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Evidentiality in Media: Evidential Strategies in

English and Catalan News Reports

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Abstract

Evidentiality is an area of linguistics that has not been as thoroughly studied as others, especially in languages where it is not realized grammatically, as is the case of English and Catalan. In these languages, where it is also not compulsory, evidentiality can be used deliberately to influence how facts are perceived. This thesis sets out to investigate the role that evidentiality plays in journalistic discourse, where it can be a useful tool to manipulate the readers, by analyzing two news reports in English and two in Catalan, taken from newspapers with similar ideologies and dealing with the same topic. It was expected that reportive evidentials would be frequent in this type of articles, as they seem more objective than other evidentials, and indeed many examples of them were found. However, the study shows that inferential evidentiality is largely present in news reports as well, which gives them an uncertain tone. As for the contrastive aspect, not many differences were found between English and Catalan, except for a few markers that are only used in one of the languages.

Keywords: evidentiality, reportive evidentials, inferred evidentials, journalistic discourse, news reports, contrastive analysis

1. Introduction

Evidentiality, the marking of the source of information, is a moderately recent area of study in the field of linguistics. Having been discovered only a century ago, it has not been as thoroughly investigated as other linguistic phenomena. Furthermore, the most extensive research on this subject has been based on the languages that encode evidentiality in their grammar, and it is largely classified as an exclusively grammatical category.

Nevertheless, several scholars, of which Chafe and Nichols (1986) stand out, have argued that languages that do not have grammatical evidentiality can still express this meaning. They encode it through lexical means, or strategies (Aikhenvald, 2004), such as verbs, adverbs or adjectives, and in some cases even through grammatical items such as verb tenses. Non-evidential languages, therefore, can also show evidentiality, and the fact that it is not compulsory raises the interest of studying the deliberate choice to use an evidential as a resource in discourse.

Particularly, journalistic discourse is an area where evidentiality plays an important role, as the articles being written, specifically the informative and supposedly objective pieces, are seen by readers as a reliable source of information. The presence of evidentials in media can influence the perception of a piece of news, either making a fact seem questionable or making doubtful information appear credible.

This dissertation seeks to investigate the role that evidentials play in media in two non-evidential languages, namely English and Catalan. After a careful review of the literature on the topic to determine how exactly evidentiality is marked in these two languages, an analysis of its presence in journalistic discourse was carried out. To do so, one newspaper in each language was selected, both with similar ideologies, and two

articles from each were chosen. The articles settled on were news reports, given that they are the most objective type of news article, and the topic decided upon was the Russian invasion in Ukraine. Since the newspapers are both European—Catalan and British—and neither directly involved in the conflict, it was expected that they would cover the topic with a similar perspective, thus allowing for easier comparison between the two. The news reports selected are from two different dates of the conflict, one from the beginning of the invasion and the other from a year later, to investigate if the chronological perspective has any effect on the choice in evidentials.

By carrying out this analysis, it is expected that enough evidential instances will be found to draw a conclusion about their role in journalistic discourse, as well as determining if the strategies used in the Catalan and English newspapers are the same or there are relevant differences between them.

The paper is organized as follows. Section 2 offers a review of the existing literature about the topic of evidentiality and how it is divided into different types, paying close attention to the evidential strategies in English and Catalan and the existing studies about evidentiality in media. Section 3 briefly describes the criteria used to choose the newspapers and the articles, as well as the method of analysis. Section 4 presents the results and analysis of the data gathered from the news reports, divided into reported and inferred evidence and then summarizing the most notable differences between the two languages. Finally, section 5 deals with the main conclusions and questions for further research that could not be dealt with in this paper.

