

The coding of evidentiality: a comparative look at Georgian and Italian

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Drawing on a comparison of two geographically and typologically distant languages, Georgian and Italian, this paper aims to provide some insights into the patterning of lexical and grammatical strategies in the domain of evidentiality. First of all, in the systems described in this paper evidentiality is signaled in opposition to neutral unmarked discourse. In both languages some verb forms, associated with various temporal and aspectual values, have taken on evidential meanings in specific contexts. Neither language has developed a morphological evidential category. A typologically relevant feature is that inferential and reportive evidentiality are articulated differently: they cluster together in the Georgian perfect but are distinguished in Italian. A further conclusion of this study is that the means to express evidentiality are a domain in movement, which admits several intermediate stages, as is manifested by the presence of grammaticalization processes involving lexical items and the increasing use of adverbial constructions.¹

1. Some introductory remarks

1.1. The encoding of evidentiality

Not every language has evidentiality markers, but every language can express how information about events is acquired and can also convey the speaker's attitude towards that information.

In the large number of publications which have appeared over the last twenty years, the distinction between grammatical markers and lexical means for expressing the source of knowledge is not always clear, not to mention the variety of terminologies that have been proposed (Dendale & Tasmovski 2001). We will start our discussion with Aikhenvald's (2004) position, namely that grammatical evidentiality (henceforth EV) is concerned with obligatory markers. This is a restrictive, but probably necessary and reasonable, definition if one wants to establish a common conceptual ground for a cross-linguistic analysis and to evaluate the various forms of EV. In some languages, EV meanings have developed as secondary mean-

ings out of tenses and moods of the verbal system. These extensions are called by Aikhenvald “evidentiality strategies” and should be kept distinct from EV proper, “whose primary – and not infrequently exclusive – meaning is information source” (Aikhenvald 2004:105).

Such a variety of grammatical means should not prevent us from recognizing the relevance of lexical sources to the expression of EV, which in many languages appear to be concomitant with grammatical means, as will be shown for Georgian and Italian. The evidential use of modal verbs is mainly a Western European feature (de Haan 2005a:319), which is found in Germanic and Romance as well as in Finnish:

(1a) Dutch

Het	moet	een	goede	film	zijn	
3SG.N	must.INDP	3SG	INDEF	good-M	movie	be.INF

Italian

Dev'essere un buon film

‘It is said to be a good film, it appears to be a good film.’ (de Haan 2005a)

Adverbial expressions, such as English *reportedly* and *apparently* (see Ramat 1996), are also widely found to express information source or degree of speaker commitment. Interestingly, a number of lexical items and constructions can also be shown to point to intermediate steps in the process of EV grammaticalization.

1.2. Semantic distinctions

As to the distinctions in the semantic domain of EV, we follow the classification adopted by Givón (1982) and widely accepted by scholars (de Haan 2005, etc.) that distinguishes direct evidentials, which are used when the speaker has some sort of sensory evidence for the action or event s/he is describing, from indirect evidentials, which are used when the speaker was not a witness to the event, but came to know about it after the fact. The latter include the two sub-categories of *inferential* and *quotative* evidentials.² This model is reminiscent of the distinction between firsthand and non-firsthand information adopted by Aikhenvald and is compatible with the subdivisions introduced by Willet (1988), who has split direct evidentials into visual, auditory, and other sensory evidence types, and the indirect domain into inferring and reported evidentials.³

The conceptual distinction between EV as a marker of information source and epistemic modality indicating the commitment of the speaker to the truth of the proposition expressed (Lyons 1977) is quite clear, although in many languages the two notions are closely intertwined and coexist in the same forms, clustering in different ways, according to the prominence given to a certain semantic component. It is no accident that for some authors EV distinctions are part of epistemic modality (Palmer 1986,⁴ van der Auwera and Plungian 1998, among others). Indeed, the relation between EV and epistemic modality in the literature is often one of inclusion, the included notion being EV (Willett 1988, Nuyts 2001), because marking the source of information can be regarded as an indirect means of marking an epistemic attitude toward the information itself (Dendale & Tasmovski 2001:342).

In this work we consider the two notions of EV and epistemic modality as being conceptually independent, along with de Haan (1999, 2005b) and Lazard (2001), although we are aware that the degree of reliability concerning the information source may have an effect on the speaker's degree of certainty about the truth of the proposition. Further support for the distinction between EV and epistemic modality comes from the fact that epistemic and evidential markers may co-occur in a utterance, even in languages that do not obligatorily code EV, as in the following Dutch example, in which the modal auxiliary *moet* (which has an evidential meaning) is further qualified epistemically:

(1b) Dutch

Het	moet	een	goed-e film zijn,
3SG.N	must.INDPRS.3SG	INDEF	good-M movie be.INF
maar ik	heb	er mijn	tweifel over
but	1SG.NOM	have.IND.PRS.1SG	there POSS.1SG doubt about

'It is said to be a good movie, but I have my doubts about that.' (de Haan 1999:93, quoted in Pietrandrea 2005:33)

In principle, epistemic modality qualifies the speaker's belief, while EV (inferential or reportive) qualifies the source that justifies the assertion of a proposition (Pietrandrea 2005:33). In other words, epistemic modality evaluates the evidence, while EV asserts the evidence (de Haan 2005b:380). Thus, as noted by Comrie (2000:2), using an evidential form does not necessarily involve any casting of doubt on the reliability of the information conveyed. Consider the following interaction:

Italian

- (2) Speaker 1: Mario dev'essere già uscito
 Mario must:3SG be:INF already gone out
 'Mario must already have gone out'
- Speaker 2: Sei sicuro?
 be:2SG sure
 'Are you sure?'
- Speaker 1: Sì, non c'è la sua macchina
 yes, not LOC-be:3SG DEF POSS car
 'Yes, his car is no longer here'

The source of the statement is indirect, inferred as it is from the absence of the car. Despite this, the speaker is convinced of the truth of the event and, in his answer, provides the evidence supporting his statement.

