

# Evidentiality in English and Central Kurdish: A Typological Study

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**Abstract**—This paper studies evidentiality in English and Central Kurdish (CK), specifically the dialect spoken by residents of Sulaimani, from a typological perspective. Typological studies are of interest to linguists, aiming to capture the commonalities and differences between languages regarding specific linguistic topics. One such topic is evidentiality, which is a linguistic category that marks the source of information upon which a statement is made (Aikhenvald, 2004). Different languages mark evidentiality in various ways. Some have dedicated grammatical markers, while others use lexical markers or other syntactic strategies. It is hypothesized that in English and Central Kurdish the expression of evidentiality is achieved through lexical, syntactic, or contextual strategies rather than grammatical markers. So, the paper is an attempt to identify the typology and the markers of evidentiality and, thereby, provide a new perspective on the topic in both languages. The main conclusion of this paper is that English and Central Kurdish are quite similar in regard to this topic since they do not grammatically mark evidentiality but make use of other means, specifically lexical markers.

**Index Terms**—English evidentiality, Central Kurdish evidentiality, evidentiality markers, typology.

## I. INTRODUCTION

In each language, there is at least one way to express how one knows what others are talking about and what one knows about what others know. In Boas's (1938, p. 133) words, "*while for us definiteness, number, and time are obligatory aspects, we find in another language location near the speaker or somewhere else, [and] source of information—whether seen, heard, or inferred—as obligatory aspects.*" For some languages, it is always compulsory to mark the source from which the information has been taken, indicating whether the speaker saw the event with his own eyes, heard it from others, inferred it based on visual evidence, or was told it by someone else. Each of these ways shows the medium through which the information source has been known to the speaker. This is the essence of evidentiality: marking the basis of the information (Aikhenvald, 2004 and 2018). Evidentiality has been studied in many languages and their evidential systems have been

demonstrated. However, the notion of evidentiality is novel in Central Kurdish. Therefore, a typological study of evidentiality in CK, along with English and with reference to some other languages, can offer valuable insights for this new linguistic category and answer the questions regarding the expression of evidentiality and the identification of the markers in both languages.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Evidentiality has received a great deal of attention in recently conducted research and literature. The analyses basically focus either on the cross-linguistic studies of the topic or the individual languages. Plus, the systems and markers of evidentiality marking are the major points of focus. The following descriptions represent how this topic has been defined in the literature of evidentiality.

According to Chafe and Nichols' (1986) work, evidentials are seen as devices to mark both the source and the reliability of what the speakers have knowledge of. Similarly, Ifantidou (2001) believes that the evidentials have two main functions which are marking the source of knowledge and indicating the speaker's degree of certainty about the statement that they express. Moreover, Palmer (2001) believes that evidentiality, alongside epistemic modality, has to be included under propositional modality, which indicates the speaker's attitude to the truth value or factual status of the proposition. Thus, evidentiality and epistemic modality are regarded as two overlapping categories.

In contrast, there is now a growing body of research which shows that evidentiality is a distinct semantic-functional domain rather than a subcategory of epistemic modality. Evidentiality, in Aikhenvald's (2004) words, is considered as a grammatical category that has the source of information as its primary meaning. Evidentiality means stating the existence of a basis of evidence for the information which the speaker has obtained. This includes indicating that there is some kind of evidence and also identifying the type of evidence which the speaker has.

For Aikhenvald, evidentiality is taken to be an independent morphological and semantic category which is not to be included as part of epistemic modality (ibid). Whatever the views are, there are still researchers, like Plungian (2010), who take a more neutral stance. They acknowledge that evidentiality and modality are two distinct semantic domains but are closely related.

According to Bakhtiari and Mehrabi (2023), human languages have ways to express where information comes from. This practice of linking statements to their sources is an important part of how they communicate. Linguists refer to this concept as "*evidentiality*," and the tools which are used to indicate these sources are called "*evidentials*."

In the literature of evidentiality, different evidentiality types can be found. Both Willet's (1988) and Aikhenvald's (2004) studies believe that evidentiality can be classified into two types. The first one is called "*direct evidentiality*." Direct evidentiality refers to firsthand access to information source. It refers to any method of gaining information that relies on the speaker's immediate perception of a situation, primarily through visual means, though it can involve other senses as well. It also includes situations where the speakers are directly involved (Kalsang et al., 2010. p. 11). In the example '*I saw the dog stole the fish*,' the speaker has direct visual evidence for the information source.