2. Theoretical background

2.1 Evidentiality

When we make a statement that we present as a truth, we might want to support it by indicating the evidence behind it. We do that by means of evidentiality, a linguistic category which can be defined as "stating the existence of a source of evidence for some information" (Aikhenvald 2003, p. 1). It was first recognized in North American native languages in the early 20th century, and it has been less studied than other categories present in the classical Indo-European languages (Aikhenvald, 2018). These languages, along with the other evidential languages that were documented afterwards, encode this meaning grammatically, by means of affixes—typically suffixes. The category is also compulsory in most cases, that is, it is not rare that these languages *need* to specify how the evidence has been acquired every time that they present a fact (Torrent 2016, p. 44, based on Aikhenvald 2006, p. 321).

All of this means that evidentiality has largely been considered in the literature as a grammatical category, and it has not been granted the same degree of attention in languages that may express it through other means. As Squartini (2018, p. 274) points out:

> the revitalization of the studies on evidentiality set in motion by Chafe and Nichols (1986) paved the way for a more extensive perspective in which evidentiality is not only restricted to what is 'formally' coded by the core of grammatical systems but is also intended as a more general 'functional category' expressed by different means, which include lexical elements sharing the same semantic content as the grammatical morphemes discovered in Native American languages.

Speakers of languages that do not have grammatical—and compulsory—evidentiality may still want to provide the source of information. They can do that by

means of lexical items, such as verbs, adverbs, specific constructions, and even some nouns. These items, labelled by Aikhenvald (2004) as evidential strategies, may develop over time an evidential reading as their primary meaning (Aikhenvald, 2018).

2.2 Types of evidentiality

There is not a unified classification for the different types of evidentials in the literature, but a typical broad division, proposed by Willett (1988) and supported by many other scholars, is between direct evidence, indirect reported evidence, and indirect inferred evidence. Direct evidentiality can then be divided into evidence acquired visually or through other senses (Forker, 2018), and in the languages that do not have grammatical evidentiality, it is commonly marked with perception verbs:[1]

> (1) A: John's had a severe car accident today.
> B: How do you know?
> A: I've <u>seen</u> it happen myself!
> (Nuyts 2017, p. 67)

Indirect reported evidence can also be further divided. Scholars have used different labels, but the ones used in this paper are those established by Fitneva (2018, p. 186), who divides reported evidentiality into "hearsay" and "quotation". Although some authors do not differentiate between them, those who do distinguish between cases where the source is known, and typically made explicit (quotation) and cases where there is simply an acknowledgment of an external, but unknown, source (hearsay):

> (2) Quotation:
> <u>According to the victim's father</u>, she has been forced to change her identity five times and is effectively living life "on the run".
> (Mañoso-Pacheco & Juárez-Escribano 2019, p. 200)

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[1] I have underlined the evidential markers in every example to emphasize them.

Hearsay:
I <u>hear</u> you've got a tuition waiver at Stanford, congratulations!
(Nuyts 2017, p. 67)

Some authors also identify a third type of reported evidential, folklore, which refers to shared knowledge or tradition, something that the speaker has always known (Cestero Mancera & Kotwica 2021, p. 151, based on Lazard 2001, p. 365). It usually encompasses areas such as mythology, proverbs, or simply a piece of information that is widely—often universally—known and accepted, and therefore taken as true (Mañoso-Pacheco & Juárez-Escribano 2019, following Willett 1988):

(3) <u>Se suele decir</u> que el perro es el mejor amigo del hombre.
     (Cestero Mancera & Kotwica 2021, p. 154)

As for indirect inferred evidence, again there is variety in the literature. Marín Arrese (2017, p. 198-199), for example, distinguishes between "perceptual-based" and "conceptual-based" evidence. The former (4) is an inference based on sensory perception, while the latter (5) refers to an inference based on the speaker's logic or assumptions:[2]

(4) John <u>must</u> be home, because his car is outside.

(5) John <u>must</u> be tired after such a long trip.

Moreover, as Fitneva (2018, p. 200) observes, "the mental processes involved [in inferences] are often made salient in the immediate conversation (...), an inference is often provided with its basis or justification", which can be seen in the examples above.

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[2] Examples (4) and (5) are my own.