Since Lyons (1977), the notion of subjectivity has often been related to modality. Although the term subjectivity is used with a variety of different meanings, here we follow Nuyts (2001), who, discussing the distinction between subjective and objective evaluations of the likelihood of a state of affairs (Lyons 1977:797ff), argues for an evidential qualification of subjectivity: "the dimension of subjectivity is thus probably not a distinction within the epistemic domain, but within the evidential domain" (Nuyts 2001:386). The linguistic expressions reflecting the dimension of subjectivity are all lexical in Nuyts' discussion. They include expressions like *in my view* (cf. Italian *secondo me*) and mental state predicates like *I think*. According to Nuyts, modal auxiliaries and adverbials like *probably* and modal adjectives of the type (*it is*) *probable* occur by far most frequently in the expression of non-subjectivity (e.g. they may be used when reporting the results of scientific research and the like).

Thus, the following sentence:

Italian

- (3) Secondo me il treno è deragliato perché correva troppo
 according me DEF train be:3SG go off: PTCP because run: IMPF.3SG too much
 'In my opinion the train went off the rails because it was running too fast'

can be taken as a subjective evidential inference, indicating that the evidence is (only) available to the speaker (the speaker might have been a participant in the situation). The dimension of subjectivity should be defined in terms of whether the evidence is only available to the speaker or is known more widely. Anyway, it

is worthwhile to underline the fundamental role of the speaker's evaluation in EV.

1.3 Areal patterns

European languages have no exclusive grammatical category for EV but use several EV strategies, by resorting to parts of their verbal systems. On a world-wide basis, the marking of (indirect) EV in the verbal system is a strategy adopted by only 24 languages out of a sample of 418 languages considered in WALS (de Haan 2005a). To this group belong languages that are found in two not very distant areas, the Balkans and the Caucasus. Actually, within Europe, three sub-areas can be recognized in which some forms belonging to verbal paradigms are employed to mark EV: Balkan languages, Baltic and Finno-Ugric languages,⁵ and Romance languages.

Romance languages have been added to the list although they “do not seem to have evidentials, with the exception of French, probably under the influence of Germanic”, according to a recent survey (de Haan 2005a). By contrast, following the seminal papers by Squartini (2001, 2004, 2005), it will be argued that EV expressed through verb forms has a firm place in the Italian verb system as well as in other Romance languages.

In a large area including Balkan languages, Turkish and Turkic languages, Iranian languages, and Caucasian languages, evidential systems exhibiting similarities with one another are found⁶ (Johanson and Utas 2000). It has been claimed that Balkan languages developed EV strategies under Turkish influence and the same might be true of Caucasian languages. We do not discuss the issue of contact here, but we limit ourselves to pointing out that the diffusion of EV from one language to another through contact is a well-attested phenomenon (Aikhenvald 2004:288-299, de Haan 2005a:319, Heine & Kuteva 2005:265).

In this paper two geographically and typologically distant languages will be compared on the basis of the expression of EV: Italian, a Romance language, and Georgian, a South-Caucasian language. At first sight, the two languages should be located quite apart on a scale of EV grammaticalization. According to traditional views, Romance languages lack EV and Georgian is part of the EV area of the Caucasus. However, the two languages share a number of features that are worth noticing. First of all, they do not belong to those languages that expressly code “direct” EV, or “eye-witness” EV, but mark information either obtained through various kinds of inference or

reported by someone else (“indirect” EV). Secondly, in both languages the grammatical means of EV coding derive from the verbal system either from tense/aspect morphemes, as in the case of the Georgian perfect, or from temporal/modal ones, as in the case of the Italian conditional. Thus, they represent “EV strategies” rather than EV proper, according to Aikhenvald (2004). Further, in both languages lexical expressions of EV or intermediate stages between lexicon and grammar are found, ranging from periphrastic constructions with modal verbs (Italian *potere, dovere*, Georgian invariable *unda* ‘must, need’) to a variety of adverbial expressions.

In dealing with the various means of EV coding, we will also be concerned with highlighting the relevance of pragmatic factors, such as narrative conventions and discourse genres.

In this paper we hope to offer a contribution, albeit a restricted one, to the cross-linguistic comparison of both EV as a semantic conceptual notion and the specific linguistic realizations that EV may have in different languages.

The paper is organized as follows: section 2 deals with EV in Georgian, in which the perfect has a variety of non-firsthand meanings. Other means of expressing EV are also discussed. Section 3 provides a brief description of the Italian case, in which three forms of the verbal system, the conditional, the imperfect and the future can acquire evidential extensions and discusses some instances of semi-grammaticalized expressions. Section 4 draws some conclusions.

2. Evidentiality in Georgian

EV in Georgian is mainly encoded in the perfect. With other tenses evidential meanings are expressed by adverbials and quotative particles. The Georgian perfect codes indirect EV, which includes the subcategories of inference, hearsay and mirativity. Direct evidence is expressed through neutral forms of the verbal paradigm (e.g. aorist for past events). Since the perfect has also non-evidential meanings, it must be concluded that Georgian has no specific grammatical marking for EV, in the sense of Aikhenvald (2004).

