The internal structure of evidentiality in Romance

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This article discusses the evidential uses of the Future, Conditional and Indicative Imperfect in various Romance languages (mostly French, Italian, Portuguese, Spanish) and the semantic factors that underlie the choice between them. The Romance data are used as a background for an evaluation of proposed taxonomies of evidentiality (Willett 1988; Frawley 1992; Botne 1997). It is shown that Willett's model, based on the primary distinction direct vs. indirect type of evidence, is better suited to account for evidentiality in Romance, while the notion of source should be considered as independently interacting with the type of evidence/mode of knowing.

1. Introduction

The nature and limits of evidentiality are still debated issues in typological works, a point of major concern being the distinction between evidentiality and other modal notions. It has even been questioned whether evidentiality belongs to modality or should be treated as an independent semantic domain (Van der Auwer & Plungian 1998:85–86). For those who implicitly or explicitly consider evidentiality as properly modal another often discussed point is the relationship between evidentiality and epistemic modality. Even if these two are often presented as independent notions (Chung & Timberlake 1985:242–246; Palmer 1986; Bybee & Fleischman 1995:4), some form of overlapping between them seems to exist, blurring the distinction. It may happen that one and the same gram is considered evidential by some authors and epistemic by others or as borderline between the two domains. This is for instance the case of inferential markers, which, even if often consistently treated as evidentials (Chung & Timberlake 1985:242–246; Willett 1988:54, 89 fn. 5; Frawley 1992:412–413), are described as a case of interaction between epistemic modality and eviden-
tiality by Van der Auwera & Plungian (1998:86). Their intermediate status is also recognized by Palmer (1986:57–60, 69–70), who treats inferentials under the heading judgements when languages such as English or German are concerned (as in English *John must be at home*), while mentioning them in the section devoted to evidentials in a language such as Tuyuca.

The question concerning the mutual boundaries between epistemic and evidential is not the only point debated, another issue often discussed being the internal organization of evidentiality. In some classifications the relevant notions are presented in a non-hierarchical list, as can be mostly found in the first classificatory attempts, like Givón’s (1982:411), recognizing four main gradient evidential scales, or Chung & Timberlake’s (1985:244), distinguishing four epistemological submodes, and again in Guentchéva (1994:9; 1996), who recognizes three main subcategories belonging to the domain of evidentiality (*médiatif* in her terminology). More recently, attempts have also been made to introduce an internal organization in the classification, relevant examples of this tendency being Anderson’s (1986:284), Willett’s (1988) and Frawley’s (1992:413) proposals. These classifications differ profoundly in the formats employed: while Willett (Figure 2) and Frawley (Figure 3) adopt a structur- alistic representation based on traditional hierarchical tiers, Anderson (Figure 1) proposes a connectionistic semantic map admitting polydirectional and non-hierarchical relationships among the relevant notions. On the other hand, Willett’s and Frawley’s proposals, even if having the hierarchical principle in common, differ with respect to the internal organization. From this point of view Willett’s model is more compatible with Anderson’s map, and radically different from the schema proposed by Frawley. As is clear from Figures 2–3, the main difference between Willett’s (1988) and Frawley’s (1992:413) categorial models is the choice of the basic opposition hierarchically dominating all evidential distinctions. While Willett (1988) recognizes the type of evidence as the notion governing the main binary opposition (direct vs. indirect type of evidence), in Frawley it is the source of evidence to be taken as the main organizational principle. Obviously, the selection of a different basic opposition leads to a completely different model, thus providing two different approaches awaiting empirical testing.
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Figure 1. A map of mental space for evidential meaning (Anderson 1986: 284)
In what follows these classificational proposals will be tested by means of (mainly synchronic) data from the Romance modal system. The discussion will be focused on the empirical adequacy of the classifications rather than on the evaluation of their representational formats. For the time being, the differences in the format will be minimized, and major attention will be paid to the form-function correlations represented in the schemata. From this point of view Anderson’s and Willett’s models, being more consistent in their results, will be considered as two different ways of representing the same classification and contrasted with Frawley’s model. Even if not recognizing any hierarchical dependencies, in Anderson’s methodology the location in the map is a way of representing form-function correlations recurrent in several languages and can be intended as a way of providing an internal organization of the evidential semantic space. In particular, the adjacency of two semantic notions in Anderson’s map corresponds to semantic similarity and Willett’s proposal generally
respect, even if in a simplified way, the correlations proposed by Anderson.

Even if in this article the question of the format remains in the background, some hints for a revision of Willett’s and Frawley’s traditional structuralistic representation can be derived from the data. In particular, it will be shown that a hierarchical ordering of the two basic notions of evidentiality (source and type of evidence) is not tenable and should be replaced by a non-hierarchical interaction between the two (see Section 3.1). On the other hand the data presented in Section 3.2 are compatible both with an old-fashioned hierarchical modelling and with a more modern connectionistic semantic map. In the former option two formally related functions will be represented as hierarchically dominated by an overarching category, while in the latter choice the two functions will be adjacent in the map. Therefore, the evaluation of the empirical adequacy can be considered independent from the format. It must be admitted that this is especially true as far as the synchronic arrangement is concerned. Conversely, the choice of the format becomes crucial in a diachronic perspective. In fact, one significant aspect which makes a semantic non-hierarchical map preferable with respect to a structuralistic layering of categories is the possibility of accounting for synchronic and diachronic data at the same time. In Anderson’s semantic map diachronic evolutions are represented by means of unidirectional or bidirectional arrows connecting different locations in the map and this methodology has been fully implemented by Van der Auwera & Plungian (1998). Unfortunately, the few diachronic data presented in this article (Section 4) are not enough to test the diachronic dimension of the schema. Therefore, an evaluation of the empirical adequacy of Anderson’s model, as well as a comprehensive comparative evaluation of semantic maps with respect to more traditional schemata, must be postponed for further research. For the time being the discussion will mostly be limited to the synchronic make-up, assuming that the form-function correlations which can be found in a synchronic stage are relevant data per se, independently of their diachronic development. Thus, the fact that a form is used for two different meanings is prima facie evidence for a semantic correlation between the two meanings which has to be reflected in the classification (for the methodology concerning the construction of functional classifications see Anderson 1986:278–285, and, more recently Haspelmath 1997:58–86). As noted by Anderson (1986:280–285) the diachronic dimension might correct some invalid conclusions based on synchronic data, but synchronic form-function correlations are still primary evidence in the construction of a classification, whatever its format is.
2. **Source vs. type of evidence**

The two different notions chosen by Willett (1988) and Frawley (1992:413) as basic organizational principles, type and source of evidence respectively, require some additional remarks, since their definitions and usage in the literature are not consistent.

The notion of **type of evidence**, ultimately deriving from Anderson (1986:274), corresponds to what in other analyses is called **mode of knowing**, which was originally introduced in Chafe (1986:263) and also used in Botne (1997:524), who defines it as “the path by which the information was obtained”. Mostly elaborating on Palmer’s (1986) analysis and Chung & Timberlake’s (1985:242–246) classification, Willett (1988) distinguishes between **direct** and **indirect types of evidence**. An evidential marker of directness is used to emphasize that the speaker has acted as a direct witness of the situation, in some languages (such as the well described case of Tuyuca) the type of sensorial evidence the speaker has (visual vs. auditory) being also morphologized. On the other hand, an evidential marker of indirectness emphasizes that the speaker has no direct evidence of the situation presented, which can only be inferred or attributed to an external source (reported).

As for the **source of evidence**, which is attributed the main role by Frawley (1992:413), it must be observed that this notion has been interpreted in different ways. In some analyses source seems to be very generically intended as synonymous with evidence (see for instance Chung & Timberlake 1985; Bybee 1985:184; the narrow definition of evidentiality in Chafe 1986:262; Willett 1988), whereas in Frawley (1992:413) and Botne (1997:519) source is used in a restrictive sense, being related only to the origin of the information, which can be internal (the self is the source) or external (the source is someone else). The restrictive sense of source adopted by Frawley (1992) fits well into his general deictic account of evidentiality, where the contextual reference point (**Self** vs. **Other**) plays a major role.  