2.3 Evidentiality in English and Catalan

English and Catalan are two languages that do not encode evidentiality grammatically, but have other means of expressing it. As stated before, the most common evidential strategies are lexical, specifically verbs and adverbs. In English, perception verbs are the most typical marker of direct evidentiality, as in (6), where the verb *see* indicates that the fact has been perceived by the speaker directly:

(6)   I <u>see</u> him coming.
       (Cuenca 2015, p. 367, based on Ifantidou 2001)

A number of other verbs and adverbs are used to mark indirect evidence. Consider the following examples:

(7)   John <u>seems</u> to be here now.
       (Cuenca 2015, p. 367, based on Ifantidou 2001)

(8)   <u>Allegedly</u>, Roger shoplifts.
       (Rett & Murray 2013, p. 462, based on Potts 2005)

In (7), the verb *seem* is used as an inferential marker, indicating that the speaker has used their own reasoning to conclude the fact (John is here now). Mortelmans (2017, p. 123) says of *seem*-type verbs that "they combine epistemic with evidential traits",[3] as they encode both the speaker's degree of commitment towards the proposition and the source of information, which in the case of *seem* can be inference or hearsay. The adverbial *allegedly* in (8), on the other hand, encodes reported evidence, since the speaker

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[3] Epistemic modality is a category closely related to evidentiality. Since it deals with "an estimation of the likelihood that a situation is/has been/will be true or false" (Forker 2018, p. 71), the source of evidence will naturally play a strong role in determining how likely a proposition is to be true. While there is debate among scholars about whether the two are separate but related notions, or one category is embedded in the other, this paper follows those who claim that epistemic modality and evidentiality should be treated as distinct categories (see also Sentí 2017, Aikhenvald 2018, Nuyts 2001).

is relaying information that comes from an external source. Similar types of evidentials have been studied in English, such as the adverbials *seemingly* and *apparently* (Böhm, Haßler & Hennemann, 2017) or the structures *be likely to* and *be expected to* (Besnard, 2017), to name a few examples.

While these are the most common evidential strategies in English, they are not the only ones. The modals *may* and *must* have been analyzed by Ortega and Quintana (2013) as inferential markers, indicating an induction process by the speaker based on external evidence, and even some nouns can carry an evidential meaning. Carretero (2016) claims that the nouns *evidence*, *indication*, *proof* and *sign* can encode evidentiality in certain contexts, usually not on their own, but as part of what she calls an evidential expression, which tends to be used to strengthen the reliability of a proposition:

(9) Seismic <u>evidence</u> of the internal structure of the delta suggests that over thirty events can be identified across the region.
     (Carretero 2016, p. 33)

The situation in Catalan is quite similar to the one described above. Like English, Catalan has several equivalent verbs and adverbs that express evidentiality. It also has many instances of semi-grammaticalized evidential strategies, that is, lexical items that originally had evidentiality as a secondary meaning now encode it as its primary—and sometimes only—meaning and may have moved closer to a grammatical element of the language triggered by the semantic change (Sentí, 2017). Sentí describes this process for the verbal periphrases involving the verbs *deure* and *haver* 'must', which underwent a process of grammaticalization during the Old Catalan period in which they "developed other more abstract values, such as meanings of probability or possibility" (Sentí 2017,

p. 20).[4] In a more general sense, this has also been studied as a common phenomenon across Romance languages with certain structures, notably, as Cruschina and Remberger (2008, p. 95) state, the "forms derived from *verba dicendi*". They study the case of a functional form derived from the verb *say* + complementizer in several Romance languages where it has become grammatical. A study of the Catalan correlate of this form, *diu que* 'it is said that', has been conducted by Antolí Martínez and Sentí (2020), who conclude that, while not a fully functional form like its correlates, it is partially grammatical in contemporary Catalan, and used in informal spoken discourse with a reportive meaning:

(10) La rabera sabia on havia d'anar. <u>Diu que</u> els animals tenen més coneximent que les persones.
(Antolí Martínez & Sentí 2020, p. 138)

