

## Evidentiality (and epistemicity) in Catalan parliamentary debate\*

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### 1. Introduction

This paper describes evidential marking in Catalan parliamentary debate. The analysis takes as its starting point the idea that evidential and epistemic words and expressions are interpersonal markers, indicating source and degree of knowledge, respectively.

The markers related to knowledge have been identified and analyzed in the Plenary Investiture Session, a debate held in the Parliament of Catalonia on the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> of December, 2012, by which Artur Mas was re-elected as the president of Catalonia's Regional Government (Generalitat de Catalunya).<sup>1</sup>

The Parliament of Catalonia contains 135 seats, distributed among seven different groups:

1. *Convergència i Unió* (CiU, 50 seats), a right-wing Catalan nationalist coalition whose leader is Artur Mas.
2. *Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya* (ERC, 21 seats), a left-wing Catalan pro-independence party whose leader is Oriol Junqueras.
3. *Partit dels Socialistes de Catalunya* (PSC, 20 seats), the Catalan Socialist Party, whose leader is Pere Navarro.
4. *Partit Popular de Catalunya* (PPC, 19 seats), the right-wing Spanish nationalist party, a branch of the party running the Spanish Government from 2011 to 2015, whose leader is Alicia Sánchez-Camacho.
5. *Iniciativa-Verds & Esquerra Unida i Alternativa* (ICV-EUiA, 13 seats), the Catalan green socialist and communist coalition, whose leader is Joan Herrera.
6. *Ciutadans* (C's, 9 seats), the anti-Catalan nationalism party, whose leader is Albert Rivera.
7. *Candidatura d'Unitat Popular* (CUP, 3 seats), a left-wing and pro-independence party, whose leaders are David Fernández and Joaquim Arrufat.

CiU has been running the Catalan Government since 2010. CiU won the 2012 election and has been running the Catalan Government with ERC as a stable parliamentary support from December, 2012 to September 2015. The main issue in the 2012 campaign was the right to decide about self-determination in the context of the economic crisis that deeply affects Spain since 2008.

The debate includes the candidate's speech, the interventions of the leaders of the other parties—including Oriol Pujol as the representative of *Convergència i Unió*—,

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<sup>1</sup> *Diari de Sessions del Parlament de Catalunya*. X Legislatura, Sèrie P núm. 3. Primer període. Debat del programa i votació d'investidura del diputat Artur Mas i Gavarró, candidat proposat a la presidència de la Generalitat de Catalunya (tram. 201-00001/10).

On-line transcript: <http://www.parlament.cat/activitat/dsppc/10p002.pdf> and

<http://www.parlament.cat/activitat/dsppc/10p003.pdf>. Words: 81.546 On-line video:

[http://www.parlament.cat/web/actualitat/canal-parlament/activitat/plens?p\\_cp20=6](http://www.parlament.cat/web/actualitat/canal-parlament/activitat/plens?p_cp20=6). Access: 01/03/2013.

Duration: 5 hours, 41 minutes and 29 seconds.

and Mas' responses to the leaders' interventions. Following the debate, Artur Mas was elected president, supported by 71 'yes' (CiU and ERC) against 63 'no' votes (PSC, PP, ICV-EUiA, C's and CUP).

Following Van Dijk (2000) and Ilie (2006), parliamentary debate can be defined as a genre—or sub-genre—of parliamentary discourse. It belongs to the social domain of political discourse because its participants are politicians (members of a parliament) acting in a political institutional setting (the Parliament) and with a political purpose (see Cuenca 2014). Namely, contributing “to problem-solving tasks regarding legal and political deliberation, as well as decision making processes” (Ilie, 191).

Parliamentary debate is a highly ritualized power-based interaction that relies on the confrontation of opposing positions, both at individual and group level. Members of Parliament “need to promote their own image in a competitive and performance-oriented institutional interaction” (Ilie, 191). Furthermore, their interventions have a clear aim: “to call into question the opponents' ethos, i.e. political credibility and moral profile, while enhancing their own *ethos* in an attempt to strike a balance between *logos*, i.e. logical reasoning, and *pathos*, i.e. emotion eliciting force” (Ilie, 191). As a consequence, epistemicity and evidentiality become key-elements related to strategies to strengthen the arguments that build the debate.

The present paper is organized as follows. In Section 2, evidentiality and epistemicity are defined in relation to interpersonal pragmatic marking, and the fuzzy boundaries between the two functions are discussed. Section 3 includes the description and illustration of evidential marking in parliamentary debate, which consider the types of evidentiality defined in the previous section; namely, sensory, reported and inferential (which, in turn, can be based either on deduction, induction or supposition). Section 4 summarizes the results.

The analysis shows that in Catalan parliamentary debate evidentiality is tied to epistemicity, and that the basic source of knowledge is an inference made by the speaker, or attributed to an indefinite subject who is subsumed under the concept of shared knowledge.

## 2. Interpersonal pragmatic markers, evidentiality and epistemicity

Discourse includes various markers related to pragmatic interaction. In line with Fraser, these units can be defined as *pragmatic markers*, that is, “linguistically encoded clues which signal the speaker's potential communicative intentions” (Fraser, 168). Pragmatic markers convey information added to the basic propositional content or message of an utterance. Fraser (1996) classifies them into the four types illustrated in (1): basic markers (*I estimate*), commentary markers (*quite frankly*), parallel markers (*Sir*) and discourse markers (*however*).

- (1) I appreciate that you are a member of the Police Benevolent Association and a supporter of the baseball league. *However, quite frankly Sir, I estimate* that you were going a bit more than 86 miles per hour. (Fraser 1996, 169)

From a more general perspective and taking into account also the research about metadiscourse (see Hyland & Tse 2004, Hyland 2005), pragmatic markers can act at the textual level or at the interpersonal level. Pragmatic markers at the textual level mainly correspond to discourse markers such as *and*, *on the other hand* or *as a consequence*. Discourse markers contribute to discourse organization by adding, elaborating (i.e., present in an alternative way), contrasting or establishing a cause-effect relationship between discourse segments. Pragmatic markers at the interpersonal level, such as *must*,

*obviously, it is clear that, might, probably, it seems, I think, I promise, I agree, unfortunately, allegedly,* and so on, convey modal information. They refer to the addressor's degree or source of knowledge, illocutionary intention, opinion and evaluation of what is said and the way it is said, and also to his or her feelings and the relationship with the addressee.<sup>2</sup>

### 2.1. Types of interpersonal markers

Different classifications of interpersonal or modal markers have been proposed. For the purposes of this analysis, four basic functions are distinguished: (i) knowledge, (ii) speech-act, (iii) attitude and (iv) interaction.

(i) Knowledge markers provide pragmatic information about the degree of (un)certainty and the source of knowledge regarding the basic content of an utterance, as in (2):

(2) Gràcies, senyora presidenta. Senyor Herrera, intentaré fer un comentari sobre més o menys els grans blocs en què vostè ha distribuït la seva intervenció.

