> [DE POLICIA^TRÀNSIT INDEX<sub>manifestació\_z</sub> POLICIA INDEX<sub>j</sub>]<sub>j</sub>-topic 1<sub>ipsil-</sub>MIRAR-INDEX<sub>(manifestació)</sub> DIR<sub>j</sub>  
CA:POLICE <[NO]<sub>neg</sub> APROXIMADAMENT MIL 500 UNA.MICA MÉS APROXIMADAMENT>  
Lit. ‘But, the traffic police looked at it and said: “*Not really, roughly one thousand five hundred, (or maybe) a little bit more approximately.*”’  
‘The Catalan Federation for the Deaf estimated that two thousand people participated in the demonstration. However, the traffic police claimed one thousand five hundred, or a little bit more, approximately.’

First, two relatively large groups, the Catalan Federation for the Deaf and the Barcelona traffic police, are each presented as conceptually ‘compressed’ into one individual standing for the whole group. Clearly, it is highly unlikely that an entire organization would pronounce the long string of words ascribed to them in unison. More importantly, the contradictory reports on participation at the demonstration by these two groups appear as a statement plus rebuttal, as if they had truly been presented in sequential turn-taking during a situated verbal debate. The narrator first adopts the viewpoint of the Federation for the Deaf, by slightly shifting his body and producing the verb ‘VEURE’ ‘to see’ from a contralateral side. This sign begins from the signer’s body and ends at the point in space that corresponds to the deaf demonstration.

After assuming the perspective of the Deaf Federation and presenting their estimation (15a), the signer takes the perspective of the traffic police (15b). He does so not only by signing for them, but also by presenting them as directly confronting the Deaf Federation in a discussion that never took place. Note that the estimate that is first refuted is the Deaf Federation’s (“Not really”), as one may do in sequential interaction, before the police’s assessment is given. Thus, in (15) an approximate number of attendees to a demonstration is presented through a fictive discussion between two opposing groups, each giving their estimation ‘as one voice’ that contradicts the other. This allows the signer to provide both a piece of information and the source of this information in a compressed human-scale communication scene that viewers can easily recognize and cognitively manage. In sum, the fictive dialogue set up thus serves to express evidentiality.

We hasten to note at this point that this is not a rhetorical device, meant to make the discourse more lively or interesting to viewers. It is certainly not a didactic means of making information more accessible, like the presentation of a contemporary philosopher as debating with the long-deceased Kant in order to teach philosophy students (e.g. Fauconnier and Turner). Neither is it an argumentative strategy meant to

persuade viewers of a given position, as the fictive argument between contemporary and future generations that former American Vice President Al Gore sets up at the end of his Award Winning documentary film *An Inconvenience Truth* as a means to urge viewers to act against global warming (Turner, 110). Quite differently, the use of a fictive dialogue represents an utterly unmarked means of providing new information in LSC. Also, by indicating the source of information upon which his statement is based, the narrator in (15) presents his degree of commitment to the validity of the information reported to the interlocutor (i.e. the viewers). This gives an epistemic value to that information through conversational implicature (cf. Chafe and Nichols; Aikhenvald).

## 9. Discussion and conclusions

This paper dealt with direct discourse expressing evidential values in Catalan Sign Language. This involves the use of the communication domain (saying/hearing, explaining/listening) as source of information. In such cases a string of discourse often involving several lexical items has a proposition as its scope, rather than it being a state of affairs or “propositional content” (Boye). This implies that even the so-called “lexical expression of evidentially” (cf. Aikhenvald; Plungian 2001, 2010) constitutes a grammatical construction. This position challenges the view that considers evidentiality to be an exclusively grammatical, obligatory category of a language (cf. Aikhenvald). Instead, our approach is based on recent discussions on the need for considering evidentiality, as well as other grammatical categories, from a wider functional perspective (cf. Cornillie 2007a, b; Squartini 2007; Wiemer and Stathi). This is in line with the Cognitive Linguistics assumption that lexicon and grammar are not distinct, clear-cut categories, but rather form a continuum (cf. Langacker 1987, 1991; Goldberg 1995, 2006). It also conforms to the overall view that grammar emerges from discourse (cf. Li and Thompson; König). Signed languages are particularly interesting for the study of the encoding of evidentiality as a construction along the discourse-grammar-lexical continuum, since most of the linguistic resources to express grammatical functions are not fully grammaticalized (yet).