Lastly, there are also certain verb tenses that can encode evidentiality. In Catalan, as well as other Romance languages, there is a growing tendency, especially in written journalistic discourse, to use the conditional and the conditional perfect as markers of reported evidence:

(11) De fet, <u>hauria estat</u> ell [el regidor d'Economia de Sant Cugat] qui ha fet la trucada a Interior, segons han confirmat a l'ACN fonts properes al cas.
(Martines 2018, p. 260)

2.4 Evidentiality in media

The role that evidentiality plays in journalistic discourse has been of interest to several scholars. Boas (1942, p. 182, quoted in Aikhenvald 2018, p. 1) claims that "we could read

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[4] Translated by me.

our newspapers with much greater satisfaction if our language would compel them to say whether their reports are based on self-experience, inference, or hearsay!".

Evidentials can be used in newspapers both to add reliability to the information that is presented as a fact or, on the contrary, to make a claim sound unreliable. Some evidentials, namely those that mark indirect reported evidence, also relieve the author from the responsibility of their assertions, placing the weight of the truth on the external source instead, which in turn makes them more credible (Ruskan, 2017).

Inferential markers can also be found in journalistic language, even in "fact-based news reporting", as Besnard (2017, p. 265) points out, since "analysis of those facts is part and parcel of journalistic discourse and in this context, conjecture is to be found often". She analyzes two evidential expressions in English, *be likely to* and *be expected to*, and how they are used to represent points of view in journalistic writing. The results show that *be expected to* distances the speaker from the responsibility of the prediction while *be likely to* entails a higher degree of commitment on the speaker's part.

Marín Arrese (2017) examines, among other issues, the evidential expressions found in journalistic discourse in English and Spanish. She predicts that the most common type of evidentiality in news reports will be indirect reportive, as it is more objective because it identifies the source of evidence as an external, ideally reliable, voice. In journalistic commentary, on the other hand, there is likely to be "a greater presence of the internal authorial voice expressed through inferential evidentials" (Marín Arrese 2017, p. 213). Indeed, she finds those results in both languages, with only slight differences regarding the frequency of certain types of evidentials, like a bigger presence of inferential markers in English than in Spanish. A notable phenomenon in Spanish, which has also been observed in the literature for other Romance languages, is the rise of the

conditional and the conditional perfect to indicate reported evidentiality, especially in journalistic language. In English, she observes the tendency of several lexical markers which are typically classified as inferentials, such as the verbs *appear* and *seem* or the adverb *apparently*, to be used as reportive markers in journalistic discourse.

3. Methodology

Two newspapers with a similar ideology were selected to gather the data for the analysis. On the one hand, the Catalan newspaper *Ara* was picked, since, among the current newspapers in Catalan, it is considered to be quite neutral with regards to right- or left-leaning ideologies. On the other hand, the British newspaper *The Independent* was chosen, given that it is widely regarded as a neutral medium—even if slightly left-leaning—which places it near *Ara* in the ideological spectrum.

Once the newspapers were selected, a topic was decided upon, namely the Russian invasion in Ukraine. With the two newspapers being from European countries, but neither directly involved in the war, this was considered a topic that could be handled similarly by both media. Two news articles from each newspaper were analyzed, one from a date surrounding the beginning of the invasion, and one from a date surrounding the one-year anniversary. The articles chosen are news reports, as they are typically more objective than news commentary and, therefore, the information is expected to be delivered in a more neutral tone than in an opinion article. The final aim of these choices was to guarantee that the articles from both newspapers had a similar style of writing, which would make them suitable for a comparison between the two languages.

The four news articles were analyzed manually for instances of evidential markers of any kind. Although the most typical markers usually found in these types of articles are reported evidentials, there might also be inference markers, as was found in other studies about the topic (Besnard 2017, Marín Arrese 2017). Direct evidentiality would be a rare finding in this style of journalism, but any instances of it would also be discussed. Locating the evidential markers and analyzing them in their full context will allow for an analysis of their function in journalistic discourse and their effect on the delivery of the information.