En primer lloc, per dir-li que *certament* nosaltres hem perdut diputats. Això és *evident*, i a més a més ho hem reconegut des del primer moment. És *obvi*, i, com vostè *deu* comprendre, a ningú li agrada, perdre diputats. (DI, Mas: 21)

'Thank you, Madame President. Mr Herrera, I will try to comment more or less on the large sections in which you have distributed your speech. First of all, [I want] to tell you that we have *certainly* lost members. This is *evident*, and, moreover, we have acknowledged it from the start. It is *obvious*, and as you *may* understand, nobody likes to lose members.'

In (2) Artur Mas admits that his party has reduced its representation in the Parliament, and he reinforces this idea by using three markers of certainty (*certament, evident, obvi*). The markers *evident* ('evident') and *obvi* ('obvious') indicate that the information under their scope is not only true, but derives from an inference and is to be considered as shared knowledge. The candidate, thus, qualifies a message whose propositional content is: "we have lost members of Parliament, we have acknowledged it from the start and no one likes to lose members of Parliament." Mas also uses a modal evidential auxiliary (*deu* 'may') indicating uncertainty as a strategy to include the hearer in his reasoning process.

Examples such as (2) show how knowledge markers make explicit the interactive component of the exchange and activate the dialogical dimension of an intervention, which, in the case of (2), is a response to a previous attack on the part of another Member of Parliament, Joan Herrera.

(ii) Speech-act markers are performative verbs or predicates, typically including a first person subject, that convey the illocutionary force of the utterance.

(3) Per tant, nosaltres, senyor Mas, el primer que li *demanem* és que plegui. (DI, Rivera: 28)

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<sup>2</sup> Hyland differentiates between interactive and interactional functions. Interactive functions refer "to devices which allow the recovery of the writer's intention by explicitly establishing preferred interpretations of propositional meanings" (Hyland & Tse, 442). Interactional functions have to do with "the ways writers conduct interaction by intruding and commenting on their message. The writer's goal here is to make his or her views explicit and to involve readers by allowing them to respond to the unfolding text" (Hyland, 49).

‘So, we, Mr. Mas, in the first place we *ask* you to resign.’

In (3) Rivera uses a performative verb, *demanar* ‘to ask’, which unambiguously asserts a speech-act of request (or a mitigated indirect order) that could have been expressed by the use of the imperative (*plegui* ‘resign’).

(iii) Attitude markers refer to the speaker’s intentions, opinion or evaluation about the basic message.

- (4) Vostè, senyor Mas, no és de fiar. I *cregui*’m que ho *lamento*, perquè *crec* que els catalans es mereixen un millor lideratge, un president que governi i un president que compleixi els acords. (DI, Sánchez-Camacho: 4)  
 ‘You, Mr. Mas, you are not trustworthy. And *believe me* that *I regret* it, because *I think* that the Catalans deserve better leadership, a president who governs and a president who complies with the agreements.’

Attitude markers encode pragmatic information that qualifies the fact of saying or the basic content communicated (“I am honest when I say...”, “I regret that...”, “It is my opinion that...”).

(iv) Interaction markers focus on the relationship between addressor and addressee. They can be verbs and predicates, vocatives and modal particles.

- (5) I darrera cosa. Vostès em diuen que s’han de complir les lleis, etcètera. Jo *hi estic totalment d’acord*; s’han de complir les lleis. Però vostès m’han d’admetre una cosa: que les lleis poden canviar i les lleis es poden interpretar. (DI, Mas: 11)  
 ‘And one last thing. You tell me that the laws must be enforced, and so on. *I totally agree* with that; the laws must be enforced. But you must admit one thing: laws may change and laws can be interpreted.’

In (5), Mas explicitly says that he agrees with what has just been said as a way to introduce a counterargument: “I agree that law must be observed but laws can be changed and interpreted.”

In summary, in languages such as Catalan, interpersonal markers are adverbials, verbs and predicates, parenthetical clauses, vocatives, interjections, and modal particles that fulfil various modal functions: they qualify the message (knowledge and attitude markers), encode pragmatic information about the message illocutionary force (speech-act markers), and give information about the relationship between addressor and addressee (interaction markers).

The four basic functions distinguished here are not to be considered as mutually exclusive inasmuch as some markers indicate more than one function or sub-function.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> The functions of mitigation (implemented by hedges) and emphasis (implemented by boosters) can also be considered on their own right, although they are usually added to one of the main functions.

## 2.2. Evidentiality and epistemicity

As we have illustrated in example (2) above, evidentiality and epistemicity are functional categories including interpersonal markers associated with knowledge. The definition of evidentiality is a controversial topic. In the first place, evidentiality can be defined in a broader or a narrower sense. In a broad sense, it can be seen as a discourse strategy at the interpersonal level by which the speaker gives information about the source of knowledge and the reliability of this knowledge. In Cornillie's words: "evidentiality is defined as the functional category that refers to the perceptual and/or epistemological basis for making a speech act" (2009: 45).

In a narrow sense, as proposed by Aikhenvald, evidentiality is a grammatical category "whose primary meaning is information source" (1) so that source of information is its "unmarked, or default interpretation" (Aikhenvald, 3). From a narrow perspective, a language such as Catalan, and European languages in general, lack the category of evidentials. According to Aikhenvald (17), evidentiality "is only found in about 25 per cent of the world's languages. Most familiar languages—such as English, or French—lack it"<sup>4</sup>

Ifantidou (161) summarizes the two positions on evidentiality as follows:

In its broadest sense, an utterance has an evidential function if and only if it overtly communicates evidential information, whether this information is linguistically encoded or pragmatically inferred. More narrowly, we can regard a linguistic construction as being evidential if and only if this information is not only communicated but encoded. More narrowly still, we can regard a construction as being evidential if and only if it plays a highly restricted syntactic role, e.g., as a clitic, particle, "discourse marker," bound morpheme or some other minor syntactic category.

Adopting a broad perspective, we can assume that the pragmatic information about the source of knowledge can be expressed or implied in any language. Therefore, all languages have ways to refer to the source of information, but not every language has grammatical evidentiality. In fact, having lexical meanings for optional specification of the source of knowledge is probably universal—cf. English *I guess, they say; I hear that*, etc., as well as lexical verbs such as *to allege* (e.g. *the alleged killer of X*) (Aikhenvald, 10).<sup>5</sup>

Another controversial topic related to the definition and identification of evidential markers is their relationship with epistemicity. After reviewing different approaches to this topic, Cornillie (2009) points out that Western linguistics has mostly considered evidentiality and epistemicity as overlapping concepts. Some authors, such as Plungian (2001), argue for an inclusive approach, according to which the evidential value is always present in the epistemic meaning. Nowadays, most authors (see, e.g., De Haan 1999, 2001, Nuyts 2001a, 2001b, Aikhenvald, Cornillie 2007, 2009) consider that the two categories do not necessarily correlate, and thus "there is neither inclusion nor overlap between the two qualifications" (Cornillie 2009, 59). From this perspective, epistemicity implies "an evaluation of the chances that a certain hypothetical state of affairs under consideration (or some aspect of it) will occur, is occurring, or has occurred in a possible world which serves as the universe of interpretation for the evaluation process, and which, in the default case, is the real world (or rather, the

<sup>4</sup> Aikhenvald's typological analysis shows that the languages that have evidential marking are frequent in South America and North American Indian languages, in the languages of the Caucasus, and in the languages of the Tibeto-Burman family.