The choice of considering the type of evidence or the source as the primary organizational principle has clear consequences for the further distribution of the remaining evidential notions. Thus, in Willett (1988) the primacy of the opposition direct vs. indirect mode of knowing produces a unification between reported and inferring evidence, which are lumped together within the general notion of indirect evidence. On the contrary, in the organizing system proposed by Frawley (1992:413), since the deictic source of information is taken as the primary organizing principle, inferences and reports fall into different
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categories, inferences being more naturally embedded in the Self and reports in the Other.

The relationship between inference and report is a case in which Willett’s internal hierarchy is clearly more consistent with Anderson’s semantic map than with Frawley’s model, despite the different representational format. In Anderson’s map inference and verbal source evidentials (hearsay etc.) are adjacent and far apart from sensory evidential located on the right border of the rectangle (which contains those forms considered by Anderson 1986:280 as true evidentials). The basic distinction between direct and indirect types of evidence proposed by Willett is a way of representing in a hierarchical manner the semantic similarity between inference and report as is presupposed by the adjacency in Anderson’s semantic map. On the contrary, Frawley’s account is not compatible with Anderson’s results, provided that in his schema inference and report are far apart, embedded in two separate general notions (Self vs. Other). This is why, for the sake of the present discussion, Willett and Anderson will be considered as representative of the same general organizational proposal and contrasted with Frawley’s model, which is radically different.

Willett’s (1988) and Frawley’s (1992:413) organizational models have been discussed and tested in Botne (1997:522–526), a study devoted to evidential markers in a Bantu language (Lega). In fact, even if basing his analysis on Willett’s and Frawley’s organizational models, Botne (1997:525) provides a classificatory system where no hierarchical embedding can be found. He recognizes two different sources (Self and Other) and three types of evidence in its classification (sensory, inference and report; see Figure 4), but none of them is given a primary status as organizing principle of the evidential semantic space.

The absence of a hierarchical organization in Botne’s classificatory system is confirmed by his presentation of the data in Figure 5 (Botne 1997:519), where Lega evidentials are classified in a two dimensional outline.

In Figure 5 mode of knowing and source of knowledge act as two independent categories, possibly interacting but not hierarchically ordered. However, Botne’s discussion is not uncontroversial on this point: while in the charts no

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of information</th>
<th>Mode of knowing</th>
<th>Modality</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self</td>
<td>Sensory</td>
<td>Cogency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>Inference</td>
<td>Validity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Report</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Figure 4. Evidentials (Botne 1997:525)
hierarchical principle is recognized, in the text Frawley’s model is considered as more suitable to describe the formal and functional distribution in Lega, where the same evidential marker (ampô) can be used for the expression of both inference and direct attested evidence, while other markers occur as reportive, thus confirming the major role played by the source distinction Self vs. Other. To this it could be objected that ampô not only neutralizes the distinction between attested and inferred evidence, but, as is clear from Botne’s (1997:519) description, also occurs in reportive contexts, thus neutralizing all evidential distinctions including Frawley’s main opposition Self vs. Other. What is common in all uses of ampô seems to be the marking of “cogent and compelling evidence for the assertion made” (Botne 1997:522), thus being a marker of factuality rather than an evidential form. Whatever the interpretation of ampô is, the fact remains that it can not be considered as providing supportive evidence for Frawley’s classification, since all evidential values are neutralized by this marker.3

In this article the discussion of the internal structure of evidentiality will be pursued by means of mainly synchronic Romance data. It will be shown that the behavior of some Romance modal markers provides the appropriate evidence allowing a contrastive testing of Anderson’s/Willett’s and Frawley’s proposals (that kind of evidence which Botne 1997 has failed to provide).

The data here presented will show that Willett’s classification provides better results than Frawley’s, even if the behavior of the Italian Imperfect will also demonstrate that Willett’s schema should be revised too, adopting a classification, along the lines proposed by Botne (1997:525), in which type of evidence and source are considered as independent interacting notions instead of being hierarchically embedded.

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**Figure 5.** Evidential coding in Lega (Botne 1997:519)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of knowledge</th>
<th>Sensory</th>
<th>Inference</th>
<th>Report</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self</td>
<td>ampô</td>
<td>ëmbë/ampô</td>
<td>ampô</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>ëmbo</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of knowledge</th>
<th>Sensory</th>
<th>Inference</th>
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<tr>
<td>Self</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
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</table>
3. Evidential markers in Romance

Applying the notion of evidentiality to the Romance verb system requires some preliminary comments, for Romance is not a traditional field of descriptive work on evidentials. Only recently has the presence of evidential markers in these languages been the object of careful semantic description, as in Radanova-Kuševa (1991–1992), Dendale (1994), Dendale & Tasmowski (1994), Dendale & De Mulder (1996), Guentchéva (1994). Apart from these works evidentiality had never been recognized as a necessary tool in describing the Romance modal system, the basic distinction between epistemic and deontic being traditionally considered as comprehensively covering the semantic space where a morphological encoding of modality can be found in Romance. In this article the project of introducing evidentiality as a relevant notion in the description of Romance will be further pursued, also providing partially new descriptive analyses of the semantic behavior of some Romance verb forms which have never been studied as possible evidential markers. In particular the Future and Conditional, as well as the Indicative Imperfect, will be carefully analyzed in their functions as inferential and reportive markers. Attention will also be paid to the crosslinguistic diverse distributions shown by these Romance forms, as well as to the different diachronic development which characterizes the Italian verb system as opposed to French, Spanish and Portuguese.

It could be objected that a classification proposed for languages where evidential distinctions are saliently grammaticalized by being obligatorily marked by special forms does not work for languages such as the Romance group where evidentiality is expressed by forms which mainly have other modal and aspectual values. Ironically, languages where evidentiality is less prominently grammaticalized can be even more significant in order to evaluate classificational systems, for in these languages neutralizations of different evidential functions in one and the same form occur frequently. In the methodology adopted in this article, following the traditional functional approach, neutralization is a relevant piece of evidence in order to evaluate a classificatory model.

3.1 Reportive markers in Italian

Descriptive works on the Romance verb system have often pointed out that the form traditionally called Conditional, among other more prominent and frequent uses, can also occur in contexts expressing report, hearsay or unconfirmed information, as in the French (1) and Italian (2) examples:
This usage has been dubbed with diverse terminology focusing on different facets of its semantics: the label *conditionnel de l’information incertaine* ‘Conditional of unconfirmed information’ is used by Martin (1981:87), who emphasizes the lack of commitment of the speaker to the factuality of the situation referred to. On the other hand the definition as *conditionnel de la rumeur* ‘Conditional of rumor’ proposed by Togeby (1982:388) brings emphasis on the hearsay evidential character of the form. More recently reference on the reportive character of the Conditional can be frequently found in Romance verb system analyses. In his survey of evidential systems Palmer (1986:70) includes the French Conditional among evidential reportive markers. The primacy of evidentiality over the other epistemic features of the Conditional has been convincingly demonstrated by Dendale (1993). According to him the essential character of the Conditional in these cases has to be found in the external nature of the source, the attenuation of the factuality only being a secondary effect. As for the Italian Conditional Lepschy & Lepschy (1981:209) describe it as expressing hearsay, in Schwarze (1988:660–661) it is dubbed *Modalität der Redewiedergabe* ‘quotative modality’, Radanova-Kuševa (1991–1992) studies in detail the reportive usage of the Conditional and Berretta (1992) refers to its quotative nature (see also Fava 1995:52 and Solarino 1996:162–164).