4. Results and discussion

In all four news articles that were analyzed, there is a considerable quantity of evidential expressions. As explained in section 2.3, evidentiality is not a grammatical category in English and Catalan. Therefore, the examples found in the news articles consist mostly of lexical items—especially verbs, but also some adverbs—as well as strategies closer to grammaticalization, such as specific verb tenses that have also been commented on earlier. As for the types of evidentiality, only indirect evidence can be found in the news reports, which is coherent with the genre under study: they are objective pieces where the voice of the author should be almost non-existent, instead relaying information that is based on facts and external sources.

Within indirect evidence, considering what Marín Arrese (2017) predicted and later confirmed in her study, it was expected that there would be a higher presence of reported evidence, which contributes to the objective nature of these types of articles. Nonetheless, in the news reports that were analyzed in this paper, a large amount of

inferred evidentiality was found, sometimes surpassing the number of reported evidentials. This could be due to the topic discussed in the articles (the war between Russia and Ukraine), which is complex and easily gives rise to doubts and questions about the reliability of the information about it. Furthermore, the topic is also polarizing, and it is likely that authors, even when writing as objectively as possible, let their stance on the matter shine through.

This section of the paper is divided into three subsections. Firstly, the most representative examples of reported evidentiality in English and Catalan are discussed. Secondly, the inferential evidentials are examined. Lastly, the most notable differences and similarities in the use of evidentials in newspaper discourse between both languages are summarized.

4.1 Indirect reported evidentiality

As mentioned above, most examples of evidentiality found in the news articles are lexical items, particularly verbs. In the case of reported evidence, it is realized mostly through reporting verbs:

> (12) Ms Harris also <u>said</u> that Russia had been "weakened" by the war in her speech at the security conference.
> (*The Independent*, 19/02/2023)

In this example, the verb *say* indicates that the fact (Russia has been weakened by the war) has been learned through an external source (Kamala Harris). The type of reporting verb that the author chooses also affects the credibility of the report. The verb in (12) can be considered neutral, as it does not show judgment on the author's part toward the original statement. The same can be said of the following example with the Catalan

verb *apuntar* 'declare', where the author is presenting a fact based on an external source and acknowledging the credibility of said source:

(13) Però ahir el president dels EUA, Joe Biden, <u>va apuntar</u> encara un escenari més quan va assegurar que l'ambició de Putin "va molt més enllà d'Ucraïna" i que no es quedarà aquí.
(*Ara*, 25/02/2022)

Other reporting verbs, however, have different implications. Some of them are weaker, showing that the author is less certain of the reliability of the report and concedes the possibility of other views:

(14) Some experts <u>have</u> also <u>suggested</u> British planes would not be the most suitable option for Ukraine.
(*The Independent*, 19/02/2023)

These types of verbs also indicate that the reported evidential itself is not very strong, further away from being a fact than the examples above. There is a third type of reporting verb that shows a strong commitment towards the fact from the source, but not necessarily from the author who reports the source:

(15) [Joe Biden] <u>va assegurar</u> que l'ambició de Putin "va molt més enllà d'Ucraïna" i que no es quedarà aquí.
(*Ara*, 25/02/2022)

(16) US vice president Kamala Harris <u>has accused</u> Russia of committing "crimes against humanity" in Ukraine.
(*The Independent*, 19/02/2023)

In these two examples, the author is deliberately choosing strong verbs—*assegurar* 'claim' and *accuse*—that show that the source is committed to their statement and presents it as a fact. However, using this type of verb places the weight of the truth on the source while minimizing the author's involvement, which makes the report seem unreliable and subjective.

As stated before, verbs are a very common evidential strategy in English and Catalan, and by far the most common one in the articles analyzed. However, several examples of other evidential expressions were found as well.