<sup>5</sup> The author argues that "saying that English has 'evidentiality' [...] is misleading: this implies a confusion between what is grammaticalized and what is lexical in a language" (Aikhenvald, 10).

evaluator's interpretation of it" (Nuyts 2001a, 21). In contrast, evidentiality "concerns the speaker's indication of the nature (the type and quality) of the evidence invoked for (assuming the existence of) the state of affairs expressed in the utterance. This does not involve any explicit evaluation in terms of the state of affairs being true or not" (Nuyts 2001a, 27). In a nutshell, "evidentiality refers to the reasoning processes that lead to a proposition and epistemic modality evaluates the likelihood that this proposition is true" (Cornillie 2009, 46-47).

As for the types of evidential meanings, there are a number of classifications. Aikhenvald (2004), considering more than 500 languages, describes morphological evidential marking, and identifies six recurrent semantic parameters:

- I. VISUAL: covers information acquired through seeing.
- II. NON-VISUAL SENSORY: covers information acquired through hearing, and is typically extended to smell and taste, and sometimes also to touch.
- III. INFERENCE: based on visible or tangible evidence of result.
- IV. ASSUMPTION: based on evidence other than visible results: this may include logical reasoning, assumption, or simply general knowledge.
- V. HEARSAY: for reported information with no reference to those it was reported by.
- VI. QUOTATIVE: for reported information with an overt reference to the quoted source. (Aikhenvald, 63-64)

Most proposals are based either on a two-fold or on a three-fold distinction. In traditional classifications, such as Willett's (1988), direct and indirect evidentiality are distinguished:

Direct evidentials are used when the speaker has witnessed the action while indirect evidentials are used when the speaker has not witnessed the action personally but has either deduced the action or has heard about it from others. When the action is deduced, we are talking about inferentials; when information about the event is conveyed through others, they are called hearsay markers, report(at)ives or quotatives. (Cornillie 2009, 45)

This classification is often reformulated so that three types of evidentiality are distinguished, namely, sensory, reported and inferred. As Ifantidou (5-8) summarizes, information can be acquired through observation, as in the case of her examples in (6), by hearsay (7) or by inference (8):

- (6)
  - a. *I see* him coming.
  - b. *I hear* her cooking.
  - c. *I feel* water in my shoes.
  - d. It *tastes* good.
  - e. He *looks* like he's drunk.
  
- (7)
  - a. *John tells me* you got a job.
  - b. *People say* he's trustworthy.
  - c. *It seems* he is the burglar.
  - d. *It's supposed to* be the best play of the year.
  - e. *Apparently,* she is very efficient.
  
- (8)
  - a. *Presumably,* he is capable of teaching A levels.
  - b. John *seems to/must* be here now.
  - c. John *must* have arrived.

d. *I gather that* Toms in town.

Evidentiality in Catalan has not received much attention. González (2005) presents what she labels as a “preliminary work on Catalan evidentiality” (537), directly based on Chafe’s (1986) seminal work on English evidentials. She identifies and illustrates with made-up examples five types of evidential markers in Catalan according to the different ways by which knowledge is acquired: belief, induction, sensory, hearsay and deduction.

- a) Belief markers (i.e., *crec* ‘I think’, *(em) penso* ‘I guess’, *suposo* ‘I suppose’) weaken the assertivity of the basic assertion.
- b) Induction markers (i.e., *deure* ‘it must’, *és obvi/òbviament* ‘it is obvious/obviously’, *sembla que* ‘it seems that’, *evidentment* ‘evidently’) imply an inference process on the part of the speaker. González also includes some pragmatic marker uses of *llavors* (‘then’) as in utterances such as *Llavors no anem al cine?* (‘Then/So we don’t go to the cinema), the adjective *clar* (‘clear’) and the question tag *no?* (‘huh?’, literally ‘no?’).
- c) Sensory or perceptual evidence, expressed by the verbs *veure*, *sentir* and *semblar*, indicate highly reliable knowledge.
- d) Hearsay evidence, expressed by the predicates *se suposa*, *es veu que* (‘apparently’), implies “knowledge that has been acquired through other people’s experiences and has been told to us through language” (González 2005, 530).
- e) Deduction, indicated by verbs such as *deduir*, *inferir*, *intuir*, and a number of modal auxiliaries and adverbs (e.g., *haver de*, *es pot/es podria*, *suposar*, *probablement*, *pressumiblement*), involves a reasoning process going from a hypothesis to a conclusion based on evidence.

In a more recent work, González (2011) focuses on two markers of indirect evidence in Catalan: the impersonal predicate *es veu que* (literally, ‘one can see that’, which can be translated as ‘apparently’, ‘allegedly’) and the modal periphrasis *deure* + INF (‘must+INF’), as in *Aquest deu ser un bon restaurant* (‘This must be a good restaurant’). These markers will be discussed later on.

### 3. Evidentiality in Parliamentary debate

Assuming a broad approach to evidentiality, I have searched for evidential encoded or inferred meanings in Catalan parliamentary debate. The search has shown that these meanings are bound to epistemic markers, so that both evidential and epistemic meanings have been identified and classified. In fact, the analysis has confirmed that evidential markers “often suggest or imply a certain degree of probability of the state of affairs” (Nuyts 2001a, 27). Therefore, the differentiation of the two pragmatic functions is often difficult and, to some extent, artificial in languages such as Catalan, especially in the domain of inference (Fetzer, 75) which is the most frequent in the corpus analyzed here. Thus, evidentiality and epistemicity can—and probably must—be differentiated at a theoretical level but should be related, as in the identification of markers and strategies in languages lacking an evidential system.

The markers identified in the corpus are shown in Table 1.