Its nature as marker of indirect evidentiality is confirmed by the ungrammaticality of the Italian Conditional in a context (3) where a direct evidential interpretation is forced by focusing on the direct knowledge of the speaker, as in a context containing a visual verb:

(3)  \[\text{Venerdì scorso Giovanna sarebbe uscita alle 5. L’ho vista io.}\]

‘Last Friday G. left (lit. would have left) at 5. I saw her’

In this respect the Conditional behaves like other modal forms in the Italian paradigm, also discussed by Radanova-Kuševa (1991–1992), such as the Future (4) or other modal periphrastic constructions with the auxiliaries *dovere* ‘must’
(5) or potere 'may' (6), whereas other forms, such as the Present Perfect (7) or the Simple Past (8), are felicitous in such contexts:

(4) ??Venerdì scorso Giovanna sarà uscita alle 5. L'ho vista io.
   ‘Last Friday G. probably left (lit. will have left) at 5. I saw her’

(5) ??Venerdì scorso Giovanna deve essere uscita alle 5. L'ho vista io.
   ‘Last Friday G. must have left at 5. I saw her’

(6) ??Venerdì scorso Giovanna può essere uscita alle 5. L'ho vista io.
   ‘Last Friday G. may have left at 5. I saw her’

   ‘Last Friday G. left (lit. has left) at 5. I saw her’

(8) Venerdì scorso Giovanna uscì alle 5. La vidi io.
   ‘Last Friday G. left at 5. I saw her’

Other tests show that among the forms expressing indirect knowledge the Conditional is the only one which cannot occur in an inferential context (12), whereas the Future (9) and the other modal periphrastic constructions with the auxiliaries dovere 'must' (10) or potere 'may' (11) are felicitous (similar data in Radanova-Kuševa 1991–1992:346; Orletti 1995:368; Solarino 1996:161; for French see also Dendale 1994:38): 5

(9) Strano che la luce sia accesa. Si saranno dimenticati di spegnerla.
   ‘It is strange that the light is on. They have probably forgotten (lit. will have forgotten) to turn it out’

(10) Strano che la luce sia accesa. Devono essersi dimenticati di spegnerla.
    ‘It is strange that the light is on. They must have forgotten to turn it out’

(11) Strano che la luce sia accesa. Possono essersi dimenticati di spegnerla.
    ‘It is strange that the light is on. They may have forgotten to turn it out’

(12) ??Strano che la luce sia accesa. Si sarebbero dimenticati di spegnerla.
    ‘It is strange that the light is on. [According to what someone said] they have forgotten (lit. would have forgotten) to turn it out’

Radanova-Kuševa (1991–1992:346–347) has also demonstrated that the Conditional is sensitive to the indication of the source of the information, necessarily requiring an external source (13) and disallowing the speaker as a possible source (14) (see also Donaire 1998:219–220 for similar French data): 6

(13) Secondo Paolo adesso sarebbero già le 4.
    ‘According to P. it is (lit. would be) already 4 o’clock now’
(14) \( ^{12} \) Secondo me adesso sarebbero già le 4.
   ‘According to me it is (lit. would be) already 4 o’clock now’

The data presented so far conclusively confirm that the Conditional is marked as a reportive form, excluding any inferential reading. In what follows it will be demonstrated that the Conditional is not the only form whose evidential nature is restricted to report in the Italian verb system, showing that the Indicative Imperfect as well has an evidential reportive function, which has never been recognized in descriptive works on the Italian verb system.

The Romance Imperfect has often been described as showing several modal meanings (see Bertinetto 1986:368–380; Bazzanella 1990; Berretta 1992 for a survey on the Italian form; Coseriu 1976 for Romance in general). Among these meanings Conte (1984:202) has pointed out a special usage (15–16), where the Imperfect shows some form of epistemic meaning, signalling that the situation is part of presupposed knowledge, that both the speaker and the addressee share and about which the speaker is asking for confirmation:

(15) Che cosa c’era domani al cinema?
    ‘What’s (lit. was IP) 7 on tomorrow at the movies?’

(16) A che ora dovevamo incontrarci stasera?
    ‘At what time shall we (lit. had we to IP) meet tonight?’

What is striking in these cases is that the Imperfect shows a modal value which is not the counterfactual function (17) or an attenuative usage in pragmatically marked contexts (18), which are often associated with this form.

(17) Se venivi domani era meglio.
    ‘If you had come (lit. came IP) tomorrow, it would have been (lit. was IP) better’

(18) Volevo un bicchiere di vino, per favore.
    ‘I would like (lit. wanted IP) a glass of wine, please’

According to Bazzanella (1990:450–452) the usage of the Imperfect in (15–16) is likely to derive from the ellipsis of a past \textit{verbum dicendi}, that requires an Imperfect in the subordinate clause for a situation contemporary or posterior to the \textit{verbum dicendi} (past in the past reading and future in the past reading of the Imperfect). The originating context of the epistemic Imperfect would be something like (19), where the Imperfect is triggered by the Present Perfect in the matrix clause for \textit{consecutio temporum}：“

(19) Secondo me ieri sera c’era il tenente col suo ufficiale domani.
    ‘According to me yesterday evening there was the captain with his officer tomorrow’
However, the Imperfect is now completely autonomous from this original context and can appear without requiring the matrix clause and the *verbum dicendi*. Berretta (1992:141–143) quotes some other examples of this kind, proposing to consider them as due to the intrinsic non-factual nature of the Imperfect, which is also responsible for its other modal uses. In fact, the usage here discussed seems to be much more frequent than has so far been recognized. In Squartini (1995) I proposed considering also cases such as (20–22) as other instances of the same kind of modal Imperfect discussed by Conte (1984), Bazzanella (1990) and Berretta (1992):

(20) *Ieri Paolo andava a vedere la casa nuova.*
   ‘Yesterday Paolo *was to visit* (lit. visited IP) the new house’

(21) *Paolo quel giorno lavorava fino alle sei del pomeriggio.*
   ‘On that day Paolo *was to work* (lit. worked IP) until six o’clock in the evening’

(22) *Ieri il treno partiva alle 5.30, invece che alle 6.*
   ‘Yesterday the train *was due to leave* (lit. left IP) at 5.30 instead of 6’

In all these cases, unlike those quoted by Conte (1984), the Imperfect has a past temporal reference, so that it can be more easily misinterpreted as a regular case of Imperfect aspectually marked as imperfective form and temporally past, which is the canonical usage of the form in a Romance language. Upon more accurate inspection it can be shown that in (20–22) the Imperfect neutralizes its aspectual imperfective value. This is quite clear in (21–22), where the Imperfect is combined with delimiting (21) and punctual (22) temporal adverbials forcing a perfective reading. This can be confirmed by the fact that perfective forms such as the Present Perfect or a Simple Past are also grammatical in (20–22). Had these latter forms been used, the aspectual visualization and the temporal reference would not be affected, the modal semantics being the only differential feature. With the Imperfect the situation is reported as planned to occur but not confirmed by the speaker’s direct knowledge. On the contrary, a perfective form can also be interpreted as implying the speaker’s direct knowledge.

My proposal now is to consider the modal semantics of the Imperfect in cases such as (20–22) as basically involving evidentiality: what is emphasized in these contexts is the evidential mode of knowing; the speaker underlines that no direct knowledge on the actual occurrence of the situation is available, only
indirect knowledge being provided. The same tests used above for the other forms expressing indirect knowledge will now be extended to this kind of Imperfect, in order to reach a better understanding of its evidential nature. In so doing similarities and differences with respect to the Conditional and the inferential forms recognized above (the Future and the periphrastic forms with *may* and *must*) will be pointed out.

First of all it can be demonstrated that the Imperfect patterns together with the other evidential forms (4–6) not being acceptable in contexts implying direct visual knowledge:


‘Last Friday G. was to leave (lit. left IP) at 5. I saw her’

As far as the distinction between inferential and reportive markers is concerned, the Imperfect patterns together with the Conditional, not being acceptable in an inferential context, unlike the Future and the modals (cf. 9–12).

(24) ?Strano che la luce sia accesa. Si dimenticavano di spegnerla.

‘It is strange that the light is off. They forgot (IP) to turn it out’

Nevertheless, the Imperfect is compatible with a context where the speaker reports a piece of information which is now contradicted by a factual piece of data, a context which is incompatible with inferential markers:

(25) Strano che Anna non sia più in ufficio perché stasera lavorava fino alle 5.

‘It is strange that A. is not at the office now for she was to work (lit. worked IP) until 5 tonight’

(26) ?Strano che Anna non sia più in ufficio perché stasera avrà lavorato fino alle 5.

‘It is strange that A. is not at the office now for she probably worked (lit. will have worked) until 5 tonight’

(27) ?Strano che Anna non sia più in ufficio perché stasera può aver lavorato fino alle 5.

‘It is strange that A. is not at the office now for she may have worked until 5 tonight’

(28) ?Strano che Anna non sia più in ufficio perché stasera deve aver lavorato fino alle 5.