Little as it has been studied, direct discourse for evidential values can be observed across a large number of unrelated languages, spoken and signed (cf. Pascual 2014, ch. 4). This should come as no surprise. We more often than not regard talk-in-interaction as a window into the utterer’s thoughts, intentions, or emotions. Indeed, someone’s words are generally taken as indicative of their personal world (cf. Wierzbicka; Cicourel 1973, 1978; Haiman), since it is usually through expressing our emotions that others get to know how we feel (Haiman, 145). Indeed, our folk understanding is that in the default case language is informational, so that what is said is understood as entailing what the utterer believes and what is objectively the case (Grice; Sweetser).

Hence, what has or has not been said can serve as source of information, and is in fact considered direct legal evidence in a court of law (Philips; Pascual 2008, 2014). This is also the reason why (part of) a non-genuine conversation may be presented as a means to set up a type of mental or emotional state, a situation, or an individual or entity in a so-called *fictive interaction* (Pascual 2002, 2006, 2014). Conventionalized examples from Spanish are: “*hasta decir basta*” (lit. ‘until you say *stop*, meaning ‘a lot’, ‘very much’), “*de agárrate si puedes*” (lit. ‘of *hold on it if you can*, ‘very extreme’) or ‘*pordiosero* (lit. ‘*by God*’, ‘beggar’) (Pascual 2010, 64). We sustain that some types of evidential direct discourse, such as constructed dialogues and the mind warning the thinking individual, involve fictive interaction.

More generally, the fact that evidential values may be ascribed to direct discourse further shows that grammatical and discursive structures both emerge from and reflect

our life-long experience as social beings constantly engaged in meaningful interactions with others. Indeed, our approach to evidential direct discourse stems from the premise that there is an interactional basis for language (cf. Voloshinov; Bakhtin; Vygotsky), based on the universality of conversation (Sacks et al.) and its being the primacy form of communication (Clark). Our research is thus an attempt to contribute to the view that discourse and grammar are fundamentally modeled by the basic structure of face-to-face conversation (Voloshinov; Vygotsky; Bakhtin; Verhagen; Zlatev et al.).

The study of conversational structures, such as direct discourse expressing evidential values, is particularly interesting in signed languages. As it is, they are mostly used by literate individuals, but are as such only used in a conversational or conversation-like structure, as they lack a writing system of their own (Jarque forth.a; Jarque and Pascual forth.). This is non-trivial, since interactional structures, such as unmarked direct discourse, seem to be more grammaticalized and pragmaticalized in languages mostly or solely used in sequential turn-taking, such as aboriginal languages without or with limited writing (Pascual 2014, ch. 4), or indeed, signed languages (Pascual 2014, ch. 2; Jarque and Pascual forth.; Jarque forth.a.). The data discussed in this paper provides further evidence for this tenet. Indeed, LSC direct discourse constructions for evidential values do not serve merely for embellishment, poetic or otherwise rhetorical purposes. They are all utterly unmarked, in fact constituting the language's most common means of expressing mediated evidential values. This does not imply, we hasten to point out, that they are obligatory or even fully grammaticalized. Catalan Sign Language is still in a process of grammaticalization, like most signed languages, for that matter. Another interesting aspect of signed languages used by a given deaf community that we addressed in this paper is that they are influenced by the lexicon and language-specific gestures from the dominant spoken language that they are in daily contact with and in which deaf language users often received their education. Thus, counter to one may think at first, the study of evidential values in Catalan Sign Language may provide clues to further understanding these values in spoken Spanish and Catalan.

We hope to have shown that the study of evidential direct discourse can shed some light on the conceptualization of language use as source of information and thus as a means for us to form a picture of the world. This device seems to play a particularly important role in languages of the visual modality, such as Catalan Sign Language, in which verbal communication is the second most frequently used domain for the expression of evidential values.

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