**Table 1.** Evidential and epistemic markers identified<sup>6</sup>

Modal (semi)-auxiliaries	<b><i>sembla que</i></b> ‘(it) seems that’, <b><i>resulta (que)</i></b> ‘(it) results (that)’, <b><i>deu</i></b> ‘(it) may/must’ <i>es pot/poden</i> (‘can be/can’ in the sense of ‘suppose’)
Modal particles	<b><i>és clar</i></b> ‘(it) is clear/obvious’ (parenthetical)
Modal adverbs	<b><i>òbviament</i></b> ‘obviously’, <b><i>evidentment</i></b> ‘evidently’, <i>segurament</i> ‘surely’, <i>probablement</i> ‘probably’, <i>previsiblement</i> ‘obviously’, <i>potser</i> ‘maybe’
Modal adjectives	<b><i>obvi</i></b> ‘obvious’, <b><i>evident</i></b> ‘evident’, <b><i>indubtable</i></b> ‘undoubtful’ <i>cert</i> , <i>segur</i> (parenthetical), <i>veritat</i>
Mental state predicates	<b><i>suposo (que)</i></b> ‘(I) guess (that)’, <b><i>entenc que</i></b> ‘(I) understand/assume (that)’, <b><i>entenc</i></b> (parenthetical) ‘(I) assume’ <b><i>se sap</i></b> ‘it is known (that)’, <b><i>és ben sabut</i></b> ‘it is well known (that)’, <b><i>no cal dir(-ho)</i></b> ‘(it is) needless to say’ <i>crec jo</i> (parenthetical) ‘think I’, <i>crec</i> ‘(I) think’, <i>creiem</i> ‘(we) think’.

These classes range from more grammatical to more lexical. Semantically, the boldfaced markers encode evidential meaning, whereas the rest are epistemic markers or, in the case of mental state predicates, opinion markers with evidential extensions, in the sense defined by Aikenwald (2004), namely, “as a ‘side-effect’ without having ‘source of information’ as its primary meaning (...)” (11).<sup>7</sup>

As for the sources of meaning, sensory and reported evidentiality only seldom occur in the parliamentary debate analyzed, whereas inferential evidentiality is very frequent. However, the source of knowledge is not often made explicit, because in this genre either the speaker, as an authority backing the truth of what he or she says, or general knowledge are presented as the origin of the evidence (Fuentes 2010).

### 3.1. Sensory evidence

In the corpus analyzed, sensory evidence is not present. Only some metaphorical readings of the verb *veure* ‘to see’, as in (9) and (10), have been identified.

- (9) ...si mirem al nostre voltant, al nostre entorn proper, *veurem que* hi ha països que ja han fet aquest esforç col·lectiu en altres moments i, afortunadament, se n’han sortit, i avui afronten la crisi amb millors condicions que la resta de països. (DI, 10, Mas)  
‘...if we look around us, at our immediate surroundings, *we will see* that there are countries that have made this collective effort at other times and, fortunately, they have succeeded, and now they are facing the crisis with better conditions than other countries.’
- (10) Ara els toca a vostè i al senyor Junqueras fer-ho possible, legal i acordat. Com *veu*, nosaltres no els posarem cap problema, però entendre que és el seu pacte i és el pacte del senyor Junqueras. (DI, 21, Navarro)

<sup>6</sup> Only the boldfaced markers are to be considered prototypical evidential.

<sup>7</sup> Aikenwald (2004) illustrates the idea of evidential extension with the use of the conditional in French “used for information obtained from a questionable secondhand source for whose veracity the speaker refuses to take responsibility”. She further argues: “This does not mean that this conditional has ‘become’ an evidential. Rather, it has acquired a semantic extension to do with evaluating and information source” (105).



‘Now it is your turn and Mr. Junqueras’ turn to make it possible, legal and agreed. As *you see*, we will not raise any problem, but you will surely understand that it is your agreement and it is Mr. Junqueras’ agreement.’

In the previous examples, *veurem/veu* (‘(we) will see’/‘(you) see’) do not imply a sensory activity but a cognitive process of understanding, derived from the conceptual metaphor SEEING IS BELIEVING. If you ‘see’ something, you understand it and cannot deny that it is true. Thus these uses have a crucial argumentative potential: the idea that ‘there are countries that have already made that effort’ in (9) and ‘we will not raise any problem’ in (10) are thus pronounced as if they were uncontroversial facts, although the recipient may—and often will—disagree.

### 3.2. Reported evidence

Reported evidence is generally quotative. It can be used as an authoritative argument, as in (11), or as a reference to another member of parliament’s words, generally as the previous step for counter-argumentation, as in (12):

- (11) Fa pocs dies el president Lula da Silva va rebre el Premi Internacional Catalunya. Després de l’acte *ens va comentar* el següent. Molts països d’Europa, també Espanya, *deia ell*, i Catalunya, han descarrilat el seu tren. (DI, 10, Mas)  
 ‘A few days ago President Lula da Silva received the Catalonia International Prize. After the event *he told us* this: Many countries in Europe, also Spain—*he said*—and Catalonia, have derailed their trains.’
- (12) Miri, senyor Mas, vostè *parlava* que em costa —em sembla que *ha dit*— arribar a acords. En absolut. Jo sempre he sigut una persona d’acords, de consens. (DI, 28, Navarro)  
 ‘Look, Mr. Mas, *you said* that it was difficult for me—I think that you *have said*— to reach an agreement. Absolutely not. I’ve always been a person of agreement, of consensus.’

In both examples, the source of the following statement is explicitly established. In one example in the corpus, the type of evidential meaning is hearsay, and thus the source is indefinite (13):

- (13) *S’ha dit*, amb raó, que la magnitud de l’estalvi per a l’any vinent pot ser de l’ordre d’uns 4.000 milions d’euros. (DI, 7, Mas)  
 ‘*It has been said*, reasonably, that the magnitude of savings for next year may be about 4,000 million euro.’

It is worth noticing that the evidential marker *es veu que* (‘(it) is seen that’), which can be translated as ‘apparently’, ‘allegedly’, ‘presumably’ or ‘it is said’, does not occur in our corpus. González (2011) points out that *es veu que* “is a reportive evidential mainly used in text genres that require distance between the conceptualiser and the object of construal (vicarious narratives of personal experiences, factual articles)” (147).<sup>8</sup> The

<sup>8</sup> According to González (2011, 168-9), “*es veu* is a perceptual evidential form with a primary quotative/reportive meaning that is used by the speaker to assess secondhand factual information which can be confirmed, from a distant objective stance (i.e. outside the speaker’s deictic sphere of action), with no personal involvement in the action or event being told”. Albelda (in print) analyzes its Spanish counterpart (*se ve que*) as an evidential marker based on the metaphorical interpretation of the perception

distance implied, or the fact that it activates an uncertainty extension, may explain why the preferred way to indicate evidentiality with an uncertainty extension is the periphrastic modal *deure* ('must) followed by *sembla que* ('(it) seems that').

### 3.3. Inferential evidence: Deduction

In contrast with sensory and reported evidence, inferential evidence is pervasive in parliamentary debate. Inference can stem from deduction, induction or supposition. Let us illustrate the different uses.

Inference can be presented as a conclusion from a deductive process ('I deduce that...'). This is the case of *entenc* 'I understand', 'I assume', both as a matrix verb introducing a subordinate clause and as a parenthetical (14):

- (14) De fet, hi ha la possibilitat..., i és una possibilitat que *entenc que* ambdues formacions signatàries d'aquest acord d'estabilitat tenen voluntat d'intentar portar a terme, tenim la voluntat, *entenc*, de proposar al conjunt de la nostra societat una mena de contracte programa... (DI, 19, Junqueras)  
 'In fact, there is a possibility... and it is a possibility that *I assume that* both groups signing this agreement intend to carry out, we, *I assume*, intend to propose some kind of contract program to our society as a whole...'