The second type is "*indirect evidentiality*." Within indirect evidentiality, two types are classified. They are inferred (inference, assumption) and reported (hearsay, quotative) evidentiality. An example of reported evidentiality can be '*the witness said that he saw the suspect near the scene of the crime*.' The speaker has taken this information from someone rather than direct observation of the event. Boye and Harder (2009: 28 cited in Foolen, et al, 2018. p. 2) believe that a higher degree of certainty is expressed by the markers of direct evidentiality compared to the markers of indirect evidentiality.

From the literature review, the notion of evidentiality has been elaborated. Nowadays, typological studies of evidentiality are taking over linguists' interest on the topic. The main concern is to classify the languages in regard to their evidentiality systems. For that reason, the following sections of this paper will deal with the topic from a typological perspective in both English and Central Kurdish and the markers which are used in expressing evidentiality in both languages will be shed light upon.

### III. EVIDENTIAL TYPOLOGY

Languages are classified differently regarding their evidential systems for marking sources of information. They are basically classified into two groups of evidentiality. The first group includes those languages which have dedicated grammatical markers. The second type of the typology includes those languages that make use of other strategies, like lexical markers. Aikhenvald argues that there is a difference between "evidential markers" and "evidential strategies." Evidential markers' basic function is to indicate information source while the evidential strategies express evidentiality as their

peripheral, not as their primary, function (Aikhenvald, 2004; Diewald and Smirnova, 2010). So, basically the languages which have obligatory grammatical markers for evidentiality are classified together and those which use other functional markers compose a different evidential typology as well.

#### A. Grammatical Evidentiality

Some well-known scholars in the field (e.g., Aikhenvald, 2004) have strongly argued that only fully grammaticalized evidential systems are worth being put under the label of evidentiality in language. According to Aikhenvald (2004. P: 1), it is supposed that in about a quarter of the world's languages, every statement has to specify where the information comes from. For Aikhenvald, every language has ways to refer to the source of knowledge which a speaker has but not all the languages have grammatical evidentiality. Examples of these languages which have grammatical evidentiality are Tucano, Turkish, Tariana, and more. Aikhenvald (ibid, 52) highlights some examples of grammatical evidential markers in Tucano language:

(1)

- a. "diayi wa 'f-re yaha-*ami*."  
the dog stole the fish (I *saw* it)."
- b. "diayi" wa 'f-re yaha-*api*"  
the dog stole the fish (I *was told*)"

In these examples, the suffix '*-ami*' and '*-api*' are grammatical markers which have evidentiality as their primary meaning. The first one indicates direct visual evidentiality while the latter denotes that the type of the evidentiality is reported.

#### B. Lexical Evidentiality

Contrary to Aikhenvald's view toward evidentiality, many linguists, Wiemer among others, nowadays take a different, more comprehensive perspective and also take lexical strategies into account as another way for marking a source of knowledge. They believe that the notion of evidentiality cannot only be restricted to grammatical markers. For Diewald and Smirnova (2010. pp. 5-6. 12), evidentiality is a semantic-functional domain which is more concerned about conveying the meaning of the source of information rather than what structure is used to perform that function.

Those languages which do not have obligatory grammatical markers mostly use lexical items to indicate the source of information. So, lexical items which mark information source are considered to be evidentials. Marín Arrese's (2015. p. 212 cited in Foolen, et al, 2018. p. 3) assessment that "*if we restrict the notion of evidentiality to cases of obligatory grammatical marking, we miss out on the expression of evidentiality in a significant number of languages, and we fail to adequately characterize and delimit the conceptual domain of evidentiality*" emphasizes the importance of the inclusion of lexical strategies as part of the evidential systems. The lexical means basically include the use of perception verbs (see, hear), cognitive verbs (know, think), adverbs (reportedly, supposedly), and modal verbs can also convey evidential meanings. Examples in Persian which use lexical items can be the followings:

- (2)
- “man ***did-am*** ke ‘ali resid. = I ***saw*** that Ali arrived.”
  - “man ***shenid-am*** ke ‘ali resid. = I ***heard*** that Ali arrived.”