‘It is strange that A. is not at the office now for she must have worked until 5 tonight’

In (25–28) only the Imperfect is appropriate, for the speaker wants to emphasize that what s/he knew was due to happen does not seem to have occurred. In
such a case an inferential form is not admitted since in inferential contexts the mode of knowing is different: the speaker is inferring on the basis of some evidence what is likely to have happened and is not reporting what was due to happen. It can be concluded that the evidential value expressed by the Imperfect is a form of report of what the speaker knew was due to happen and about which direct confirmation is lacking.

Being reportive the evidential value of the Imperfect patterns together with the Conditional described above. In what follows some differences between the two forms will be considered in order to show the specific nature of the Imperfect. The contrast in (29–32) highlights a major difference between the two:

(29) *Secondo Luca, ieri il treno sarebbe partito alle 5.*
    'According to L. the train left (lit. would have left) at 5 yesterday'

(30) *Secondo Luca, ieri il treno partiva alle 5.*
    'According to L. the train was to leave (lit. left IP) at 5 yesterday'

(31) ?? *Secondo me, ieri il treno sarebbe partito alle 5.*
    'According to me the train left (lit. would have left) at 5 yesterday'

(32) *Secondo me, ieri il treno partiva alle 5.*
    'According to me the train was to leave (lit. left IP) at 5 yesterday'

Whereas both the Conditional and the Imperfect are compatible with an external source (29–30), if the source is the Self, only the Imperfect can occur (31–32), thus implying that the Imperfect is not sensitive to the difference between internal and external source. If the speaker is the source of the information (32) the result is a peculiar encroaching of evidential report on the distinction internal vs. external source. A report prototypically requires an external source, as in the case of the Conditional. Nevertheless, the Imperfect can be used to report information which, also according to the speaker, was due to happen, but whose actual occurrence cannot be confirmed. As in the case of the Conditional, the Imperfect also conveys indirect knowledge about the actual occurrence of the situation, but, unlike the Conditional, in the case of the Imperfect the external source is not a necessary requirement.

Another major difference between the Imperfect and the Conditional is connected with the type of evidence the speaker has in order to make his/her statement. The Imperfect can only occur when the reported information refers to a scheduled situation. In (33–34) the reported information is due to a common indisputable source such as the train timetable, but in case the reported information cannot be considered as scheduled (35–36), the Imperfect
(36) is not admitted. The Conditional is not subject to such a restriction, being admitted both for scheduled (33) and unscheduled (35) information, the basic condition to be fulfilled being only the existence of an external source.

(33) *Secondo Luca, ieri il treno sarebbe partito alle 5.*
    ‘According to L. the train **left** (lit. would have left) at 5 yesterday’

(34) *Secondo Luca, ieri il treno partiva alle 5.*
    ‘According to L. the train **was to leave** (lit. left IP) at 5 yesterday’

(35) *Secondo Luca, ieri il treno sarebbe partito vuoto.*
    ‘According to L. the train **left** (lit. would have left) empty yesterday’

(36) *Secondo Luca, ieri il treno partiva vuoto.*
    ‘According to L. the train **was to leave** (lit. left IP) empty yesterday’

Ultimately, the difference between the Imperfect and the Conditional is due to the intrinsic indirect nature of the information reported by means of the Imperfect, since even the source of the information has no more than indirect knowledge whether the situation occurred or not. S/he only reports that a given situation was due to occur. This is the reason why a situation which is not scheduled, such as the one in (36), cannot be expressed by the Imperfect. On the contrary, with the Conditional the information reported may have been personally witnessed by the source, so that non-scheduled situations can also be reported.

What is interesting for our purpose is the relationship between report and source in the usage of the reportive Imperfect. Interestingly, this turns out to be a case of report where the source of information is neutralized, both external or internal source being admitted. With respect to the general classification of evidentiality this implies that the notions of report and that of source should be kept apart, allowing both for reports necessarily requiring an external source and reports neutralizing source distinctions. Thus, the notion of source can be considered as an independent notion interacting with the mode of knowing, as in Botne’s (1997:525) model. Following Botne’s suggestion the main results deriving from the data discussed in this section are outlined in Table 1, which is intended as a preliminary classification of Italian evidential system, distinguishing two main evidential notions, i.e. mode of knowing (Inference vs. Report) and source (Other vs. Self).

With respect to the standard terminology used in Romance linguistics it must be noted that what is referred to here as inferential is usually called epistemic (as in the traditional label epistemic Future, often used in Romance
linguistics). Nevertheless, given the data here presented and the general spirit of this work, which aims at highlighting the evidential functions of some Romance forms, the label inferential is preferred here, since it specifically covers the semantic scope of the forms discussed, being more precise than the traditional label epistemic.\(^8\) This is not tantamount to saying that a form such as the Romance Future in its modal functions can be exclusively defined as expressing an evidential value. It is reasonable to consider inferential evidentiality as one facet of its semantics, which does not exclude the cluster of other modal functions, it being well-known that evidentiality intermingles with other modal notions (Willett 1988:55). The cluster of different modal notions also explains why inferentials have often been considered as intermediate between epistemic modality and evidentiality (Palmer 1986; van der Auwera & Plungian 1998; see Section 1 above). In the Romance Future, as well as in the cases of the modals may and must, a major role is played by the degree of confidence in the factuality of the situation, which is independent from the mode of knowing (inference). A more accurate semantic analysis concerning the differential value of each of the three inferential forms mentioned here is required in order to assess the relationship between inferentiality and epistemic factuality (see Dendale 1994 and Dendale & de Mulder 1996 discussing the interaction of evidentiality with other modal values in the case of French devoir + infinitive). The aim of this work was only to signal the evidential character of the forms and the relationship with other forms also showing an evidential value, such as the Conditional or the Indicative Imperfect.\(^9\)

If the distribution of the Italian evidential markers is compared with the hierarchical classificational systems proposed in the literature, it becomes clear that it cannot be accounted for in a system proposing the hierarchical primacy of the source distinction Other vs. Self, as suggested in Frawley (1992:413). If the source dominates the whole system, an immediate consequence is that any subordinate notion has to be sensitive to such a major distinction, and interme-

**Table 1. Italian evidential markers**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inference</th>
<th>Report</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dovere 'must' + infinitive</td>
<td>Future</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>potere 'may' + infinitive</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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mediate cases are not possible. As shown above, this is not the case in Italian, given the behavior of the Imperfect, which neutralizes the distinction between internal and external source. Only the Conditional, being the canonical case of reportive marker restricted to external source, could easily fit into Frawley’s model. In order to allow the Imperfect to be accounted for by Frawley’s analysis, report should be duplicated and another instance of it added under Self. Nonetheless, a report with internal source could not find any natural location in the two subcategories (inference and direct evidence) stemming from Self in Frawley’s (1992) model. Willett’s categorial system could be more apt to allow for the kind of report expressed by the Italian Imperfect, provided that the notion of source is added as an independent notion interacting with reported information, as suggested in Botne (1997:525). In so doing, the general architecture of Willett’s model is maintained, only adding source as an independent notion, without giving it the primary status accorded to it in Frawley’s account.

In Section 3.2 other data will be considered also providing support to Willett’s proposal as more suitable to account for Romance evidential distinctions, thus confirming the role of the distinction direct vs. indirect type of evidence as the main dichotomy.

3.2 Inference vs. report in Romance

In this section the relationship between form and function in the expression of some other evidential grams will be studied, focusing on a crosslinguistic comparison among their distributions in French, Italian, Spanish and Portuguese. Major attention will be paid to the expression of inference and report, by considering the behavior of the Future and the Conditional, which, as was shown in Section 3.1 discussing the Italian case, occur as evidential markers. The interesting point is that other Romance languages do not always behave like Italian in the usage of these forms and the crosslinguistic comparison can be crucially capitalized on in order to contribute to the discussion of the categorial and hierarchical organization of evidentiality.

In Section 3.1 it was shown that the Italian Future and the Conditional have a distinct distribution as evidential markers, the former being restricted to the context of inference, while the latter, when used as evidential marker, only occurs expressing report based on an external source (Table 1).

If the whole domain of Romance languages is considered the case of the Italian evidential Conditional turns out to be unique, since in other Romance
languages the Conditional is not at all restricted to the expression of report, being also admitted as inferential marker.