When it comes to expressing reported evidentiality by means of adverbs, there are only two examples in the articles, both in English:

(17) However, worries are <u>reportedly</u> growing that China might increase its support for Russia up to and including lethal military aid.
(*The Independent*, 19/02/2023)

(18) Johnson spoke of how he, and Europe and America, "will maximise the economic price" that Putin will pay for his actions. This will start, <u>apparently</u>, with "ending Europe's dependence on Russian oil and gas".
(*The Independent*, 25/02/2022)

The evidential adverb in (17) is a typical one, which shows how the fact being discussed has been reported by an external source. Example (18), however, is a little more interesting, as the adverb *apparently* is used as a reportive evidential despite typically encoding an inferential meaning. This tendency was already described by Marín Arrese (2017) in her study on multifunctionality of evidential expressions, where she observed this change of meaning not only with the adverb *apparently*, but also with the verbs *seem* and *appear*.

Another reported evidential strategy that is quite common in non-evidential languages is the preposition *according to*, in English, and the Catalan equivalent *segons*. It is quite neutral when it comes to introducing a reported statement, as there is no judgment on its reliability, and it allows the reporter to place the weight of the fact on the external source. There is only one example in English in the news reports, but several in Catalan:

(19) US officials have shared intelligence with allies and partners at the conference suggesting China is adopting a more aggressive attitude, <u>according to</u> reporting by CNN.
(*The Independent*, 19/02/2023)

(20) Aquest càlcul també ha pesat en la decisió de Putin d'envair Ucraïna, <u>segons</u> Ter.
(*Ara*, 25/02/2022)

(21) (...) però, <u>segons</u> opina l'experta en Rússia Marta Ter, és difícil "que Zelenski pugui mantenir-se en el poder i probablement aquest serà un dels punts de la capitulació que el mateix president pot acabar acceptant".
(*Ara*, 25/02/2022)

The strategies seen so far are quite common and can be found in both languages analyzed. However, verb tenses expressing evidentiality can only be found in the Catalan newspapers. Particularly, the use of the evidential conditional is becoming popular in several Romance languages to mark reported evidence in journalistic discourse:

(22) Cal parar atenció també a les baixes (morts i ferits). Amb les corresponents precaucions respecte a les dades, ambdós bàndols ja <u>haurien superat</u> les cent mil.
(*Ara*, 18/02/2023)

(23) El doctor en relacions internacionals Ernesto Pasqual apunta un escenari intermedi en el qual Ucraïna <u>mantindria</u> el seu govern però el Kremlin <u>s'annexionaria</u> tant el Donbass i Crimea (ja annexionada de facto des del 2014) com tota la zona d'Odessa (...).
(*Ara*, 25/02/2022)

Finally, there are some examples that are hard to classify, as the evidential itself is not a specific marker, such as a verb that typically carries an evidential meaning. Instead, there are cases where the full context of a sentence or phrase is needed to understand its evidential function:

(24) <u>Les notícies aparegudes les darreres setmanes</u> sobre una possible nova ofensiva russa tenen fonament, però convé estar atents als detalls.
(*Ara*, 18/02/2023)

(25) <u>US officials have shared intelligence</u> with allies and partners at the conference suggesting China is adopting a more aggressive attitude, according to reporting by CNN.
(*The Independent*, 19/02/2023)

The verbs *aparèixer* 'appear, turn up' and *share* are not evidential on their own, but it is the whole phrase, with the direct reference to the external source, that gives rise to the evidential meaning.

These two cases are examples of quotative evidentials, that is to say, the external source is made explicit and the reader knows where the information comes from. This is the case for most of the reported evidentials that were found, which is coherent with the genre under study—the news report—as stating the source gives credibility and objectivity to the report, especially when it is an authority figure.

Compare the examples above with (26), where the type of reported evidentiality is hearsay, meaning that the source is not explicit and therefore unknown to the reader:

(26) When <u>it's been explained</u> how one of the functions of the European Union was to make the economies of the major European powers so intertwined and interdependent that war between them would be unthinkable.
(*The Independent*, 25/02/2022)

Although the reader can interpret that there must be some reliable source that has "explained" the fact, the use of the passive allows for the source to be unidentified and simply shows that the reporter has acquired the information externally.