2.1 The Perfect

A prototypical perfect refers to an action completed in the past, whose result is still present at the time of the speech event (Comrie 1976:110, Pkhakadze 1984:53). In Georgian the perfect takes on an

evidential meaning insofar as it expresses indirect knowledge about an event: the speaker has not witnessed the event but has acquired information about it from indirect sources by inference, hearsay (second-hand, third-hand information), etc. The perfect can aptly be described as involving current knowledge of something the speaker was not previously aware of (Boeder 2000:295). The interpretation can be inferential or reportive depending on the context. In example (4), the speaker has not witnessed the event of the construction of the fountain, but can infer it from either its visible result or reported information.

- (4) kalak-is cent'r-ši axal-i šadrevan-i a -u -šeneb -i -a-t.
 city-GEN center-in new-NOM fountain-NOM PREV-VERS-build-PERF-3SUB-PL
 'A new fountain has been built in the city center, (so it appears).'

With temporal adverbs or locutions related to the present or future (e.g. 'today', 'next week', 'in two days', etc.), the perfect of the verb *q'opna* 'to be' becomes an equivalent of the present with an evidential meaning:

- (5) xval q'opil-a giorgoba, k'alendar-ši v-nax-e
 tomorrow be:PERF-3SG Saint George's day:NOM calendar-in 1SG- see - AOR
 'Tomorrow (so it seems) is Saint George's day, I saw it on the calendar'
 (I did not know it/ I have forgotten it)

2.1.1 *Lexical markers of evidentiality*

An alternative to the perfect in expressing EV are lexical means. The mostly used one is the particle *turme*⁷ 'apparently', which occurs with other tenses (e.g. aorist and future). *Turme* is semantically broad. In (6), the information source can be a report or an inference:

- (6) turme davit-i sazɣvargaret c'a - vid -a sasc'avleblad.
 apparently David-NOM abroad PREV-go:AOR-3SG for study
 'It seems that David has gone abroad to study.'
 [(a) He sent me a letter from London. / (b) His sister told me.]

Turme can also be combined with the perfect. In such cases, it is used as a kind of intensifier of the evidential meaning but is not obligatory. In example (7), there is double EV marking (*turme* + perfect):

- (7) turme davit-i sazɣvargaret c'a- sul -a sasc'avleblad.
 apparently David-NOM abroad PREV-go:PERF-3SG for study
 'As it seems, David has gone abroad to study.'

Generally, the evidential perfect can be replaced by *turme* + aorist, especially in affirmative sentences. However, there are some semantic restrictions on exclamatory and interrogative sentences. This is a topic worth a separate study and will not be discussed here.

In the spoken language as well as in some narrative genres, inference is frequently conveyed by the semi-grammaticalized marker *et'q'oba* (literally: 'it is visible on him/her/it'). It is a 3rd person present form of the verb *šet'q'oba* 'to notice' which has become an invariable evidentiality marker with the inferential as well as epistemic value of 'as it seems, as it appears, probably'. The reportive interpretation of *et'q'oba* is not possible.

- (8) nino-m mocart'-is disk'-i i-q'id-a, et'q'oba
 NINO-ERG Mozart-GEN cd-NOM VERS-buy-AOR.3SG. apparently/probably
 mosc'on-s k'lasik'ur-i musik'a
 like-3SG.PRES classical-NOM music:NOM
 'Nina bought a Mozart CD, evidently/apparently she likes classical music.'

With past events, *et'q'oba* occurs only in the aorist and imperfect. It can be combined with a negated perfect, which is devoid of any evidential meaning. As was seen above, *turme* does not have such limitations.

The evidential perfect has also admirative extensions (see note 14 on mirativity) when it expresses surprise at a fact discovered at the time of speech (Friedman 1979:341) which does not necessarily have to be pleasant (Boeder 2000:288):

- (9) es ra cecxl-ši čavvardnil-var!
 this what fire-in fall into:PERF.1SG
 'Into what a fire have I fallen!' (Grigol Orbeliani quoted by Boeder 2000:288)

The evidential perfect can also occur with the 1st person when the speaker refers to actions s/he accomplished in some unconscious state (Sumbatova 1999:74) or reports on a piece of information about himself/herself which has been acquired by inference or hearsay:

- (10) k'ar-i γία damit'oveb-i-a, satednierod mezobel-ma
 door-NOM open leave-PERF-3SG, fortunately neighbour-ERG
 droulad še- m- a- t'q'obin-a amis šesaxeb.
 in due time PREV -1SG -VERS- inform-AOR.3SG it:GEN about.
 'Evidently I left the door open, fortunately a neighbour told me about it in due time.'

- (11) *latinur-is savardžišo q'vela-ze k'arg-ad da-m-i-c'e-r-i-a.*
 Latin-GEN exercise:NOM all-on good-ADV PREV-1SG-VERS-write-PERF.3SG
 'Evidently I did the Latin exercise better than everyone else' (information acquired by the speaker through an indirect source).

Thus, there are no restrictions in the use of the evidential perfect in first person contexts of the type discussed by Aikhenvald (2004:231) and Hewitt (1995:259).

2.2 *Non-evidential uses of the perfect*

As mentioned above, the perfect also has non-evidential uses such as the experiential meaning and the iterative meaning. Generally, in the latter interpretation, the perfect is found when adverbials such as *bevrđzer* 'many times', *xširad* 'often', etc. are also used:

- (12) *mariam-s xširad u-mogzaur-i-a ucxoetši*
 Maria-DAT often VERS-travel-PERF-3SG abroad
 'Maria has often traveled abroad.'