3.2.1 French
It was shown in Section 3.1 that in both French and Italian the Conditional functions as evidential reportive marker (1–2). Moreover, French behaves like Italian in admitting the Future as inferential marker (37–38):10

(37) Notre ami est absent: il aura encore sa migraine (from Grevisse 1955: §732, p.581)
   ‘Our friend is not here: he must have (lit. will have) his migraine’

(38) L’assassin se sera introduit par la fenêtre (Leroux, Le mystère de la chambre jaune, from Sten 1952:205)
   ‘The murderer must have entered (lit. will have entered) through the window’

Nevertheless, there is a special case in which French allows a Conditional in an inferential context, here differing from Italian. In descriptive works on the French verb system (cf. Schogt 1968:45, 47; Imbs 1960:121) this context is described as restricted to direct questions, thus suggesting a lower degree of the speaker’s confidence in the factual occurrence of the situation. Maingueneau (1981:116–122) and Confais (1990:299–300) also mention this usage of the Conditional expressing a speaker’s inference and consider it as another case of reportive Conditional:

(39) –Il faudrait tenter une psychanalyse, dit Françoise. Est-ce que dans son enfance, son père ne l’aurait pas battu avec une branche de sureau?
   –Pourquoi ça? dit Xavière
   –Battu, passé à tabac, dit Françoise. Il mange le tabac pour effacer les coups; (Simone de Beauvoir, L’invitée, Paris: Gallimard 1943:283)
   ‘We should try psychoanalysis, F. said. His father perhaps beat (lit. would have beaten) him with an elder branch when he was a child?
   –Why? X. said
   –Beaten, with the whip (lit. with tobacco), F. said. He eats tobacco to cancel the blows;’

What is typical of this use of the Conditional is that the speaker is making an inference which is presented as a possible, not yet certain, interpretation of some given fact. It can be considered as a case of weak inference, the only difference with respect to (38), where a stronger inference is proposed, is that
the speaker presents the inference as a possibility, which can still be questioned. This is the case where the evidential mode of knowing (inference) interacts with the epistemic scale expressing the strength of knowledge.

Other examples demonstrate the occurrence of this use in free indirect speech (40), even if it can also be found in direct speech (39, 41).

(40) François se sentit en faute; elle avait manqué de tact en confiant Xavière à Gerbert, mais l’accent de Xavière l’étonna: est-ce que Gerbert aurait été vraiment grossier avec Xavière? Ce n’était pourtant pas son habitude. (Simone de Beauvoir, L’invitée, Paris: Gallimard 1943:58)

‘F. felt herself in the wrong: she behaved tactlessly in putting X. in G.’s hands, but X.’s tone struck her: Had G. really been (lit. would have been) so impolite? It was not his habit’

(41) Se figurerait-il, le malheureux, qu’il a déjà atteint ce stade où il peut se permettre tant de banalité, un tel effacement? (Nathalie Sarraute, Entrela vie et la mort, in Oeuvres complètes, Paris: Gallimard 1996:706)

‘Can he imagine (lit. would he imagine), the poor thing, that he has already reached the stage where he can admit such a triviality, such a discretion?’

This type of Conditional also occurs in 19th century literary texts (42) and the usage seems to be well rooted in the history of the French Conditional, already occurring in Old French and Old Occitan (Jensen 1990:353).

(42) –Aurait-il conçu des soupçons sur mes assiduités? pensa Lucien, car il paraît m’être bien hostile! (Honoré de Balzac, Illusions perdues, Paris: Gallimard 1974:98)

‘–Had he entertained (lit. would he have entertained) suspicions on my regular visits? L. thought, for he seemed very hostile!’

The interesting comparative point here is that in all these contexts Italian requires another form instead of the Conditional. This is confirmed by (44), which is a published translation of the French (43). The weak inference in free indirect speech, which is expressed in French by the Conditional, has been translated into Italian by means of a Subjunctive (an inferential Future could also have been used):

'But the little ruddy man can't decide to leave his office. He thought he would receive news about Wallas during the morning, but he received neither a second visit nor a call. In turn, had the detective been killed (lit. would have been killed) by the gangsters? Disappeared for ever, swallowed up in the darkness?'

‘Had he, in turn, been killed?’

These French data show that even in a language where the Conditional and the Future have a distribution which is comparable to the Italian case, a difference can be found in the distribution of inferential usage, which, although minor, has interesting consequences in the whole picture of Romance evidential markers, as will be shown in Table 2.

3.2.2 Spanish
In the Ibero-Romance area the Conditional can occur as a reportive form with external source (45), like its Italian and French counterparts, but is also available as an inferential form in past contexts (46), transposing what in the present is expressed by an inferential Future (47). The Future Perfect is also available in Spanish for past inferences but its occurrence is restricted to contexts where a perfectal interpretation is possible, as in (48), where the adverb ya shows the relationship between the Event Time and the Speech Time:

(45) Según fuentes políticas consultadas por este periódico, Milosevic habría aceptado que la fuerza de interposición en Kosovo esté compuesta por un 30% de efectivos de la OTAN (El País 7.5.1999: 3)
‘According to political sources consulted by this newspaper, M. accepted (lit. would have accepted) the Kosovo interposing force to be composed of 30% regular NATO soldiers’

(46) Serían las ocho cuando salimos
‘It was probably (lit. would have been) 8 o’clock when we left’

(47) Ahora serán las cuatro
‘It must be (lit. will be) 4 o’clock now’

(48) El chico ya habrá salido
‘The boy has probably already left (lit. will have already left)’

With respect to these Spanish data it must be noted that the usage of the Conditional as reportive marker is described as restricted to journalistic prose
and stigmatized as due to French influence (Carrera Díaz 1997:328–329; Romero Gualda 1994:35–36 and the literature quoted therein). According to Romero Gualda such a usage has been decreasing since 1990 and is absent in oral corpora. Thus, the Spanish usage of the reportive Conditional should be considered as a recent and still unstable extension, this being an interesting diachronic clue which will be referred to in the final discussion of the whole set of Romance data.12

3.2.3 Portuguese
The functional distribution of the Portuguese Future and the Conditional partially overlaps with the Spanish pattern described above. As in Spanish, and unlike French and Italian, the Conditional is the current form expressing a past inference (49), transposing into the past what in the Present is expressed by an inferential Future (50). As in Spanish the Future Perfect can also occur in inferential contexts, but is restricted to cases semantically corresponding to a Present Perfect, as in (51), denoting a durative situation including the Speech Time:13

(49) Seriam umas seis horas, mas a noite era evidente (António Botto, Isto sucedeu assim, from Sten 1973:51)
‘It was probably (lit. would have been) 6 o’clock but the night was clear’

(50) Que horas serão? (Aquilino Ribeiro, Lápides partidas, from Sten 1973:42)
‘What time is it (lit. will it be)?

(51) nem lhe acede ao espírito que a vida e os anos terão feito dessa mulher um outro ente (Manuela Porto, Doze histórias sem sentido, from Sten 1973:260)
‘and it didn’t reach his spirit that life and the years had probably made (lit. will have made) this woman something else’

Moreover, like in Spanish, French and Italian the Conditional occurs as a reportive form attributed to an external source. Examples of this type not only occur in contemporary newspapers (53–54), but also in novels (52)

(52) Segundo certas vezes, teu pai teria reunido a esta altura um bom pecúlio (Aquilino Ribeiro, Uma luz ao longe, from Sten 1973:264)
‘According to some rumors, your father had saved (lit. would have saved) a lot of money at that time’

(53) Ao mesmo tempo desmentiu informações da imprensa segundo as quais os EUA estariam a treinar militarmente grupos de opositores a Saddam (Diário de Notícias 1.2.1999:14)
‘At the same time he denied information from the press according to which
the USA were training (lit. would be training) military groups of Saddam’s opponents’

(54) Este o conteúdo de um parecer jurídico elaborado por Narana Coissoró […] que contraria a recente posição tomada pelos ministros Marçal Grilo e Mariano Gago, segundo a qual parte do palácio teria sido “cedida” ao instituto científico (Diário de Notícias 25.2.1999:22)

‘This is the content of a law judgment prepared by N.C. that contrasts a recent position taken by the ministers M.G. and M.G., according to which a part of the building was given (lit. would have been given) to the scientific institute’