Both perception Persian verbs (*see*, and *hear*) indicate the information source of evidence (Bakhtiari and Mehrabi, 2023).

#### IV. EVIDENTIALITY IN ENGLISH

English language is part of the Indo-European language family, which is the cover term for a large number of languages spoken in Europe and some parts of Asia (Crystal and Potter, 2024). According to most of the studies, like Aikhenvald (2004, p. 11), Bakhtiari and Mehrabi (2023, p. 11), and Siau (2013 cited in Abbas et al, 2023), the Indo-European languages generally do not have grammaticalized information source. For Chafe (1986), English makes use of a large system of evidential devices. These devices are mainly lexical. Scholars like Palmer (1990, 2001), Muhsin (2000, 2001), and Halliday & Matthiessen (2004) also deny the existence of grammatical evidentiality in English. They approach the notion of evidentiality as a semantic category and are less concerned with the structures which are used in expressing evidentiality (cited in Yang, 2014, p. 582).

According to Gurajek (2010, p. 54) and Melac (2022, p. 12), there are different linguistic categories, mostly lexical, which are used in expressing evidentiality. They are perception verbs (hear, see), adverbs (reportedly, supposedly), modal verbs (must), cognition verbs (think, imagine), verbs like *seem* and *appear*, parentheticals (it seems), a whole range of constructions used in what is reported or narrated (it is said, they say), and other possible structures. Presenting every single word which has evidential meaning in the language seems to be hard. These are generally the main referenced linguistic ones.

In the context of evidentiality, perception verbs are used in many languages as means to indicate sources of information. They include the verbs of visual, auditory, olfactory, tactile, and gustation perception. A large set of verbs are constituted by these sensory English perception verbs and they can be arranged into three different types (dynamic, stative subject-perceiver, stative subject-percept) (Viberg, 1984). Whitt (2008) comes up with a similar classification to that of Viberg. He classifies the types as subject-oriented agentive verbs, subject-oriented experienter verbs, and object-oriented perception verbs:

Table 1: English Perception Verbs

Type of sensory perception	Types of verbs		
	Dynamic (subject-agentive)	Stative (subject-experienter)	Stative (subject-percept)
Sight	look	see	look
Hearing	listen	hear	sound
Touch	feel	feel	feel
Taste	taste	taste	taste
Smell	smell	smell	smell

Not all the verbs of perception have evidential meanings. Only the subject-oriented experienter perception verbs and object-oriented (subject-percept) perception verbs carry

evidential meanings. Examples for the second type of these verbs are:

- (3)
- John ***saw*** the horses.
  - John ***heard*** the tweets.
  - John ***smelled*** cigars in the class.

The bold, italicized perception verbs are examples of indirect reported evidentiality because the speaker has come to know about the events only from what others have told him/her.

Examples for the subject-percept (object-oriented) verbs are:

- (4)
- John ***looks*** sharp.
  - John ***sounds*** happy.
  - The shirt ***feels*** smooth.
  - The food ***tasted*** of garlic.
  - John ***smelled*** of cigars.

These are examples of inferred evidentiality. In each case, the subject (object of percept) is inferred by someone using sensory his/her evidence to draw conclusions from existing evidence.

Two things greatly affect the evidential meaning that is encoded in the perception verbs. They are the argument structure and the complementation patterns. To begin with, the role of the subject is crucial in determining the type of evidentiality. Rooryck (2001a, p. 126) notices the relations between evidentiality type and person. He argues that for first-person subjects the evidence should either be direct (sensory) or inferential. On the other hand, reported-evidentiality occurs with third-person subject. On that basis, if the subject of the examples of (3) is to be replaced by a first-person subject, then the type of evidentiality becomes direct:

- (5)
- I ***saw*** the horses.
  - I ***heard*** the tweets.
  - I ***smelled*** cigars in the class.

In these examples, the events have been personally witnessed by the speaker. The speaker has personal and direct experience of the event. Therefore, they are all examples of direct evidentiality (Gurajek, 2010, pp. 58-59).