*Entenc* ('I assume') indicates that the information under its scope is a conclusion from a deductive mental process. In ordinary conversation *entenc* is used as a mitigator that weakens the speaker's commitment. So *Entenc que vindrà* ('I assume that he will come') is less assertive than *Vindrà* ('He will come'). On the contrary, in parliamentary debate this type of qualification does not imply any doubt or lack of commitment but it is rather related to the idea that the speaker has data to assert something. The contextual effect is thus that of boosting rather than hedging, in contrast with the prototypical use in informal conversation. As we will see in Section 3.6, this is a defining feature of some markers in parliamentary debate, as Fuentes (2010) analyzes in detail for Spanish.

Similarly, *resulta que* ('(it) turns out that') implies a deductive process from which the meaning of the following clause can be derived as a conclusion:

- (15) Com les augmentarien ara, en aquestes condicions, les plantilles, si *resulta que* no es pot contractar pràcticament ningú, fins i tot des d'un punt de vista legal? Miracles, no en sabem fer, senyor Navarro. (DI, 25, Mas)  
 'How would you increase the staff under these conditions, if *it turns out that* almost no one can be hired, even legally? We can perform no miracles, Mr. Navarro.'

The marker *resulta que* is an evidential with an epistemic extension of certainty. In this case, the speaker is not involved in the qualification, in contrast with the first-person predicate *entenc*, so that there is no commitment involved in what he or she says.

### 3.4. Inferential evidence: Induction

Some markers express inductive inference ('I conclude that'), i.e., a process that leads from the data to a conclusion, as in the examples in (16).

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verb *ver* 'see' as a cognitive verb and the presence of the de-personalizing clitic *se*, which activates a generalizing and intersubjective reading.

- (16) a. Hi ha un altre apriorisme que diu que «el sector públic sempre ho fa tot millor.» I també *és evident* que hi han molts exemples que servien per demostrar que això no és sempre així. (DI, Junqueras: 18)  
 ‘There is another a priori assumption that says that «the public sector always does everything better.» It is also *evident* that many examples could serve to demonstrate that this is not always the case.’
- b. Si després de l’Onze de Setembre i de la negativa de Rajoy al pacte fiscal vostè hagués decidit, legítimament, canviar les seves prioritats de govern, ja tenia la majoria necessària per fer-ho. No calien, *evidentment*, unes eleccions. (DI, Navarro: 21)  
 ‘If after September 11<sup>th</sup> and Rajoy’s negative to the fiscal pact you had—and it is legitimate—, decided to change the government priorities, you already would have had the necessary majority to do so. There was no need, *of course*, for any election.’
- c. I Catalunya en aquest moment està –ho he dit en el meu discurs inicial– observada, desperta interès. Estar observats també, *òbviamment*, ens atorga la necessitat d’exercir responsabilitats importants. (DI, Mas: 27)  
 ‘And Catalonia is currently being observed—I already told you so in my initial speech—, it is observed with interest. Being observed, *obviously*, also obliges us to exert important responsibilities.’
- d. Dret a decidir vol dir *certament* sobirania, però sobretot vol dir democràcia. (DI, Mas: 4)  
 ‘Right to decide *certainly* means sovereignty, but above all it means democracy.’

In the previous examples, *és evident*, *evidentment*, *òbviamment* and *certament* indicate that the truth of the following statement is uncontroversial. The markers of inductive inference are adjectives (*evident* ‘evident’, *obvi* ‘obvious’, *indubtable* ‘undoubtable’/‘no doubt’) and adverbs (*evidently* ‘evidently’, *òbviamment* ‘obviously’, *certament* ‘certainly’) indicating shared certainty based on general experience. So the information referred to cannot be denied, and its truth is accepted by the speaker, who assumes that it should be accepted by the hearer and the rest of the people, too. They are argumentatively used as reinforcers and legitimizing strategies to the extent that knowledge goes beyond the speaker’s sphere and, as Fuentes (116) puts it, arguments turn into axioms.

Inductive inference markers always have an epistemic reading, which is considered more or less prominent in the literature. Nuyts (2001a, 70) argues that inductive adjectives are related to (inter)subjective evidentiality, but he points out that “the evidential dimension does not appear inherent to the lexical item as such. Rather, it is brought along by the syntactic pattern in which the item figures, which is why one lexical form expresses subjectivity or intersubjectivity dependent on the format of the construction.”

The evidential extension can be better grasped if the examples in (16) are compared with (17), which includes an epistemic marker but evidentiality is not encoded.

- (17) Del resultat de les eleccions els puc dir que de la mateixa manera que *és cert* que no vaig tenir el recolzament electoral que esperava *no és menys cert* que el poble català es va manifestar de manera inequívoca donant suport al dret a decidir. (DI, 4, Mas)  
 ‘From the results in the election, I can tell you that just as *it is true* that I did not have the electoral support I expected, *it is no less true* that the Catalan people showed unequivocally their support to their right to decide.’

Example (17) illustrates the use of a prototypical epistemic marker (*és cert* ‘it is true’). The prepositional phrase *del resultat de les eleccions* (‘from the results of the election’) triggers an inference, but the evidential meaning is not codified in any way by the modal markers. If, instead, the modal marker was *és evident* or *evidentment*, as in the examples in (16), the evidential inference would be codified.

Also observe that the co-occurrence of the inferential phrase in (17) and an evidential marker such as ‘it is obvious that’ or ‘obviously’ is ruled out. There would be some sort of clash between the two inferences (*From the results in the election, I can tell you that it is obvious that/obviously I didn’t get electoral support I expected...*) since the epistemic-evidential marker implies an indefinite source of knowledge.

Some impersonal predicates are also related to evidentiality, as in the following examples:<sup>9</sup>

- (18) La realitat, *com se sap*, va ser un dèficit no de 4.800 milions d’euros sinó de 8.400, gairebé el doble de l’autoritzat; equivalia no a 640 euros per persona sinó a 1.120 euros per cada català. (DI, 5, Mas)  
 ‘Reality, *as everyone knows* (literally, ‘as it is known’), was not a deficit of 4,800 million euro but of 8,400, nearly double the authorized deficit; it was not equivalent to 640 euro per person but to 1,120 euro for each Catalan.
- (19) Només en la nostra condició d’estat podrem aportar el màxim al desenvolupament d’aquestes institucions. I *és ben sabut* que els mateixos que som independentistes a Catalunya també som els europeistes més convençuts en el Parlament europeu. I ens sembla que les dues apostes són perfectament compatibles, és més: són indestriables. (DI, 16, Junqueras)  
 ‘Only by being a state could we develop these institutions completely. And it *is well known* that those who are for independence in Catalonia are also more in favor of Europe at the European Parliament. And it seems to us that these two bets are perfectly compatible; moreover, they are inseparable.’
- (20) Si finalment no hi vol ser ningú més, doncs, ho haurem de tirar endavant nosaltres, però això no vol dir que no estiguin oberts a altres formacions polítiques i a altres aportacions, i, *no cal dir-ho*, sobretot estan oberts, també, no només a l’aportació d’altres grups del Parlament, sinó del conjunt de la societat. (DI, 16, Mas)  
 ‘At the end of the day, if no one else wants to be there, then we will have to forge it ahead ourselves, but this does not mean that they are not open to other political parties and other contributions, and, *needless to say*, they are especially open, not only to the contribution of other groups in Parliament, but also to society as a whole.’