So far the Portuguese distribution completely overlaps with Spanish, but other examples show that in Portuguese the expression of reports is not restricted to the Conditional, since the Future can also express reported information (55–56), a case which, to the best of my knowledge, is unique in Romance and has never been pointed out before:

(55) Segundo fontes que lhe são próximas Soares terá dito a Gomes Motas e a Carlos Monjardino que as criticas à liderança de Guterres foram “pura locura” (Diário de Notícias 14.5.1994)

‘According to sources which are quite close to him S. said (lit. will have said) to G.M. and C.M. that the criticism of G.’s leadership was pure nonsense’

(56) Segundo David Ximenes, familiares das duas vítimas terão posteriormente morto um soldado indonésio, ainda não identificado (Diário de Notícias 25.2.1999:6)

‘According to D.X., members of the families of the two victims later killed (lit. will have killed) an Indonesian soldier, not yet identified’

Thus, in the Portuguese Future reportive and inferential contexts coexist without formal distinctions, and in the same newspapers where the Future occurs as reportive it can also be found as inferential:

(57) Raras vezes se terá observado uma tão extrema manifestação de afecto (Diário de Notícias 1.2.1999:13)

‘Such an extreme outpouring of affection has rarely been observed (lit. will have rarely been observed)’

These data show that the Portuguese Future neutralizes the distinction between report and inference and the same can be said with respect to the Conditional, which can be used both as reportive marker as in (52–54), and as inferential past marker (49) and also in the inferential context of direct questions, as in French (59–60). In
this case it alternates with the Future (58). According to Mourin (1959:151–152) the distinction between Conditional and Future in this case is connected with the factuality of the situation, the Future being used for situations presented as more reliable by the speaker.

‘Did “they” say (lit. will have said) something to J. before leaving? Or did they write (lit. will have written) something?’

(59) O que lhe teria dito o professor para ela ficar assim? (from Abreu & Benamor Murteira 1994:76)
‘What did the professor say (lit. would have said) to her for her to be like that?’

(60) há indicações precisas duma pedraria que um antepassado de V.a Exc.a escondeu na capela do solar de San-Gregório. Teria sido depois encontrada? É possível, mas não é provável. (Manuel Ribeiro, A batalha nas sombras, from Mourin 1959:151)
‘There are accurate records of a piece of jewelry that one of Your Excellency’s ancestors hid in the chapel of S.G. Castle. Was it found (lit. would have been found) later on? It is possible, but not likely.’

More research needs to be done in order to reach a more accurate analysis on the differential semantics of the Portuguese Future and Conditional, and in this respect Mourin’s (1959) suggestion should be carefully tested. As for the reportive usage, native speakers seem to confirm Mourin’s observation, noting that the reportive Future (55–56) requires a greater degree of the speaker’s commitment on the factuality of the situation with respect to the Conditional (52–54). The issue will not be tackled in detail here, the important piece of data for our discussion being the neutralization of inferential and reportive functions by means of the Portuguese Future and Conditional.

3.3 Evidential functions of the Romance Future and Conditional

The results reached in Section 3.2 can be summarized in Table 2, where the data provided by the Romance languages described above with respect to the formal and functional distribution of the two evidential notions inference (I) and report (R) are compared. The case of Catalan can also be added, where the Future and Conditional are described as having no evidential functions, neither inferential nor reportive (Badia Margarit 1962:429–435; Hualde 1992:307, 323), even if further research is required to assess whether these usages are penetrating in Catalan as well, in a way
similar to what is occurring in the reportive usage of the Spanish Conditional. It must be noted that in Table 2 only the behavior of the Future and the Conditional is considered, leaving aside other forms expressing the same evidential notions (such as for instance the periphrastic forms with *must* and *may*, which in several Romance languages also express inference or the Subjunctive, which as shown in (44) is also used as inferential in Italian). Note also that in Table 2 differences between the Future and the Conditional with respect to the speaker’s commitment on the factuality of the situation are not taken into account. It was mentioned above that in French and Portuguese the factual commitment plays a crucial role in the semantics of the forms, thus differing from Spanish, where the selection between the inferential Future and Conditional is only connected to a change in the temporal reference (past=Conditional vs. present=Future). This point will be left for further research, not being directly relevant for the present discussion, which is primarily concerned with the mutual relationship between evidential notions (inference vs. report), rather than with the interaction of evidentiality and other modal notions (such as epistemic factuality).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>French</th>
<th>Spanish</th>
<th>Portuguese</th>
<th>Italian</th>
<th>Catalan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Future</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>I/R</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conditional</td>
<td>I/R</td>
<td>I/(R)</td>
<td>I/R</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>-</td>
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</table>

The set of data presented in Table 2 allows several conclusions. First, it must be observed that the distributions of inference and report are quite varied in Romance. All Romance languages, excluding only Catalan, admit the occurrence of the Future as inferential marker, but they vary as far as the distribution of report and the functions associated with the Conditional are concerned. Portuguese and Catalan turn out to be the languages where the highest degree of uniformity can be found, even if the two languages show opposite ways of providing a uniform pattern: in Catalan none of the forms has either inferential or reportive value, whereas in Portuguese both forms have both values. In Spanish a tendency towards a uniform distribution can also be noted, if the normative account provided by Spanish grammarians is trustworthy. If this is the case the reportive value of the Spanish Conditional can be considered as a recent extension due to external influences. Thus, the distribution of the Spanish evidential forms is to be seen as uniform, only allowing the inferential value for both the Future and the Conditional. However, the intrusion of the reportive value seems to be a new disrupting factor introducing a non-uniform feature, possibly producing a new development in the Spanish evidential system. In French a non-uniform distribution can
be observed and does not seem to be due to a recent development of the whole system, while the maximum degree of lack of uniformity is represented by Italian, where the Conditional and the Future diverge totally as far as evidential functions are concerned, avoiding any overlapping area. More extensive research on other Romance varieties, also including geographic, social and contextual dialects, is required in order to verify whether the Italian distribution is a unique case, as it seems to be, only considering the major literary Romance languages. In the next section it will be observed that the current Italian distribution is due to a recent diachronic development, which affected the function of the Conditional and disrupted the traditional Romance uniformity between Future and Conditional. With respect to the typology presented in Willett (1988:58), the Italian distribution seems to represent the marked case, since in the majority of the languages in Willett’s sample inferential and reportive evidentiality are expressed by one and the same marker.

Back to the starting point of our discussion, the results reached in this section and summed up in Table 2 can be capitalized on in order to contribute to the debate on the general classificatory system of evidentiality. It has been shown above that the major debated point is related to the hierarchical ordering of the notions of source and mode of knowing. Now, the Romance distribution of evidential markers is illuminating in order to select the most appropriate option. In particular the comparison between the behavior of French and Portuguese, on the one hand, and Italian, on the other hand, is specially interesting. Despite superficial differences what Portuguese and French have in common is a tendency to neutralize the distinction between the two evidential notions discussed here. In French there is one form (the Conditional) where the distinction between inference and report is neutralized. In Portuguese the tendency to neutralization is complete, since, as mentioned above, there is a total functional homogeneity between Future and Conditional, both having inferential and reportive functions. On the other hand, in Italian inference and report totally diverge, so that each function has a different form. The question is now which categorial model (Frawley’s or Anderson’s/Willett’s) more appropriately accounts for such a distribution, at the same time allowing for the neutralization in French and Portuguese and the functional distinction occurring in Italian. The answer is, I believe, uncontroversial: only in Willett’s categorial analysis can the case of a neutralization between inference and report be admitted, since these two depend on one general notion (indirect evidence), so that it can be concluded that the Portuguese Future and Conditional and the French Conditional express the general notion of indirect evidence, without distinguishing between inference and report. In Frawley’s proposal there is no such general a notion accounting for neutralizing forms, given that in his model inference and report belong to two different major categories (Self and
Other). Note that in Frawley’s model a neutralization between Self and Other would produce a complete lack of distinction of any evidential notions. An evidential form neutralizing between Self and Other, like the Portuguese Future and Conditional, would give the result of being also applicable to cases of direct evidence, which in Frawley’s model is a subcategory of the Self. This is not a desirable consequence, for in Portuguese the Future and the Conditional are restricted to indirect evidence.