Secondly, the evidential meaning of the perception verbs is affected by their complementation patterns. The perception verbs in the examples of (5) have direct object as their complements. However, they can have other complementation as well. The different complementation of the same perception verb can result in having different evidential types:

- (6)
- I ***saw*** the birds fly over the sea.
  - I ***saw*** the birds flying over the sea.

c. I **saw** (that) the birds had flown over the sea.

The past form of the verb *see* has been used in all the structures. However, it has been complemented with different structures. In (6/a), the use of a bare infinitive indicates that the speaker has seen the whole event with his own eyes and has direct evidence. In (6/b), the use of the gerund implies that the speaker has only seen part of the action not the entire event. Again, the speaker has personally witnessed (part of) the event and it is direct evidentiality. However, in (6/c), the visual perception verb is followed by a *that*-clause. Although it seems to have a similar meaning to the two first sentences but it is not. According to Gisborne (2007) and De Haan (2005), there can be other analyses. First, the verb *saw* in the sentence has a meaning of understanding or feeling not that of visual perception. Secondly, the sentence is seen as a 'hybrid' between direct and indirect evidentiality. The speaker has not witnessed the event but only its result. Therefore, the sentence can be regarded as indirect inferred evidentiality (cited in Gurajek, 2010).

The same complementation pattern can be applied to the auditory perception verb *hear*:

(7)

- a. I **heard** Ahmad talk on the phone.
- b. I **heard** Ahmad talking on the phone.
- c. I **heard** that Ahmad had talked on the phone.

The sentences of (7/a) and (7/b) are examples of direct evidentiality because the speaker witnessed the events personally. However, the sentence in (7/c) is an example of reported evidentiality since the information has been reported to the speaker.

In English, most of literature has focused on the visual and auditory perception verbs while somehow overlooking the other three. However, it is possible to come up with examples for the other verbs of perception: tactile (*feel*), olfactory (*smell*), and gustatory (*taste*) with different complementation patterns. These last three verbs of perception may not have the same capacity as the verbs of visual and auditory perception to allow different complementation patterns like bare infinitive, gerund, and *that*-clause. The sentences of (5) all the way to the sentences of (7) have subject-oriented perception verbs in the role of perceiver.

However, the third type of the perception verbs, which are object-oriented perception verbs (subject-percept), can also have different complementation patterns (Gurajek, 2010. pp. 63-64). The first three examples of (4) have adjectives as their complementation. The other complementation pattern which follows the subject-percept perception verbs is *like* and a noun phrase or clause:

(8)

- a. Jonah **looks like** an athlete.
- b. She **sounds like** an educated person.
- c. The food **tastes like** it has been cooked by a chef.

The examples (8/a), and (8/b) have *like* and a noun as the complementation of the perception verbs while (8/c) has clausal

*like* complementation. In all these examples, the subject of the sentence is compared to the complementation of the sentence. In each case, the speaker infers the situation based on his/her sensory evidence and, on that regard, draws conclusions. In other words, the speaker is not personally involved in the situation but construes the scenario outside the scene. Therefore, they are all examples of inferred deductive evidentiality.

The perception verbs are not the only markers used in expressing evidentiality in English. There are some other strategies as well. Modality and evidentiality are two distinct notions but yet related. Some modal verbs can express deductive or assumptive evidentiality which both show indirect access to information source:

(9)

- a. Sarah **must** be at home; I can see the lights on.
- b. Deya **will** win the game, I know how good she is.

The modal verb in the example (9/a) carries the meaning of inferential evidentiality. The speaker has sensory evidence for his/her claim. S/he sees the lights are on and, on that basis, it is deduced that Sarah should be at home and this makes the reading of the sentences deductive. In (9/b), the speaker has prior knowledge about Deya's performance and, on that regard, makes the assumption that she will win. So, this is assumed evidentiality. The difference between deductive and assumptive values is that deductive relies on sensory perception while assumptive relies on experience and reasoning. According to Palmer (2001), the modal verb '*must*' usually indicates deductive evidentiality while '*will*' mostly denotes assumptive evidentiality.

The verbs of *seem* and *appear* can also have evidential meanings in English. Verbs of *seem* and *appear* can indicate deductive, assumptive, or reported evidentiality (Gurajek, 2010. p. 66):

(10)

- a. Jane **seems** exhausted.
- b. Sarah **appeared** to be angry yesterday.