<sup>9</sup> On impersonality as a source of evidentiality, see Albelda (in print).

The impersonal construction (*se sap* ‘(it) is known’ / ‘as everyone knows’, *és ben sabut* ‘(it) is well-known’, *no cal dir(-ho)* ‘(it is) needless to say’) triggers an intersubjective reading of shared knowledge that implies an induction inference. If the source of a statement is general knowledge, the message is supposed to be true. So these markers have an epistemic extension of certainty.

In a similar vein, the parenthetical modal marker *és clar* (literally, ‘it is clear’) encodes induction based on shared knowledge, like English *of course* does:

- (21) Acordada, ens haurà de dir amb qui. Acordada en aquest Parlament? Segur. Acordada amb el Govern espanyol? No ho sé. Tant de bo –tant de bo. Però, *és clar*, si ha de ser acordada amb el Govern espanyol, que és del PP i amb majoria absoluta, doncs vostè dóna tota la clau de la decisió al PP de la majoria absoluta, que no sé si hauria de ser la posició del Partit Socialista, donar tota la capacitat de decisió al PP i amb majoria absoluta. (DI, 26, Mas)  
 ‘(It has been) Agreed, you will have to tell us with whom. Agreed in this Parliament? Sure. Agreed with the Spanish Government? I don’t know. I hope so, I hope so. But, *of course*, if it is to be agreed with the Spanish government, which is the PP and has absolute majority, then you give all the key decision power to the PP with absolute majority. I am not sure this should be the position of the Socialist Party, giving all decision-making capacity to the PP, a party that has absolute majority.’

As described in Cuenca and Marín (2012) and González (2005) for Catalan—and similarly in Pons (2003), Santamaría Pérez (2009) or Maldonado (2010), among others, for Spanish *claro*—, *és clar/clar* used as a pragmatic marker indicates shared knowledge and inferential evidence. Specifically, “agreement and evidentiality meet because the speaker’s voice is introduced in the turn as source of evidence (an argument is ‘clear’—sure—because it is backed by the linguistic voice of the locuteur)” (Pons, 2003:231).

All inductive markers can be considered strategies for legitimizing assertions, as Hart (2011) describes. He considers that evidentiality manifests an epistemic positioning strategy of ‘objectification’, that is, a strategy suggesting that “the speaker’s assertion can be verified or that it is corroborated by others. Crucially, it provides the hearer with the option to ‘check for themselves’” (759).

### 3.5. Inferential evidence: Supposition

Some markers codify an evidential meaning related to supposed knowledge (‘I suppose that’). This is the case of *suposo* (‘I guess’, ‘I suppose’), *sembla que* ‘(it) seems that’ and *deure* ‘must’.

*Suposo* ‘I guess’ can be used as a matrix verb introducing a subordinate clause and as a parenthetical, but no cases of the latter use have been found in my corpus.

- (22) Ser president de Catalunya suposa sempre un honor immens; en aquest moment, *suposo que* vostès ho intueixen, també suposa una càrrega immensa. (DI, 11, Mas)  
 ‘Being the president of Catalonia always is always a great honor. At this moment, *I guess* you can imagine it, it also represents a huge burden.’

*Suposo* indicates that there are sufficient data to hypothesize that the propositional content is also true. Thus, the evidential and the epistemic meaning of probability mix.

Supposition can be expressed by *sembla que* ('(it)' seems that'). In the following example, two modal verbs, *poder* and *semblar*, combine to indicate that there is evidence to make a statement whose truth is qualified as possible:

- (23) *Pot semblar que* ens enfrontem a un exercici impossible... (DI, 10, Mas)  
 'It may seem that we are facing an impossible exercise...'

*Semblar que* does not involve epistemicity, since it does "not convey a judgment of the likelihood that the event is true but only suggest that there is (shared or non-shared) evidence to make a statement" (Cornillie 2007: 255-256). In fact, it is possible to add either a confirmation or a rejection of the statement's truth, which confirms that the predicate does not encode any epistemic meaning:

- (24) a. *Sembla que* ens enfrontem a un exercici impossible, però no ho fem.  
 'It may seem that we are facing an impossible exercise, but we don't.'  
 b. *Sembla que* ens enfrontem a un exercici impossible i, de fet, ens hi enfrontem.  
 'It may seem that we are facing an impossible exercise and, in fact, we do.'

Another supposition marker is *deure*, a modal auxiliary related to hypothesis.

- (25) I aleshores la pregunta és: no *deu ser* que vostès, per determinades problemàtiques, no es varen atrevir a fer el pas per ser amb la majoria, molt determinant, que hi havia en el Parlament en aquell moment? (DI, 25, Mas)  
 'And then the question is this: *could it be* that, because of whatever problems, you daren't take the step to be with the very determining majority that was in Parliament at that time?'

González (2011: 168-9) argues that *deure* is an epistemic marker "used by the speaker to evaluate and judge the propositional content of the action or events being told from a subjective stance (i.e., inside the speaker's deictic sphere of action)." She considers that *deure* is not (primarily) evidential, since "the speaker makes use of it not to provide source-of-information, but to convey a given personal interpretation of the information being told. The inferential meaning of *deure* is ambiguous in the sense that the information it provides is indirectly based on perceptual direct evidence (I have seen, heard, touched something, so I conclude X) or on reasoning from facts (I know X, so I conclude Y)." However, *deure* implies an inferential process of supposing something, and, thus, evidentiality is somehow present in its meaning.

Finally, *poder*, in its epistemic use, can also have an evidential interpretation, just as possibility and probability adverbs as *possiblement* 'possible', *probablement* 'probably' and *potser* 'maybe':

- (26) Els marges de maniobra fiscal que *es poden* derivar d'ulteriors retallades comporten, en general, una contracció de l'activitat econòmica que comporta, al mateix temps, una caiguda més que proporcional dels ingressos finals. I, per tant, *es pot* entrar en situacions gairebé absurdes [...]. (DI, 12, Junqueras)  
 'The flexibility of tax maneuver that *can be* derived from further cuts involves, in general terms, a contraction in the economic activity, which also implies a

drop in the final revenue that is more than proportional. And, therefore, *it is possible* to end up in almost absurd situations [...].’