The unacceptability of Frawley’s model becomes clearer if the case of a Romance form unmarked for evidentiality is compared with the distribution of the Future and the Conditional. Consider for instance the behavior of the Italian Present Perfect, which can neutralize all the functions discussed so far, being compatible in contexts where the speaker’s direct evidential commitment is required (61), as well as in inferential (62) and reportive (63) contexts, provided that contextual additions make clear how the verb forms have to be interpreted.

(61) Venerdì scorso Giovanna è uscita alle 5. L’ho vista io.
    ‘Last Friday G. left (lit. has left) at 5. I saw her’

(62) Le luci in casa sono spente. Forse Giovanna è già uscita.
    ‘The lights in the house are off. Perhaps G. has already left’

(63) Secondo Marco, Giovanna è già uscita.
    ‘According to M., G. has already left’

These data show that the Italian Present Perfect is a form neutralizing all evidential functions. This is possible since in Romance evidentiality may be marked but is not obligatory as in Tuyuca. If Frawley’s model is accepted, forms such as the Italian Present Perfect and the French or Portuguese Conditional turn out to have the same evidential definition. The French and the Portuguese Conditional, neutralizing the distinction between Self and Other, which is the major hierarchical opposition in Frawley’s model, end up as lacking any evidential marking, just like the Italian Present Perfect. The problem is that, if this is true in the case of the Italian Present Perfect, it does not correspond to the actual distribution of the French and Portuguese Conditionals, which are not acceptable in a context requiring the speaker’s direct evidential commitment. In the end, Frawley’s analysis lacks descriptive adequacy to be applicable to a Romance distribution, being only appropriate in cases such as the Italian Future and Conditional where there is no hint of neutralization between inference and report. In order to account for the whole Romance set of distributional possibilities Willett’s analysis is preferable as a classificatory proposal.

As mentioned above, the question of the format of the classificatory schema will not be dealt with in depth. However, it should be noted that the results presented in this section are independent of the format chosen. They must not necessarily be accommodated in Willett’s schema, being also compatible with a different classificatory format, as in a non-hierarchical
semantic map where inference and report can be placed as two adjacent and connected semantic units (Anderson's 1986:284). Whatever format is preferred, the point is that the spirit of Anderson's and Willett's proposals should be maintained, admitting a preferential semantic relationship between inference and report.

4. Diachronic development of the Italian Conditional

The account presented in the preceding sections can be extended in an interesting way if the diachronic dimension is also taken into consideration. Unfortunately the semantic evolution of the Romance Future and Conditional has not yet been thoroughly studied and further research should be carried out to inquire to what extent the varied picture presented in Table 2 is the result of a recent development or has been a stable distribution throughout the evolutionary process of the Romance verb system. The stigmatizing attitude against the reportive usage of the Spanish Conditional, even more radically in the case of Catalan, seems to suggest that an evolutionary process is in progress, gradually tending towards a redistribution of formal and functional patterns. In this article the diachronic issue cannot be dealt with in detail, but one single point concerning the evolution of the Italian Conditional will be tackled, since it can provide further evidence with respect to the hierarchical layering of evidential notions.

It was mentioned in Section 3.3 discussing the data summed up in Table 2 that the Italian distribution is unique in the Romance domain. Only in Italian do the Future and Conditional have a fully independent distribution without any overlapping areas, the former being consistently an inferential marker while the latter, as far as evidential functions are concerned, is restricted to report. Diachronic data show that such a distribution of the Future and Conditional is only a recent development in the Italian verb system. Still in the 19th century the Conditional could occur in inferential contexts as the morphological means of transposing into the past an inferential Future. Consider (64) from a 19th century novel where the Conditional occurs in an indirect interrogative clause, a usage which is barred in contemporary Italian, but is current in Spanish, as mentioned above and confirmed by (65), where in a comparable context of indirect interrogative expressing inference the Conditional occurs.

(64) Renzo entrò nel cortile, e sentì un misto e continuo ronzio che veniva da una stanza di sopra. S’immaginò che sarebbero amiche e comari, venute a far corteggio a Lucia (Alessandro Manzoni, I promessi sposi, from Ondráček 1965:154).

‘R. entered the courtyard and heard a mixed and continuous buzz coming
from a room upstairs. He imagined that it was (lit. would be) friends and neighbors, who came to be in L. ’s bridal retinue’

Y así seguía hablando de los trajes y costumbres del tiempo del Imperio, imaginándose que aún subsistiría todo y la Francia de hoy era como a principios de siglo. (V. Blasco Ibáñez, La barraca, from Muñiz 1984:147)

‘And so s/he kept talking of clothes and habits of the time of the Empire, imagining that everything still existed (lit. would exist) and France at that time was like it used to be at the beginning of the century’

Further research is needed here too, but (64) clearly shows that the Italian Conditional has been submitted to a process of semantic evolution involving its evidential functions. Using a chart based on Table 2 the diachronic process can be depicted as in Table 3.

Whereas the Future does not seem to have been submitted to any change, the Conditional was originally a form occurring in inferential contexts. The question mark is due to the fact that no indisputable example of reportive usage of the Conditional is documented in the 19th century and I cannot commit myself on its actual occurrence at that time. If the reportive usage were missing, it could be concluded that the Conditional had completely changed its evidential value. Otherwise, it can be speculated that reportive and inferential usage coexisted in one and the same form, which is the case in French and marginally in Spanish (see Table 2). The issue of the diachronic evolution of the reportive values of the Conditional cannot be settled here, but what is relevant is that the evolution of the Conditional has led to a complete bifurcation of the evidential value of the Future and Conditional, which in the last century still showed a certain degree of semantic solidarity. In particular the case in (64) demonstrates that the Conditional fulfilled the function of the past form of the inferential Future. In contemporary Italian the Conditional has lost this temporal tie with the Future and is now an independent evidential marker restricted to reportive cases. In Squartini (1999) this process has been related to another diachronic change involving the Conditional in its function as future in the past. Here the semantic evolution of the Italian Conditional can be capitalized on with respect to the issue which has been more intensively treated in this paper.

If the two classificatory analyses proposed in Willett (1988) and Frawley (1992) are considered with respect to the

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<th>19th c. Italian</th>
<th>20th c. Italian</th>
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<tr>
<td>Future</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>I</td>
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<td>Conditional</td>
<td>I/(R?)</td>
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Italian evolution, different results from those presented in Section 3.2 might be achieved. It was mentioned above that the contemporary Italian distribution presented in Table 2 could be compatible both with the main categorial distinction proposed in Willett (Indirect vs. Direct evidence, with Indirect evidence branching into Inference and Report, ultimately compatible with Anderson’s map), as well as with Frawley’s proposal (Self vs. Other as main categorial opposition). On the contrary the data from the other Romance languages consistently show that Willett’s analysis is to be preferred. Now, the diachronic evolution of the Italian form provides an additional element, which can interfere with the conclusions in Section 3.3. It could be tempting to interpret the evolution in the Italian evidential system as an evolution from one way of organizing the evidential semantic map to another. Italian can be described as passing from a system where the primary evidential distinction is Direct vs. Indirect to a system where the opposition Self vs. Other takes over as the main opposition. This is what might have happened with the evolution of the opposition Future vs. Conditional, which has led to a complete functional distinction of the two forms, so that the Future, being only inferential, belongs to the category Self, while the Conditional consistently represents the category Other. The evolution of the Italian Conditional could be seen as the gradual foregrounding of the distinction Self vs. Other in the evidential system. Thus, Willett’s and Frawley’s proposals might be seen as two different stages in the semantic evolution of evidential systems. Nevertheless, such a conclusion is only suggested by the data but not conclusively borne out. The contemporary Italian distribution is still compatible with Willett’s analysis and does not necessarily require Frawley’s account. What the data show is simply the evolution from a system which can be conclusively demonstrated as only accountable for in Willett’s model to a system which is compatible also with Frawley’s. Moreover, the behavior of the Imperfect and the Conditional discussed in Section 3.1 has demonstrated that in Italian the source of evidence should be considered as another dimension interfering with the type of evidence rather than the major dominating notion. In sum, the Italian system is more effectively described by means of Willett’s (1988) model, or, if the semantic map format is preferred, by Anderson’s (1986:284) model.