The perfect is also used in negative sentences, where it is an unmarked form in contrast to the aorist, which is more "concrete and categorical" (Boeder 2002:303). Compare:

- (13a) *naq'in-i (džer) ar m-i-č'am-i-a.*
 ice-cream-NOM yet not 1SG-VERS-eat- PERF-3SG
 'I have not (yet) eaten the ice-cream.'
- (13b) *naq'in-i ar v-č'ame, q'el-i m-t'k'iod-a*
 ice-cream-NOM not 1SG-eat: AOR throat-NOM 1SG-hurt:AOR-3SG
 'I have not eaten the ice-cream, I had a sore throat.'

In cases in which the negated perfect has to convey an evidential meaning, EV must be expressed by lexical means:

- (14) *et'q'oba avt'obus-i džer ar mosul-a.*
 apparently bus-NOM yet not arrive:PERF-3SG
 'Apparently the bus has not arrived yet.'

The non-evidential perfect is also used with yes/no questions without concrete time reference and to express congratulations and wishes, where the perfect acquires a present value, also as a kind of imperative (for a detailed discussion see Boeder 2000:298 ff. and Hewitt 1995:260).

2.3 Reportive evidentials

In order to mark the information source, Georgian can use reported speech markers such as *-metki* and *-tko*, which result from the grammaticalization of the verb *tkma* ‘say’. *-metki*, which derives from the sequence *me utkvi* ‘I said’, marks exclusively quotations in the first person singular when the speaker reports an utterance s/he had already made or reflected on in the past:

- (15) ramdendžer g-i -txar-i k’ar-i ar dak’et’-o – metki!
 how many times 2.SG-VERS-tell-AOR.1SG door-NOM non close-OPT.2SG-QUOT
 ‘How many times have I told you not to close the door (I said)!’

-tko (derived from *tkva* - literally ‘s/he said’) is used when the addressee is a mediator between the speaker and a third person. The utterance is addressed to the third person, the information source is the speaker. Boeder (2002:15) labels this use “instructional”:

- (16) utxar-i, male mod-i-tko.
 tell:2SG -IMP soon come-IMP.2SG -QUOT
 ‘Tell him/her, to come soon.’ (literally: ‘tell her/him, come soon, s/he said’).

In some dialects, *-tko* occurs in place of *-metki* in the first person (Kvachadze 1996:517). The tendency to use *-tko* in place of *-metki* is sometimes also noticeable in modern spoken Georgian and in its dialectal varieties (Hewitt 1981:84). *-tko* also marks quotations in the first person plural, where *-metki* is not possible (Boeder 2002:15).

The particle *-o*, whose source is obscure, is used for quotations in the second or third person. When the information source is not specified, *-o* means ‘it is said’, ‘they said’.

- (17) (ambob-en), c’els civ-i zamtar-i ikneb-a-o.
 (say:PRES-3PL) this year cold-NOM winter-NOM be:FUT-3SG-QUOT
 ‘Winter will be cold this year (they say).’

Quotative particles as reportive markers are frequently used in oral speech. They occur especially in dialogues of various narrative genres (folk tales, stories, etc.) to report the speaker’s words exactly:

- (18) iq’o erti col-kmar-i. γmert-s exvec’ebod-nen:
 be:AOR.3SG one wife-husband-NOM God-DAT implore:IMPF-3PL

γmert-o, oγond švil-i mo-gv-e-c-i da rasac
 God-VOC only child-NOM PREV-2PL -give -IMP and what
 gv-i-brdzaneb, imas agisruleb -t -o
 2PL-VERS-command:FUT that accomplish:FUT-1PL-QUOT
 ‘(Once upon a time) there was a wife and a husband. They prayed to
 God: ‘God! give us a child and we will do everything you command us
 to do.’ (*ori dzma* – ‘Two brothers’, fairy tale).

Quotative particle *-o* can be combined also with evidential (inferential or reportive) perfect. In such cases, *-o* marks third-hand information:

- (19) mzia-m tkv-a, c’els tbilis-ši bevr-i t’urist’-i
 Mzia-ERG say-AOR.3SG this year Tbilisi-in many-NOM tourist-NOM
 c’amosul-a-o
 arrive:PERF-3SG-QUOT
 ‘Mzia said, many tourists had allegedly arrived in Tbilisi this year.’

-o occurs usually in proverbs:

- (20) t’q’uil-s mok’le pex-eb-i akv-s-o.
 lie-DAT short:NOM leg-PL-NOM have:PRES-3SG-QUOT
 ‘Lies have short legs, it is said.’

2.4. Reported evidentials in the news

In modern Georgian, news-reporting differs from traditional narrative genres as to the marking of the information source. Reported information is preferably expressed by lexical expressions like *cnobit* ‘according to’ (lit. ‘with information of’), *gancxadebit* ‘according to the declaration of’ (lit. ‘with declaration of’), *bolo inpormaciis mixed-vit* ‘according to the latest information’ (lit. ‘after last information’), ...*azrit* ‘according to the opinion of’ (lit. ‘with opinion of’) etc. Such expressions usually are not compatible with the perfect:

- (21) p’resent’r-is cnob-it dγes gaimarteb-a šexvedra
 press center-GEN information-INS today take place:FUT-3SG meeting:NOM
 or p’rezident’-s šoris.
 two president-DAT between.
 ‘According to the press center, the meeting between the two presidents will take place today’ (*kronik’a*, August 2006).