- (27) Portem dos anys on no ha estat gens agraït, governar. I *probablement* inclús els propers temps tampoc serà del tot massa agraït, governar. (DI2, 46, Pujol)  
‘In the last two years governing was not rewarding at all. And *probably*, even in times to come, governing will not be entirely rewarding, either.’
- (28) Hi ha altres temes dels quals *potser* podrem parlar en la segona intervenció, de rèplica, ja que, com sap, tenim el temps taxat –i se m’està acabant, per cert. (DI, 24, Navarro)  
‘There are other topics that *maybe* we will be able to talk about in the second intervention, the response turn, because, as you know, our time is limited, and, by the way, I am running out of time.’

The three markers in the previous examples indicate some degree of uncertainty, so the epistemic reading is prominent. On the contrary, an evidential inference can only derive from the context. This is also Cornillie’s (2007) conclusion from his analysis of the uses of epistemic *poder* and epistemic/evidential *deber* and *tener que* in Spanish. He points out that the different degree of speakers’ commitment that the three verbs convey can be related to different evidential modes of knowing: “*poder* usually does not rely on inference, while *deber* and *tener que* most often involve inductive inferences and deductive inferences, respectively” (Cornillie, 2007: 255).

As Fuentes (113-116) shows, the interpretation of possibility markers, and more generally inference markers related to uncertainty, is not the default one in parliamentary debate. They do not properly express doubt but mitigated assertion as an argumentative mechanism to create empathy and legitimate what is being said. Their use is, then, more rhetorical than truly epistemic.

### 3.6. Inferential evidence and opinion

As already mentioned in the case of *entenc (que)*, attitude markers expressing an opinion can contextually develop an evidential extension of inference along with an epistemic extension of certainty. The case of *crec* (‘I think’/‘I believe’) is specially interesting because of the multiple readings and structural behaviors that this predicate can exhibit. Chafe (1986) includes *I think* among the evidential markers indicating belief, but its evidential dimension is not obvious.

The forms found in the corpus are *crec que* (‘(I) think that’) and, less frequently, the parenthetical clause *crec jo* (literally, ‘think I’, with obligatory subject inversion).

- (29) Diputats, diputades, *crec que* les eleccions han tingut una bona notícia: l’increment de la participació. (DI, Herrera: 16)  
‘Members of Parliament, *I think that* the elections have brought about good news: the increase in participation.’
- (30) Per això, senyor president, *crec que* és just per als ciutadans que avui tots parlem absolutament clar. (DI, 20, Navarro)  
‘That is why, Mr President, *I think that* it is fair for the citizens that we all should be absolutely clear today.’

As recently reviewed in detail by González Ruiz (2014) for Spanish *creo* ('I think'), *creure* ('to think') in its performative form (first person) exhibits three configurations and two readings. The configurations include its use as a matrix verb (*crec que* 'I think that'), as a parenthetical with an elliptic subject (*crec* 'I think') and as a parenthetical with a post-verbal subject (*crec jo*, literally 'think I'). Regarding its interpretation, *crec* can indicate either weak epistemicity or belief and commitment. Although there are already a number of contributions that point out the existence of two interpretations in different languages (e.g., Persson 1993, Aijmer 1997, Simon-Vandenberg 1998 and 2000, De Saeger 2007, Fuentes Rodríguez 2010, Henneman 2012, González Ruiz 2014 and 2015), the weak epistemicity reading is the one generally identified in the literature.

In its default interpretation, *crec/crec jo* indicates uncertainty and lack of commitment, so that 'but I am not sure' could be added to the utterance as in the made-up example in (31a) and its variants:

- (31) a. *Crec que* vindrà demà (but I am not sure).  
'I think that he will come tomorrow (but I am not sure).'
- b. Vindrà demà, *crec jo*.  
'He will come tomorrow, I think' (literally, 'think I').
- c. Vindrà demà, *crec*.  
'He will come tomorrow, I think' (literally, 'think-1<sup>st</sup> person singular').

*Crec (jo)* is used as a mitigating device and contributes to the propositional content of the utterance, among other syntactic, semantic and pragmatic features described in the literature (see, e.g. Simon-Vandenberg 2000 and Fetzer 2014 on *I think* and González Ruiz 2014 on Spanish *creo*).

This is not the case in the uses identified in the parliamentary debate corpus, where *crec* is an emphatic marker often used as repeated discourse aimed at boosting what comes next. The excerpt in (32) is a typical illustration of this use:

- (32) *Crec que* el Grup d'Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya i Convergència i Unió aquestes línies mestres i aquestes grans vies, per dir-ho així, aquestes grans prioritats, les hem entès d'una manera comuna, conjunta, i això és el que ens ha portat a aquest acord. Acord que, si m'ho permeten [...] jo també celebri i que agraeixo, agraeixo a les persones de Convergència i Unió i d'Esquerra Republicana que hi han estat treballant, perquè em sembla que és un bon missatge de cara a la gent; és un bon missatge el to constructiu i positiu, és un bon missatge la línia de «hi poden haver consensos amplis» i és un bon missatge assumir responsabilitats. I *crec que*, si això ho anem introduint, ho anem filtrant en el conjunt de la societat catalana, la gent, doncs, agafarà més confiança. (DI, 16, Mas)
- 'I think that, we, the groups *Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya* and *Convergència i Unió*, have understood these lines in a common way, these general lines, so to speak, these major priorities, and this has led to this agreement. An agreement that, if I may say so [...], I also celebrate and I am thankful for. I thank the people in *Convergència i Unió* and in *Esquerra Republicana* who have been working on it, because I consider that it is a good message to the people. The constructive and positive tone is a good message, "it is possible to reach a broad consensus" is a good message and taking



responsibility is a good message. And *I think that* if we introduce this, if we filter it into the Catalan society as a whole, the people will then be more confident.’

In all the previous cases, *crec que* (and also the rhetorical variant *creiem que* ‘(we) think that’, whose subject is the speaker’s party) triggers the evidential inference that the speaker has sufficient evidence to say what he says. It indicates conviction (‘I am convinced’) based on an indefinite inference. The presence of *crec que* is optional, either on syntactic or on semantic grounds. The marker could be deleted and the basic meaning of the intervention would be the same, as already observed by De Saeger (2007) in the case of Spanish *creo que*. In other words, it does not seem to contribute to the propositional content of the utterance, and its function is purely pragmatic, i.e. that of indicating subjectivity, commitment and conviction. The pragmatic force derived from the evidential meaning of the marker, which even imposes itself over the lexical meaning of the opinion verb, has an important role in argumentation that makes it very frequent, even too frequent, in some speeches.

This use has been observed in other languages, such as English (Simon-Vanderbergen 2000), German (Nuyts 2001b) and Spanish (Fuentes Rodríguez 2010) in argumentative texts, especially in contexts where speaker and hearer are engaged in the expression of opinion about a controversial subject.