4.2 Indirect inferred evidentiality

Inferred evidentiality is slightly harder to analyze from a purely evidential standpoint, as it is closely tied to subjectivity: inferences are always subjective, since they are the result

of a mental process. For this reason, an inference might be used as evidence for a fact that is not necessarily true, but simply presented as such by the author, with the mental process as the evidence to support it. Similarly to what was found for reported evidence, inferential evidentiality is mostly realized by means of verbs in the articles analyzed:

(27) However, defence secretary Ben Wallace <u>seemed</u> more sceptical, saying that the move could be years away, if it happened at all.
(*The Independent*, 19/02/2023)

(28) Johnson is not the first to hope that history will condemn Putin. A lot of people <u>appear to</u> be leaving the heavy lifting to history.
(*The Independent*, 25/02/2022)

(29) (...) per enfortir les defenses per a la previsible contraofensiva ucraïnesa, que <u>s'espera</u> per a la primavera-estiu.
(*Ara*, 18/02/2023)

Specifically, modal verbs are a very common strategy to express inferred evidence. While in English there are several modals that mark inference, the examples show that in Catalan only the modal verb *poder* 'can' carries out this function:

(30) Instead, they suggest that Polish aircraft <u>could</u> be quicker to deploy in combat since they are more similar to Ukranian jets (...).
(*The Independent*, 19/02/2023)

(31) Squeezing Russia out of the global economy <u>may</u> degrade it, but it <u>should</u> be clear enough to see that it will not disincentivise it from whatever it has planned next.
(*The Independent*, 25/02/2022)

(32) El volum de notícies que han aparegut en l'any que ha transcorregut fa que <u>es pugui</u> perdre la perspectiva cronològica, necessària per saber en quin punt es troba la guerra i les perspectives de futur.
(*Ara*, 18/02/2023)

(33) Això [l'oferta d'Ucraïna de no entrar a l'OTAN] <u>pot</u> obrir la porta a un acord per posar fi a la intervenció militar russa (...).
(*Ara*, 25/02/2022)

Other than verbs, some adverbs and adjectives were found in the articles also marking inferred evidence:

(34) Ukrainians loading their children on to buses to the "safe zone" <u>probably</u> haven't had time to count all the countries and people around the world who stand "shoulder to shoulder" with them, yet when they look over their shoulder they find no one there.
(*The Independent*, 25/02/2022)

(35) The <u>obvious</u> conclusion to be drawn from such things is not that sanctions will hurt us as well as them.
(*The Independent*, 25/02/2022)

It is interesting that most of the examples of inferential evidentials in English were found in the article from the beginning of the invasion, when everything was more uncertain and journalists could speculate about the motives behind the conflict and how it would develop.

As for Catalan, inferred evidence can be found in both articles, but it is more present in the one from the beginning of the invasion as well. Example (36) is particularly interesting because it is the headline of the article, which already sets an uncertain tone for the rest of the piece:

(36) L'ocupació total d'Ucraïna i la instauració d'un govern titella de Moscou, l'escenari més <u>probable</u>
(*Ara*, 25/02/2022)

(37) Sigui com sigui, el que <u>ha quedat clar</u> és que les sancions econòmiques anunciades per Occident en resposta a l'atac rus són "necessàries però totalment insuficients" per aturar el Kremlin, afirma Claudín.
(*Ara*, 25/02/2022)

(38) Amb aquest panorama, l'escenari que <u>veuen més possible</u> els analistes és el del canvi de règim a Ucraïna per instaurar un govern pro-rus.
(*Ara*, 25/02/2022)

In (38), it is worth noting that the inference is part of a reported evidential, so the objectivity that might have been brought by having a reliable external source—such as political analysts—is mitigated with the use of the adjective *possible* 'possible'.