Other lexical expressions (*savaraudod* ‘supposedly’, *rogorc čans* ‘as it appears’, etc.) are preferred to the evidential perfect if one wants

to deny responsibility or to distance herself/himself from the truth of the reported information. The combination of some of these expressions with the perfect is however possible.

- (22) modzraoba-s, rogorc čan-s, mxardamč'er-ta 50 atasi
 movement-DAT how appear-PRES.3SG supporter-GEN.3PL 50 thousand
 xelmoc'er-is šegroveba ga-u-č'irda.
 signature-GEN gathering:NOM PREV -VERS-strive -AOR:3SG
 'For the movement, so it seems, it was difficult to gather 50,000 signatures from the supporters.' (*sakartvelos resp'ublik'a*, 17.08.06)

Direct quotations in the press are not frequent. Consequently, the use of reportive particles is reduced and, when they do occur, they often acquire overtones of irony and distance:

- (23) p'resk'onperencia-ze, žurnalist'eb-s tvalc'in auprial-a kvitr-eb-i,
 press conference - at, journalist - PL-DAT in front of flutter-AOR.3SG bill- PL- NOM
 naxe-t, rogor gv-dzarcvav-s... mtavroba-o.
 see:IMP-2PL, how 1PL - rob:PRES -3SG ... government:NOM-QUOT
 'At the press conference, he waved the bills in front of the journalists: look, at the way ...the government is robbing us!' (*sakartvelos resp'ublik'a*, 17.08.06).
- (24) gaero-m, v-i-ziareb-t tkven-s mc'uxareba-s-o
 "UN"-ERG SUB-VERS-share:PRES-1PL your-DAT grief-DAT-QUOT
 'The United Nations said, we share your grief!' (said ironically by the newspaper). (*24 saati*, 20.08.06).

2.5. Future forms

The future in Georgian may sometimes take on an inferential value, as in Italian. The information source is usually not specified. This use is restricted to stative verbs, while the conditional (the past form of the Georgian future) may express inference with all kinds of verbs (Žghenti 1996):

- (25) axla švidi saat-i ikneb-a
 now seven hour-NOM be:FUT-3SG
 'It must be seven o' clock by now.'
- (26) tinatin-i am c'ign-s ueč'velad c'a-i-k'itxavd-a
 Tinatin-NOM this:DAT book-DAT undoubtedly PREV-VERS-read:COND-3SG
 'Tinatin undoubtedly will have read this book.'

The modal particle *unda*⁸ ‘must’ plus the optative of the main verb can also express an inference:

- (27) axla švidi saat-i unda iq’o-s
 now seven hour-NOM must be:OPT-3SG
 ‘It must be seven o’ clock by now.’

2.6. Evidentiality and discourse genres

As seen above, the main function of evidentials is the marking of the information source. The use of evidentials depends on the type of narrative genre and on the concrete discourse situation. Frequently, evidentials are used when the speaker does not want to take any responsibility for his/her statement.

The use of evidentials depends on a variety of conventions, as noted by Aikhenvald (2004:379), and may be manipulated as a stylistic device. Boeder (2000) observes that the evidential perfect is used to highlight that the speaker follows a tradition. Indeed, folk tales and traditional stories are often told in the evidential perfect, since they were not witnessed by the speaker. As the following excerpt from a poem, narrating a popular legend, illustrates, various different means of expressing evidentiality (reportive markers, lexical means, perfect) may occur in the same text:

- (28) bazalet-is-a t’b-is dzir-as
 Bazaleti-GEN lake-GEN bottom-at
 okros ak’van-i ar-i-s-o
 golden cradle-NOM be-PRES-3SG -QUOT
 da mis garšemo c’q’l-is kveše
 and it-GEN around water-GEN under
 ucxo c’alk’ot’-i hq’vav-i-s-o.
 wonderful garden-NOM flower-PRES-3SG-QUOT
 mc’vane-a mudam c’alk’ot’-i
 green -be:PRES.3SG always garden-NOM
 arasdros turme ar sč’k’neb-a....
 newer apparently not fade:PRES.3SG
 ...ambob-en, - tamar dedopal-s
 say-PRES.3PL Tamara:DAT queen-DAT
 is ak’van-i ik čaudgam-s
 that:NOM cradle-NOM there put:PERF.3SG
 da er-s tvista cremltnaden-it
 and nation-DAT own tear spill-with
 t’ba k’arv-ad zed gaduxurav-s.
 lake:NOM tent-ADV above cover:PERF-3SG

‘There is a golden cradle (it is said) / at the bottom of the Bazaleti Lake / and around it, under the water / a wonderful garden flourishes. / The garden is always green, / (apparently), it never fades. / It is said, Queen Tamar has put this cradle there / and the people of the nation / made a lake above it / with their tears as a tent.’
(*bazaletis t’ba* ‘Bazaleti Lake’ – Ilia Chavchavadze)

2.7 On the origins of Georgian evidentiality

EV is an areal feature of the Caucasus which is present in the majority of, if not all, Caucasian languages in one form or another (Chirikba 2003:265). However, there is disagreement about the first attestation of Georgian EV. Some scholars consider EV to be a rather recent category because it is not found in Old Georgian, where the perfect only has a resultative meaning (Pkhakadze 1984; Boeder 2000). Other authors (Ninua & Sarjveladze 1985:79) claim that the Old Georgian resultative perfect already has an evidential value, namely when it denotes events and results of actions which are not witnessed by the speaker:

- (29) me vitar m-i -cnob-ies, col-i šen-i gandgomil
I how 1SG-VERS-know:PERF wife-NOM your-NOM separated-PP+
ars šen-gan.
be:PRES.3SG=(PERF) you -from
‘As I have found out, your wife separated from you, (as they say)/...is separated from you’
(Jacob Tsurtaveli: *Šušanik’is c’ameba* – *The Martyrdom of Saint Shushanik*, 5th century).