In (10/a), the verb *seem* is a subject-percept verb because the speaker bases the statement by observing how Jane looks. So, as the observation depends on looking at Jane, the type of evidentiality is deductive. In (10/b), the verb '*appeared*' indicates deductive evidentiality. The speaker has accessed this information by looking at Sarah's face and, on that regard, inferred that she was angry.

The verbs of speaking can also convey evidential meanings. Verbs of this kind are used in expressing reported evidentiality:

(11)

- a. Alan **said** "I am flying to Dubai next week."
- b. They **say** that Sam is going to marry Helen.

The sentence in (11/a) is an example of quotative reported evidentiality because the source from which the information has been taken is specified. The sentence in (11/b) is an example of hearsay, it does not point out the original source of information.

Verbs of cognition are also among those lexical units which

can convey evidential meanings (Melac, 2022, pp. 18-19). They are verbs which are related to human cognition and they can express sources of information as part of their evidential meanings. To do so, they can be used as parentheticals to encode inferential evidentiality:

(12)

a. The boss seems to be angry. I *imagine* we are going to be blamed for something.

b. It is 6 o'clock. I *think* the kids are at home now.

The verb '*imagine*' in (12/a) has the evidential meaning of inference which depends on the existing evidence, the boss is angry. The sentence in (12/b) relies on previous knowledge that the kids should be home at 6 o'clock. Thus, it is an example of assumptive evidentiality.

Some adverbs are among those linguistic choices which can indicate evidentiality. Their uses are mostly aligned with indirect evidentiality. Adverbs like *reportedly*, *supposedly*, and *allegedly* can be used in indicating indirect evidentiality:

(13)

a. *Supposedly*, Mary is promoted to be the manager.

b. John will *reportedly* marry Sarah.

In these examples, the underlined adverbs indicate information which have been reported, inferred, or heard and are not surely confirmed (Chafe, 1986). The speaker does not have direct access to the information in neither case. Therefore, they are both examples of indirect evidentiality.

More evidential markers can be found in English. Structures like *according to what they say/expectations* can also indicate indirect reported evidentiality since the speaker knows about the information only from others' words.

## V. EVIDENTIALITY IN CENTRAL KURDISH

The notion of evidentiality in Central Kurdish is relatively new and lacks extensive investigation and literature. As a result, it is a bit hard to find reliable sources that identify CK evidential system, whether grammatical or lexical. In their study "*Central Kurdish Operators in Role and Reference Grammar*", Azizi and Rezvani (2023, p. 302) briefly mention the notion of evidentiality. They believe that "*Evidential operators which conspicuously point to the source of information do not exist in CK, but instead, there is a process called evidentiality strategy.*"

Typologically speaking, Kurdish language is part of the Indo-European family of the languages. Previously, it was pointed out that most of the Indo-European languages lack grammatical systems for the expression of evidentiality (Aikhenvald, 2004). So, this classification of Kurdish language can also postulate the hypothesis that Central Kurdish evidentiality is believed to be the same with the languages which do not have obligatory grammatical markers for marking the information source. So, the following descriptions will be dedicated to explain if the strategies like perception verbs, some modal verbs, verbs of speaking, verbs like *appear* and *seem*, and other constructions can be used to indicate information source in CK.

To begin with, the perception verbs can be used in Central Kurdish in order to mark information source. There are different types of the perception verbs. Not all the types carry evidential senses. The three different types of perception verbs are:

Table 2: Central Kurdish Perception Verbs

Type of sensory perception	Types of verbs		
	Active (subject-agentive)	Experiential (subject-experiencer)	Perceptual (subject-percept)
Sight	seir-kirdin/temaşa-kirdin (to look)	binin (see)	diyar-e/der-dekewê (look)
Hearing	gwê-girtin (to listen)	gwê-lebûn/bistn (hear)	diyar-e/der-dekewê (sound)
Touch	ber-kewtin/dest-lêdan (to touch)	hest-kirdin (feel)	diyar-e/der-dekewê (feel)
Taste	tam-kirdin (to taste)	tam-kirdin (taste)	diyar-e/der-dekewê (taste)
Smell	bon-kirdin (to smell)	bon-kirdin (smell)	diyar-e/der-dekewê (smell)