Simon-Vanderbergen (2000) compares the use of *I think* in political radio interviews and casual conversation. She concludes that its frequency increases in political interviews, and that, in this genre, *I think* does not usually express uncertainty or lack of commitment, as is the case in conversation. On the contrary, it conveys firm opinion, which “suggests authority rather than hesitation” (2000, 60). Simon-Vanderbergen argues that *I think* “does not serve the purpose of qualifying the truth of the proposition (i.e. it is not substitutable by *probably*) but is used primarily to focus on the speaker’s personal position with regard to value judgements and proposals regarding action to be taken” (53). The author relates this difference in uses and frequency to the fact that in casual conversation speakers tend to emphasize agreement and mitigate disagreement, whereas political discourse genres are adversarial in nature and are based on opposing viewpoints.

Nuyts (2001b) briefly comments on the increase of the frequency of *denken* and *glauben* (‘think’ in German) in a debate in which Catholic clergymen and nuns were asked why they had taken the vow, and in the aftermath of a demonstration about a planned nuclear power plant. He concludes:

In such uses, it is usually quite obvious that speakers are absolutely certain about or convinced of what they are saying, but by using the mental state predicate they suggest that they are voicing a tentative and personal opinion which may be wrong, thus ‘officially’ leaving room for another opinion or for a reaction on the part of the hearer (Nuyts 2001b, 391).

In these cases, certainty is more prominent than opinion, but, at least in the case of parliamentary debate, there is no room left for another opinion or reaction. The extension triggered by these opinion markers is that there are powerful reasons (i.e. data) to assert that information, and that the speaker has the authority to claim it.

In a similar vein, Fuentes Rodríguez (2010) observes a frequent and marked use of *yo creo* (‘I think’) in the Andalusia Regional Parliament. She argues that, in this use, the opinion verb changes its basic mitigating meaning, related to its modal nature, to that of an assertion implying that the politician assumes the responsibility of what (s)he says. This use, associated with the presentation of proposals and argumentation of opinions,

shows commitment, since the speaker is the source of the assertion and the warrant of a proposition that is questioned by others. Fuentes concludes that parliamentary debate as a genre activates a change in the interpretation of modal markers: They do not qualify the message but the illocutionary act and the speaker's image and, therefore, they reinforce the assertiveness of the utterance.

In contrast with the matrix *crec que*, the comment clause *crec jo* (literally, 'think I') maintains the weak epistemicity interpretation typically associated with opinion verbs.

- (33) La duresa de la situació i la magnitud sense precedents dels reptes a què hem de fer front aconsellaven, *crec jo*, fer aquest oferiment. (DI, 11, Mas)  
'The harshness of the situation and the unprecedented scale of the challenges we have to face, made it advisable, *I think*, to make this offer.'

In (33), Mas mitigates his assertion by introducing the parenthetical *crec jo* ('I think'), expressing an opinion which may or may not be shared.

*Crec* in medial position is not frequent and no cases of final position have been found. These results coincide with Simon-Vandenberguen's analysis, who indicates that final *I think* gives the previous utterance "the function of an afterthought: after having stated something, the speaker adds his or her reservations, thus weakening the force of the assertion. At the same time, final position gives the item end focus, which means that, in this case, the speaker's doubt is highlighted" (Simon-Vandenberg 2000, 48). Simon-Vandenberg concludes that "it is therefore plausible to hypothesise that the meaning conveyed by final *I think* is not compatible with the communicative goals of political speakers in those institutional contexts" (2000, 48). The same holds true for parenthetical *crec (jo)* in Catalan parliamentary debate. As De Saeger (269) indicates, the expression of opinion has an argumentative function, whereas the expression of doubt weakens argumentation.

In sum, *crec* introducing a subordinate clause is often used in parliamentary debate as a marker of strong assertion, whose pragmatic function is that of emphasizing what comes next. It indicates that the source of knowledge is the speaker, and presupposes that he or she has sufficient data to say what (s)he is saying and is thus a reliable source of information. In contrast, the parenthetical *crec/crec jo* always remains a weak epistemicity marker.

#### 4. Conclusions

The analysis of evidential markers in Catalan still has a long way to go. This paper aims at being a qualitative contribution to the analysis of evidentiality, adopting an onomasiological perspective and considering naturally-occurring examples in parliamentary discourse. In this genre, evidentiality is intertwined with epistemicity, and sometimes with other interpersonal functions, such as opinion. The present description confirms that in languages lacking evidential grammatical markers, although evidentiality and epistemicity can be treated as independent categories on theoretical grounds, they are often interwoven in discourse.

The markers identified in the corpus are modal auxiliaries and semi-auxiliaries, modal particles, adverbs and adjectives, and mental state predicates. Among these markers, only *suposo (que)* '(I) guess (that)', *entenc que* '(I) understand/assume (that)' and *resulta (que)* '(it) results (that)' encode a primary evidential meaning.

The rest of the markers identified can be either considered evidentials with a prominent epistemic extension (e.g. certainty, possibility, probability) or epistemic markers with an evidential extension. Most of the them indicate a high degree of

certainty on the part of the speaker: *òbviament* ‘obviously’, *evidentment* ‘evidently’, *és clar* ‘(it) is obvious’, *òbvi* ‘obvious’, *evident* ‘evident’, *indubtable* ‘undoubtful’, *se sap* ‘it is known (that)’, *és ben sabut* ‘it is well-known (that)’, *no cal dir(-ho)* ‘(it is) needless to say’. Only the auxiliaries *deure* ‘may / must’ and *semblar* ‘to seem’ convey uncertainty. The scarcity of markers of doubt is coherent with the characteristics of the genre: politicians must show that they are sure of what they say, and uncertainty is usually a rhetorical strategy to attack the opponent in a more effective way. Similarly, interpersonal markers of opinion can include or imply evidential extensions.

The analysis has shown that sensory and reported evidence are not very frequent. In contrast, inferential evidence is pervasive in parliamentary debate. Inference can derive from deduction (‘I deduce that...’), which does not obligatorily entail any kind of epistemic extension; induction (‘I conclude that...’), which generally entails a certainty epistemic extension; or supposition (‘I suppose that...’), which entails a probability or possibility epistemic extension. In any case, the specific source of knowledge is generally implicit, and the mode of knowing corresponds either to the speaker (subjective evidentiality, non-shared status of evidence) or to general knowledge (intersubjective evidentiality, shared status of evidence).<sup>10</sup> The degree or reliability of what is said is then variable, and sometimes low, to the extent that “the information is considered most reliable when the speaker shares the source with other subjects” (Cornillie 2009, 58). As a consequence, first person markers, with a high commitment component, alternate with impersonal constructions, which present the proposition as completely reliable on the basis of a deduction, induction or supposition whose source is seldom explicitly indicated.

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<sup>10</sup> On the difference between subjective and intersubjective evidentiality, see Nuyts (2001a, 2001b) and (Cornillie 2007, 2009). See also Hart’s (2011) proposal on reliability of evidence and degree of subjectivity.

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