5. Conclusion

In this work the evidential meanings of the Romance Future, Conditional and Indicative Imperfect have been analyzed in order to contribute to the discussion of the general classificational modelling of evidentiality. Anderson’s (1986:284) and Willett’s (1988) models have been demonstrated as more suitable than
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Frawley’s (1992:413) to account for Romance data, showing the primacy of the distinction direct vs. indirect type of evidence and confirming that the notion of source should be considered as independently interacting with the type of evidence, as already suggested in Botne (1997:525). The aim of this article has also been to draw attention to the role of evidentiality in the Romance verb system, which has only recently been pointed out in the literature on modality. Further research is needed in order to more accurately investigate the interaction between the evidential value of the modal markers studied here and the speaker’s commitment to the factuality of the situation (strength of knowledge in Frawley’s 1992 terminology), a point which was only cursorily mentioned here. The diachronic dimension should also be more extensively studied as a prerequisite for a more general evaluation of the organizational model, also including the question of the representational format (structuralist vs. semantic map), one which has been left in the background in this article.

Notes

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1. It should be noted that Frawley’s interpretation of Tuyuca data as supporting his analysis is not uncontroversial, since the actual data do not seem to fit adequately into his model. Frawley bases his analysis on Malone’s (1988) reappraisal of Barnes’ (1984) original description. In Malone’s analysis a main distinction between firsthand and non-firsthand knowledge is introduced, the former originating in the speaker and the latter outside the speaker. According to Frawley such a distinction corresponds to his model, for it can be interpreted as his main deictic opposition Self vs. Other. Nevertheless, in Frawley’s model inferences are considered as belonging to the category Self, whereas the Tuyuca evidential morpheme yi-, which occurs in inferential contexts (see Barnes 1984:257), is considered by Malone as non-firsthand. This forces Frawley (1992:414, fig. 9.2) to include the morpheme yi- in the category Other which is contradictory with respect to his general model (Frawley 1992:413), where inference is a subcategory of the Self and does not belong to the Other.

2. Another point crucially distinguishing Willett’s and Frawley’s accounts concerns the relationship between evidentiality and epistemic modality, an issue which, as mentioned in Section 1, has been often debated. While in Willett’s model only evidential notions in a narrow sense are taken into account, namely only those notions connected with the type of evidence and the source of knowledge, in Frawley the notion of strength of knowledge is also considered as a part of the same frame, thus proposing a unifying account of epistemic modality and evidentiality. The notion of strength of knowledge allows for a scalar ordering among different values of the four categories recognized in Frawley’s model (Inference, Sensation, External Info, Participants). In the case of Inferences it is
very clear that the two values of this scalar notion (necessary/possible) refer to what is also interpreted as connected to the commitment of the speaker regarding the factuality of the situation, which in a narrow sense has nothing to do with evidentiality, since in principle an evidential notion such as personal inference or secondary information does not imply that the speaker is less confident of the factuality of the situation (see also de Haan 1997:6).

3. However, Botne (1997:524) admits that Frawley’s categorial system of evidential distinctions may not be universal, being subject to typological variation, so that in some languages Willett’s system (1988) might be more consistently applied to the description of the morphological encoding of evidential meaning.

4. Also Guentchéva (1994:12–18) treats the French Conditional as a marker expressing faits rapportés ‘reported situations’, but she considers it as not restricted to such a function, in some cases also occurring as inferential. As an example of inferential Conditional she quotes the case in (i) (Guentchéva 1994:17–18):

(i) Les résultats des examens réalisés, notamment à l’hôpital neuro-cardiologique de Lyon, par le docteur T., neuro-cardiologue, et par le professeur V., toxicologue, font état de la présence dans le sang, où le taux d’alcoolémie atteignait 1,8 gramme, d’opiacés, de la morphine en particulier. La cause de la mort serait ainsi une crise cardiaque déclenchée dans un contexte de prise d’opiacés par voie buccale qui ne semble pas devoir être assimilée à une «surdose». Ces constatations des experts donnent lieu à l’ouverture d’une instruction pour infraction à la législation sur les stupéfiants (Le Monde 17.6.93).

‘The results of the tests made by Dr T. and Prof. V. at the Lyon neuro-cardiac hospital demonstrate the presence of opiates, morphine in particular, in the blood, where the level of alcohol reached 1.8 grams. Thus, the cause of death was (lit. would be) a heart-attack caused in the context of taking opiates by injection, which should not be considered an overdose. These experts’ reports give way to opening an investigation for violation of the laws on drugs’

Note however that this example could also be interpreted as reportive (ces constatations des experts ‘these experts’ reports’, explicitly refers to the quotation of a source). As also suggested by an anonymous referee the distinction between reportive and inferential seems to blur in this case, which is not surprising given the data presented in Section 3.2.1 demonstrating the neutralization of the distinction reportive/inferential in the French Conditional.


6. As noted in Solarino (1996:165) the differential distribution of the Conditional and the Future is neutralized with the modal potere ‘may’ in the Conditional form. This is confirmed by the compatibility of this form both with an internal (i) and an external source

(ii) Secondo Paolo adesso potrebbero essere già le 4.

‘According to P. it could already be 4 o’clock now’

(ii) Secondo me adesso potrebbero essere già le 4.
‘According to me it could already be 4 o’clock now’

7. IP = Imperfective Past

8. Berretta (1997) has proposed distinguishing between epistemic and evidential uses of the Romance Future, the former being those here called inferential, while those dubbed evidential are the frequent cases of Futures with concessive meaning, as in the example of colloquial Italian in (i) (see also Brambilla Ageno 1965:196 for the history of this usage):

(i) Sarò piemontese, ma mica scema! (Berretta 1997:8)

‘Even if I am (lit. will be) Piedmontese, I am not stupid!’

According to Berretta only the special case of this modal usage of the Future is to be considered evidential, since in this case the speaker reports the point of view of someone else.

9. In passing it can be observed that the speaker’s confidence in the factual occurrence of the situation seems to be regulating the choice among the three inferential forms mentioned in Table 1. As concluded in Bertinetto (1979; 1986:491–498) the modal potere ‘may’ expresses what he calls a conjecture (a weak inference), whereas dovere ‘must’ is only compatible with strong inferences, and the Future is the neutralizing form, being compatible both with strong and weak inferences. Actually, the Future, rather than a neutralizing form, could also be conceived as a form expressing an intermediate degree of the speaker’s confidence, which is neither the strong confidence of must nor the weak inference expressed by may (see the metalinguistic judgements and the data in Bozzone Costa 1991:29–32, 36–37). There are cases where the Future patterns together with may, while must is excluded due to the weak degree of commitment (i-iii), but there are also cases where only may is admitted, whereas must and the Future are excluded, thus showing that the neutralization of the Future is not complete. In particular, may is the only form admitted in those cases where the speaker’s confidence is so weak that a selection of different possible inferences is presented (iv-vi) (see also Tasnowski & Dendale 1994:48–49; Dendale 1994:33–34; on Italian modals Simone & Amacker 1977, and Giacalone Ramat 1999 on the acquisition of modals):

(i) Non so, forse sarà uscita alle 5.

‘I don’t know, perhaps she left (lit. will have left) at 5’

(ii) Non so, forse può essere uscita alle 5.

‘I don’t know, she may have left at 5’

(iii) ?? Non so, forse deve essere uscita alle 5.

‘I don’t know, she must have left at 5’

(iv) ?? Non so, oggi avrà lavorato fino alle 5, ma anche fino alle 4.

‘I don’t know, perhaps she worked (lit. will have worked) until 5 today, but also until 4’

(v) Non so, oggi può aver lavorato fino alle 5, ma anche fino alle 4.

‘I don’t know, she may have worked until 5 today, but also until 4’

(vi) ?? Non so, oggi deve aver lavorato fino alle 5, ma anche fino alle 4.

‘I don’t know, she must have worked until 5 today, but also until 4’


12. Also in a language such as Italian, where the reportive usage of the Conditional is more stable and considered as belonging to the core grammar of modality, its late appearance in the acquisitional development of native speakers has been noticed, thus suggesting its relatively marginal status (Solarino 1996).


References


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