Verbs of the first type in the classification have an agent in the position of the subject. They indicate an intended action by the speaker. As for the verbs of the second type, the subject must have the role of experiencer. In other words, the action is not intended by the speaker. Finally, the third type of the Central Kurdish perception verbs include those verbs which have a subject-percept in the position of the subject. In other words, the subject does not perform an action. Instead, it is the subject that is being perceived by someone else. Regarding Viberg's (1984) and Whitt's (2008) classifications of the perception verbs, it can be said that only the second and third type of these perception verbs in Central Kurdish, similarly to English, can carry evidential senses. The verbs of the first type of the classification are always intended and, thus, excluded from the discussion.

Let's have a look at examples for the verbs of the second type of the classification, the subject oriented experiencer verbs:

(14)

a. Sarah mindal-eke-i *bini*.

Sarah kid-DEF-3SG *see*.PST

Sarah *saw* the child.

b. Sarah hewal-eke-i *bist*.

Sarah news-DEF-3G *hear*.PST

Sarah *heard* the news.

c. Sarah *hest*-i be serma-eke *kird*.

Sarah *feel*-3SG to cold-DEF *do*.PST

Sarah *felt* the cold.

d. Sarah *tam*-i piaz-i *kird* le xwardin-eke.

Sarah *taste*-Ezf onion-3SG *do*.PST in food-DEF

Sarah *tasted* onion in the food.

e. Sarah *bon*-i cgere-i *kird* le jûr-eke.

Sarah *smell*-Ezf cigarette-3SG *do*.PST in room-DEF

Sarah *smelled* cigarette in the room.

The sentences in (14) are examples of indirect reported evidentiality. The verbs *bini* (saw), *bist* (heard), *hest-kird* (felt), *tam-kird* (tasted), and *bon-kird* (smelled) have evidential meanings. They all have a perceiver in the position of the subject. What makes the type of evidentiality indirect is the subject. The subject is third-person. So, when the speaker utters these utterances, it looks like s/he only reports the evidence which was known for someone else, Sarah.

The verbs of the third type of the classification include the object-oriented (subject-percept) perception verbs:

(15)

a. Peter *di|xoš* *diyare/derdekewê*.

Peter happy *look*.PRS

Peter *looks* happy.

b. Peter *di|teng* *diyare/derdekewê*.

Peter sad *sound*.PRS

Peter *sounds* sad.

c. Kras-eke *nerm* *diyare/derdekewê*.

Shirt-DEF soft *feel*.PRS

The shirt *feels* soft.

d. Pizza-ke *betam* *diyare/derdekewê*.

Pizza-DEF delicious *taste*.PRS

The pizza *tastes* delicious.

e. Bon-eke *xoš* *diyare/derdekewê*.

Perfume-DEF pleasant *smell*.PRS

The perfume *smells* pleasant.

The examples in (15) indicate inferred evidentiality. What might sound odd is how come that the same words *diyare* and *derdekewê* can represent the different sensory perceptions. In this case, the subject of the sentence does not perform an action either intendedly or unintendedly. Instead, someone else makes assertion based on the available sensory evidence in that context. So, the sentences are evaluative and require the speaker's judgement on the proposition. It is the subject's facial expression which makes the speaker infer that Peter is happy, it is the tactile perception of the shirt that makes the speaker assert that the shirt feels soft, it is the olfactory perception of the perfume which leads the speaker to believe that the perfumes smells pleasant, etc. All the sentences are conclusions drawn by the speaker based on the existing sensory evidence. Explanations of this kind can be found in Gisborne (1988 cited in Gurajek, 2010. p. 64).

So, the words *diyare*, which is derived from the adjective *diyar* (obvious or outstanding) + *e* (verb to be), and *derdekewê* can be used to refer all the assertions which are made by a speaker while using a sensory evidence and the context determines to which sensory the words *diyare* and *derdekewê* refer to.

Again, the argument structure (first/third-person subject) and the complementation patterns can affect the evidential meanings that the perception verbs carry. First, it has to be known that direct evidentiality must have a first-person subject. However, not all the first-person subjects indicate direct

evidentiality. The examples in (14) have a third-person subject. If the subject is changed into a first-person subject, the type of evidentiality will change from indirect reported evidentiality into direct evidentiality:

(16)

a. Min *minda|e-ke-m* *bini*.