Following Marín Arrese's (2017) division of inferred evidentials, both types were identified in the articles. Example (27), for example, is a perceptual-based inference, as the fact that Ben Wallace is "more sceptical" can be concluded from his words. Example (34), on the other hand, is a conceptual-based inference, where the author is drawing a conclusion based on an assumption.

4.3 Notable differences and similarities between English and Catalan

As can be observed in the sections above, the analysis of the four news articles resulted in similar findings for English and Catalan. There is roughly the same amount of evidentials in both languages, with Catalan having a slightly higher count, but not enough for it to be relevant. The types of evidentiality are evenly distributed between both languages as well; in fact, the differences are more prominent when the date of the article is considered, rather than the language, with the piece written at the beginning of the invasion having more inferences than the one written one year later.

The most notable differences between English and Catalan are found in the strategies used to express evidentiality, as explained in the previous sections. The Catalan articles use the evidential conditional to mark reported evidence, a resource that is particular to Romance languages and, therefore, not present in the English news reports. Still within reported evidence, examples of evidential adverbs were found in the English articles, but none were accounted for in the Catalan ones.

As for inferred evidentials, English has a larger variety of modal verbs that carry out this function than Catalan. As exemplified in section 4.2, several English modals were identified in the articles, such as *may*, *could* or *might*, whereas all the examples found in Catalan use the verb *poder* 'can'. Despite that, both Catalan articles have a slightly larger amount of inferential evidence than the English ones, while the reportive evidence is more evenly distributed.

Overall, all four news reports have numerous examples of evidential expressions, both reportive and inferential, which influences the way that readers perceive the articles. For example, the high number of inferences in the news stories from the beginning of the invasion make it seem like an uncertain subject, of which not much is known, as well as allowing the journalist to avoid taking a strong stance. On the other hand, the reported evidentials pointing at renowned politicians and political analysts give the articles objectivity and credibility, while also relieving the reporter from the responsibility of their words.

5. Conclusion

The aim of this dissertation was to examine the role of evidentiality in English and Catalan newspaper discourse. After conducting a review of the evidential strategies that can be found in both languages, and the evidentials that were found in media in other studies on the subject, an analysis of a sample of news reports in English and Catalan was carried out.

The results of this analysis show that evidentiality is largely used in the media produced in these two languages. There was a high number of evidentials in both

newspapers, with numerous examples of both reported and inferred evidence. It was expected that there would be no direct evidentiality in the news reports, given that they are objective pieces where the voice of the author should not be present, and the analysis confirmed it.

A high amount of reported evidence was also expected, as the allusion to external sources, especially authority figures and experts on the subject, provides the articles with objectivity and credibility. The most surprising finding, however, was the large number of inferential evidentials in both languages. Although there have been some studies which found instances of inferred evidentials in news reports, such as Besnard (2017), it was expected that those would be marginal, with few examples to be found. Instead, a large amount of inferential evidentiality was accounted for in all articles, and in some it even surpassed the amount of reported evidentials.

As for the comparison between the findings in Catalan and English, there are few relevant differences. Almost the same quantity of evidentials was found in both languages, with Catalan having a slightly higher count, and both types of evidentiality were also accounted for in both newspapers. The main differences were in certain strategies that are restricted to or more productive in one of the languages, such as the evidential conditional, which is found in Catalan but not in English, or the inferential modal verbs, which are several in English but only *poder* 'can' in Catalan.

It is important to consider that this study was based on a small sample—two articles from one newspaper per language—which limits the scope of the findings. A larger sample would need to be analyzed, with several articles from several newspapers, to be able to draw more general conclusions about the role of evidentiality in English and Catalan media. Furthermore, the sample analyzed in this paper was restricted to news

reports, but the evidential strategies used in news commentary, a much more subjective genre, can also be an interesting topic for further research. Finally, this study did not deal with the markers found in the direct quotations in the articles, as it focused only on the language used by the reporters, but analyzing what type of quotations are chosen to be included in news articles and how they affect the overall tone of the piece also deserves some attention in further studies.

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