The lexical expressions of EV by means of the particle *ture* (the older form of *turme* ‘apparently’) sometimes also occurs in Old Georgian texts (Arabuli 1984:142).

As has been argued by some authors, EV in Georgian may originate from contact with Turkic languages (Boeder 2000, Johanson 2006).

3. Evidentiality in Italian

Although EV is not recognized as a obligatory grammatical category in descriptions of Romance languages, in a number of recent studies certain Romance verb forms have been analyzed as EV markers (see Dendale & Tasmovski 1994, Guentchéva 1994 on French;

Squartini 2001, 2004, 2005 on Italian). It is useful to offer a summary of the putative Italian EV forms in order to highlight their various semantic values and to assess their distribution with respect to such notions as inferentiality, reference to hearsay and epistemic modality.

In Italian, direct visual knowledge is usually expressed through unmarked forms. Unmarked forms as in sentence (30) below are used to assert the propositional content and do not necessarily provide any information on the source of knowledge. Theoretically, the information could derive from direct vision (*l'ho vista io* 'I have seen her'), any kind of inference or someone's report (Dendale & Tasmovski 1994:5):

- (30) Giovanna è uscita alle cinque
Giovanna AUX.3SG leave.PTCP at.the five
'Giovanna left at five o' clock.'

Here it is not the literal notion of "witnessedness" which is relevant, but rather the speaker's confidence in the truth of the assertion: the sentence is valid even if the speaker was told about it by someone else. Georgian also uses unmarked forms for visual information and for assertions. Other languages behave differently, specifying visually acquired information through dedicated markers (see the data discussed in Aikhenvald 2004:42ff.).

3.1. The conditional as a reportive marker in Italian

The EV values of the Italian conditional have been largely recognized (Squartini 2001, Calaresu 2004, among others). The conditional is used in contexts conveying reported information or hearsay. A parallel use in French is labeled "conditionnel de l'information incertaine" or "conditionnel de la rumeur". However, the range of meanings is not the same since the French conditional may also have an inferential use in contexts restricted to direct questions (Squartini 2001:315).⁹

As is well known, the Italian (and, more generally, Romance) conditional has a number of uses which are older and more frequent, such as future in the past, unreality, counterfactuality, and the expression of an attenuated wish. Thus, the conditional originally had a temporal value of future in the past, then developed a number of modal values, which convey different degrees of factuality of the situation and of speaker's commitment (Squartini 1999). The evidential function is just one of these uses and the result of a semantic evolu-

tion that in Modern Italian has led to the conditional being restricted to the reportive function. As was already noted for the Georgian perfect, evidential meanings develop historically as secondary meanings, although the specific details may be different.

A typical use of the conditional in newspaper reports is (31):

- (31) Ci sarebbero almeno due elementi della scena
 LOC be:COND at least two element:PL of:DEF scene
 del crimine che non convincono appieno gli inquirenti
 of:DEF crime REL not convince.PRES.3PL fully DEF investigator.PL
 dell'ipotesi del suicidio.
 of:DEF hypothesis of:DEF suicide
 'Allegedly, there are at least two aspects of the crime scene that do not fully convince the investigators of the suicide theory' ("La Repubblica", August 11, 2006)

As is confirmed by the example above, in Italian the conditional is reportive, not inferential: this means that it conveys "a true mediated knowledge" (Plungian 2001:253), the source of information being external to the speaker. The speaker/writer is simply reporting the information acquired without any overtones of unreliability. Admittedly, contexts may be found with epistemic extensions of uncertainty, since by pragmatic inference less direct or mediated information may be taken to be less reliable (a similar inference has been grammaticalized in Balkan systems, see Plungian 2001:253).

According to the general characterization of the evidential meaning of conditionals proposed by Aikhenvald (2004:106), conditionals firstly express "uncertainty" concerning the information conveyed, secondly express non-firsthand information, and thirdly indicate that the speaker/writer takes no responsibility for that information. The first and third features are clearly a bridge toward epistemic modality.

The conditional of modal verb *dovere* 'must' and that of *potere* 'can' deserve further attention. In Italian, *dovere* and *potere* have both deontic and epistemic meanings (Palmer 1986). Both the present indicative and the conditional of *dovere* and *potere* may convey epistemic meanings which, according to the position taken in 1.2 above, are based on evidential sources. *Deve* (present indicative) and *dovrebbe* (conditional) indicate that the speaker draws his/her conclusions on the basis of, respectively, a strong vs. weak type of inference. Thus, the difference between the two forms can be described in terms of degrees of confidence in the factuality of the situation (Squartini 2001:313) or in terms of degree of certainty based on objective knowledge or inference, as is proposed by Pietrandrea (2005:81ff). Compare:

- (32) Ci dev-e essere un bavaglino nella borsa,
 LOC must-PRS.3SG be-INF INDEF bib-SG in-DEF.F.SG bag-SG
 prendi-lo!
 take-IMP.2.SG+3SG.ACC
 ‘There must be a bib in the bag, take it!’