I kid-DEF-1SG *see*.PST

I *saw* the kid.

b. *Bist-im* *chi-t* *gût*.

*Hear*.PST-1SG what-2SG say.PST

I *heard* what you said.

c. Min *tam-i* *piaz-im* *kird* *le* *xwardin-eke*.

I *taste*-Ezf onion-1SG *do*.PST in food-DEF

I *tasted* onion in the food.

The perception verbs in these examples have evidential meanings. Since the subject is first-person and has direct access to the source of information, they all indicate direct evidentiality.

The other factor which results in different evidentiality types that is indicated by the perception verbs is the complementation patterns. The examples in (16) all have a direct object as their complement: *minda|eke* (the kid), *hewa|eke* (the news), and *piaz* (onion). There can be other complementation patterns as well:

(17)

a. *Bini-m* *minda|e-ke* *de-sûta*.

*See*.PST-1SG baby-DEF IND-burn.PST

I *saw* the baby burning.

b. *Bini-m* (ke) *minda|e-ke* *sûta-bû*.

*see*.PST-1SG (that) baby-DEF burn.PST-be.PST

I *saw* (that) the baby had burned.

In example (17/a), the visual perception verb “*bini*” is used to indicate direct evidentiality. The subject is the pronominal clitic “-m” which is used as first-person subject and it is followed by a finite clause. The event has been personally witnessed by the speaker. On the other hand, the meaning that is encoded in the verb *bini* in example (17/b) can be regarded as an example of indirect inferred evidentiality. Here, the verb is not an instance of visual perception. Instead, it has the meaning of ‘*understanding*.’ It is indirect because the verb is followed by a *that*-clause. So, the speaker has access to the result of the action not the action itself. Thereby, the speaker makes inference about the event.

Similar examples can be found for the auditory perception verbs (subject-experiencer):

(18)

a. *Gwê-m* *lê-bû* *Quran-it* *de-xwênd*.

*ear*-1SG from-be.PST Quran-2SG IND-read.PST

I *heard* you reading Quran.

- b. *Bist*-im ke to Quran de-xwen-it.  
*hear*.PST-1SG that you Quran IND-read.PRS-2SG  
 I *heard* that you are reading Quran.

In example (18/a), the perception verb *gwêlêbû* indicates direct evidentiality because the subject is first-person, denoting that the speaker has personally witnessed part of the event. In (18/b), the perception verb *bist* indicates reported evidentiality. Although the subject is first-person, but the complementation pattern is *that*-clause. It denotes that the evidence has come from the words of others (Gurajek, 2010).

Central Kurdish can have other markers for evidentiality expression along with the verbs of perception. To begin with, some modal verbs can have evidential meanings in CK:

- (19)  
 a. Maria *debêt* le maļ bê; glop-eke-an de-sûtê-n.  
 Maria *must* at home be.PRS; light-DEF-PL IND-burn.PRS-3PL  
 Maria *must* be at home; the lights are on.  
 b. Barin *reŋge* le maļ bê, dwênê bini-m.  
 Barin *might* at home be.PRS, yesterday see.PST-1SG  
 Barin *might* be at home, I saw her yesterday.

The words *debêt* and *reŋge* can express evidential meanings. In (19/a), the word *debêt* carries the meaning of inferential evidentiality. Here, the word does not indicate obligation but is used to draw conclusions from evidence. It is similar to the modal verb ‘*must*’ in English. The modal verb “*must*” is used to mean both obligation and possibility (inference). In the first example, the speaker has the evidence that the lights are on. Based on this evidence, the speaker infers that Maria must be at home. In (19/b), the word *reŋge*, which has other translations like *lewaneye/ pêdeçêt*, can also indicate inferential evidentiality. The speaker saw Barin yesterday and, on that basis, s/he concludes that she might be at home.

Evidentiality can also be expressed by verbs of saying (speaking). These verbs indicate reported evidentiality:

- (20)  
 a. Azad *gût*-i “de-ê-im bo bazaî.”  
 Azad *say*.PST-3SG IND-go.PRS/FUT-1SG to bazar  
 Azad *said* “I will go to bazar.”  
 b. Ewan be min-yan *gût* ke to nexoš-Ø-it.  
 They to I-3PL.CL *say* that you sick-be.PRS-2SG  
 They *told* me that you are sick.  
 c. Nhêni-eke-m *pêgût-ra*.  
 secret-DEF-1SG *tell*.PST-PASS  
 I *was told* the secret.