Here *deve* has no epistemic value, but is a pure evidential. Moreover, as suggested by Pietrandrea, the use of the imperative presupposes “that the speaker puts forward as real the presence of the bib in the bag” and consequently this occurrence may be classified as direct evidence [I know because I have seen that there is a bib in the bag, take it!] (Pietrandrea 2005:83). The conditional *dovrebbe*, on the other hand, marks tentative conclusions from uncertain premises and is an inferential evidential:

- (33) Dovrebbe esserci un bavaglino nella borsa:
 must-COND.3SG be-INF.LOC INDEF bib-SG in-DEF.F.SG bag-SG
 se lo trovi, prendilo!
 ‘There should be a bib in the bag: if you find it, take it!’

The speaker is not sure of the truth of the proposition: s/he thinks that there is likely to be a bib in the bag. Here evidential and epistemic meanings are very close.

In conclusion, *deve* and *dovrebbe* are inferential evidentials; both are used more frequently as evidential markers than as genuine epistemic markers (Pietrandrea 2005:86).

By contrast, Pietrandrea’s (2005:102) claim that Italian consistently distinguishes between secondhand and thirdhand reported evidence, expressing the first through the simple conditional and the second through *potrebbe* ‘could’ and *dovrebbe* ‘should’ does not seem to be correct, as is shown by example (34), which is discussed by Pietrandrea herself.

- (34) Secondo gli inquirenti napoletani il boss, nonostante la
 according DEF investigator-PL neapolitan-PL DEF boss notwithstanding DEF
 lontananza da Napoli, avrebbe ancora rapporti
 distance from Naples have:COND.3SG still connection.PL
 con la sua famiglia.
 with DEF POSS family
 ‘According to the Neapolitan investigators, the boss, notwithstanding the fact that he lives far away from Naples, is still in touch with his family’

In such a context *potrebbe* could be used (*il boss... potrebbe avere ancora rapporti...*), conveying a weaker degree of certainty, without any implication that the information is acquired thirdhand. The use both of simple conditionals and of the periphrastic forms *dovrebbe* and *potrebbe* may refer to mediated evidence of varying degrees.

3.2. The Italian imperfect as an evidential form

The Italian imperfect has a number of extensions in the direction of modality which have been repeatedly described in the literature (Bertinetto 1986:368-380, Berretta 1992, among others). It may be associated with counterfactuality and attenuative meanings.

An evidential extension may also appear in some contexts like the one below:

- (35) Ieri Paolo andava a vedere la casa nuova
Yesterday Paul go:IMPF.3SG PREP see:INF DEF house new
'Yesterday Paul was to visit [lit.visited] the new house' (Squartini 2001:309)

In this case the imperfect has a past temporal reference, but the speaker does not take responsibility for the fact that the event really took place: the speaker intends to say that Paul *was expected* to visit the new house. The reportive value is confirmed by the possible continuation below, which forces the evidential meaning:

- (36) Ieri Paolo andava a vedere la casa nuova,
Yesterday Paul go:IMPF.3SG PREP see:INF DEF house new
ma non so se poi ci sia effettivamente andato.
but not know:1SG if than LOC be:SUBJ.3SG really go:PTCP.M.SG
'Yesterday Paul was expected to visit the new house, but I don't know if he really went there.'

As is pointed out by Squartini (2001), what is emphasized in the example above is the evidential mode of knowledge: the speaker underlines that no direct knowledge of the actual occurrence of the situation is available. The evidential value expressed by the imperfect, Squartini concludes, is a form of report of what the speaker knew was due to happen.

In other cases, the source of knowledge may be based on direct evidence, as in:

- (37) C'era una bottiglia di vino in frigo!
LOC-be:IMPF.3Sg INDEF bottle of wine in fridge
'There was a bottle of wine in the fridge'

said by someone who had seen the bottle and now notes that it is no longer in the fridge.

A further "modal" meaning signalling an intention and allowing for future time reference is discussed by Berretta (1992:143):

- (38) partiva stasera
leave:IMPF.3SG this evening
's/he was /is due to leave this evening'

What is involved here, once again, is the evidential mode of knowing.

It should be noted that a difference between the evidential uses of the conditional and those of the imperfect is that in the latter case the source of information (Other vs. Self) is neutralized, both external and internal sources being admitted.¹⁰

To be sure, more extensive data and research are needed to get a fuller picture of the imperfect uses. However, this preliminary discussion suggests that EV plays a certain role in the network of the so-called "modal" values of the imperfect.

3.3 The future as expression of inferential evidentiality

It is common knowledge that in many languages the future may take on a number of modal meanings. Traditionally, scholars have used the label "epistemic future" to cover modality meanings (Bertinetto 1986:491ff, Berretta 1992, van der Auwera & Plungian 1998, Bybee & Fleischman 1995). However, given the general approach adopted in this work, we prefer to highlight the inferential basis for the speaker's confidence and to use the label inferential future, in line with Squartini (2001).

In Italian, the modal uses of the simple future with temporal reference to the time of speech are rather frequent (Berretta 1992:146), especially with stative predicates rather than with non-stative ones. An example is (39).

- (39) Ora come ora, saranno le 5
By now be:FUT.3PL DEF 5
'It must be five o' clock by now.'

which can be paraphrased with the modal verbs *dovere* ‘must’ or *potere* ‘can’:

(40a) Ora come ora, devono essere le 5

(40b) Ora come ora, possono essere le 5

This shows the closeness between future and epistemic modals (with an inferential meaning in (40a) and conjectural or dubitative meaning (‘it is possible that...’) in (40b), see Bertinetto 1986:493).

The past future (or *futuro anteriore*) also frequently takes on modal meanings expressing the speaker’s evaluation of a state of affairs that took place in the past on the basis of some, not necessarily specified, evidence.