The verb *gût* in the examples (20/a) and (20/b) are used to indicate reported evidentiality. The difference between the two examples is that the first one is direct reported speech while the second one is indirect reported speech. In example (c), passive voice has been used. The passive verb ‘*pêgûtra*’ marks reported

evidentiality. So, the verbs of speaking mainly indicate reported evidentiality.

More markers can be found in CK to express evidentiality. Verbs like *derdekewê* and *diyare* (*seems/appears*), which also correspond to the verb *look*, can mostly indicate inferential indirect evidentiality:

- (21)  
 a. Azad birsi *diyare/derdekewê*.  
 Azad famished *appear/seem*.PRS  
 Azad *appears/seems* famished.

In the above example, the verbs *diyare* and *derdekewê* are used to make an assertion and infer the situation based on how Azad acts and looks. So, it is an example of indirect inferred evidentiality.

Constructions like *be gwêrey hewaļ* (reportedly), *be gwêrey qsekan/pêşbiniyekan* (according to what is said/according to the expectations) can also have indirect evidential meanings:

- (22)  
 a. *Be gwêrey hewaļekan*, beyani baran de-barê-t.  
*Reportedly*, tomorrow rain IND-pour.FUT-2SG  
*Reportedly* (according to the news), it will rain tomorrow.

In this example, the construction *be gwêrey hewaļekan* is used to indicate reported evidentiality. The speaker has obtained information about the scene through the words of others. Therefore, it is indirect evidentiality.

The verbs of cognition can be among the other markers which express evidentiality. These verbs basically denote indirect inferential evidentiality. An example for this type can be the verb “*birkirdinewe/pêwabûn*” (think). It is inferential since the speaker uses existing evidence or reasoning to make a decision on something rather than having direct evidence.

Referencing every single unit which can mark evidentiality in Central Kurdish might not be easy because sources are rare and most people are unaware of this new topic. So, the aforementioned markers, to the best of the researcher’s knowledge, are the most prominent ones and there can be more markers to express evidentiality in CK. Thus, future studies can contribute more to the analysis of Central Kurdish evidentiality with their findings.

## CONCLUSIONS

It has been discussed that evidentiality is responsible to mark sources of information and indicate the degree of certainty for the claim that is presented. The sources of information can be direct and indirect. Higher degree of certainty is expressed with direct evidentials and lower degree of certainty with indirect evidentials. Several findings have been obtained in this study.

To begin with, evidentiality marking vary across languages. Typologically speaking, languages are classified into two groups: those which have grammatical evidentiality and those which have lexical markers. The languages with dedicated grammatical markers are classified together while those which lack such markers are put in a different category. It has been



pointed out that the evidential typology of English and Central Kurdish is like the evidential systems of those languages which do not grammatically mark the information source. So, they are similar to most of the other Indo-European languages which also lack obligatory evidential markers. To be more precise, the expression of evidentiality in these two languages mostly rely on lexical items. These markers can be perception verbs, modal verbs, adverbs, verbs of saying and more. Direct evidentiality is expressed by perception verbs. However, there are restrictions. The type of the perception verb should be of the second type (subject-oriented) and the subject must be first-person and it must have the role of the experiencer of the action.

Additively, the complementation pattern should not be *that*-clause. Patterns like direct object, gerund, and infinitives, if used with first-person subject, indicate direct evidentiality.

Indirect evidentiality can also be expressed by perception verbs with some definite restrictions. First, if the subject is not first-person, it is obviously indirect. Secondly, if the complementation pattern is *that*-clause, even with first-person subject, the type of evidentiality is still thought to be indirect.

Moreover, the third type of the perception verbs (subject-percept) is also used to express indirect evidentiality, mostly inferential type. The other markers, like modal verbs, adverbs, verbs of *appear* and *seem*, verbs of saying, and the other constructions can have evidential meanings and the type of evidentiality that they express is indirect, either inference or reported.

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