(41) Mario avrà finito di lagnarsi, spero
 Mario have:FUT.3SG finish:PTCP PREP moan:INF hope:1SG
 ‘Hopefully Mario has stopped moaning’ (Bertinetto 1986:505)

The past future with an inferential meaning has fewer actional restrictions with respect to the simple future, being compatible with all actional classes of predicates:

(42) A quest’ora Giovanni sarà arrivato a Parigi
 PREP DEM hour John be:FUT. 3SG arrive:PTCP PREP Parigi
 ‘By now John will have arrived in Paris’

The epistemic future is inferential in nature. It is based on the speaker’s inference, whose source is not specified: it can be either external or internal, based on either hearsay or reasoning. The future, unlike the conditional, does not seem to have to do with the evaluation of an information source.

Thus, on the basis of the evidence available, it does not seem that the future is a genuine epistemic form which, unlike the modals, “seems not to condense any inferential process” (Pietrandrea 2005:93). The future can express judgments based upon an inferential process, which may be not explicit, as shown e.g. by the example (42) above. Although, as was noted in section 1, the boundaries between EV and epistemic meanings are not clear-cut, one can in principle say that establishing one’s epistemic stance is independent of expressing the information source (and, indeed, in some languages epistemic modality is marked differently from EV, see Aikhenvald 2004:27ff).

3.4 Between lexicon and grammar: some notes on incipient grammaticalization

In this section we make some observations on the development of EV markers which confirm the existence of a grammaticalization continuum between the lexicon and the grammar. The parameters which allow us to describe a shift in the direction of a more grammaticalized category are: 1) decategorization (i.e. loss of inflectional distinctions), 2) positional freedom, 3) variability in scope (i.e. single constituent vs. entire clause scope), 4) semantic erosion.

We are concerned here with some items etymologically related to speech acts. The path from a verb of “saying” to a reported speech marker has been extensively documented, e.g. Greek *léi* ‘one says’ is becoming a reported speech marker (see the data in Aikhenvald 2004:271 ff). A similar process of grammaticalization of verbs of saying which are used to introduce quoted speech is found in creoles (Romaine 1988:143ff).

In Italian, *si dice che* ‘one says that’ is an impersonal construction expressing reported evidence. It functions as a main clause followed by a dependent clause introduced by the complementizer *che*. There also exists a related form which is on its way towards grammaticalization: the third singular form *dice* is frequently used in spoken Italian mostly as a marker of direct speech, but also of indirect speech, and is morphologically invariable and positionally mobile (Calaresu 2004):

- (43) Però d'altra parte anche quegli altri avevano
 But PREP other side also PRON. other:PL have:IMPF.3PL
 i loro problemi perché dice che ne facciamo
 DEF.PL POSS.PL problem.PL because say:3SG INT PRON make.1PL
 di questi/di questi parenti capito/ vengono anche
 of these/of these relative.PL understand:PTCP come:3PL also
 da lontano non li possiamo/ rimandare via
 from far not PRON can:1PL send back:INF away
 per cui// dopo varie insistenze lui infine ha
 so that after different:FEM.PL insistence.PL he finally have:3SG
 deciso di accettare il rischio.
 decide:PTCP PREP accept:INF DEF risk

‘But, on the other hand, the others too had their own problems because – they go – what shall we do with these relatives, you see, (who) also come from far away we cannot send them back so after much insistence he agreed to take the risk.’ (Calaresu 2004:40)

A similar development has been noted for the marker *dizque* in South American Spanish and Portuguese, which is used to mark information acquired by hearsay. It may occasionally express a negative attitude, irony or disagreement (Aikhenvald 2004:141ff). Similarly, Rumanian *cică* is a lexicalized form of *zice că* ‘it is said that’.

Another strikingly similar form is found in Sardinian, where *naki* ‘they say’¹¹ is a fused form deriving from *narrant ki* and its function is again that of introducing reported speech.

Besides the non-grammaticalized Italian construction *mi pare che* ‘it appears to me that’ and *pare che* ‘it appears that’, *pare* ‘as it appears’ displays a certain degree of grammaticalization as a non-firsthand evidential which often conveys reported information:

- (44) Ieri mattina XY voleva consegnare due lettere, ovviamente di protesta,
yesterday morning XY want:IMPF.3SG deliver:INF two letter:PL obviously of protest,
pare per le sue liti domestiche
appear:3SG for DEF:PL POSS:FEM.PL quarrel:PL domestic:FEM
 e *pare* per una storia di orti per gli anziani
and appear:3SG for IND story of garden:MASC.PL for DEF elderly people
 spostati qualche tempo fa per far posto
displacePTCP.PL some time ago for get space
 alle scale mobili
PREP.DEF stairs elevator: FEM.PL
 ‘Yesterday morning XY wanted to deliver two letters, obviously of protest, as it appears, because of his domestic quarrels and, as it appears, because of some gardens for the elderly which had been displaced some time ago in order to make room for elevators.’ (La Repubblica, August 9, 2006)

In the example above the writer gives the reason for the protest as is seen by the protagonist himself, but remains neutral with respect to it. Alongside the reported evidence, there is also an epistemic stance of distance. Note that *pare* here has a parenthetical function, which is seemingly the result of the reanalysis of the biclausal construction *pare che*. As a consequence of the reanalysis, the original complement clause becomes an independent clause, and *pare* takes on a quasi-adverbial status and can occur in either a final or an internal position, as is shown in (44).

Sembra ‘it appears’ can also be used as a semi-grammaticalized counterpart of *sembra che*. It expresses a weak degree of certainty on the part of the speaker. *Sembra*, like *pare*, is positionally mobile and is used as reported evidential, indicating that the information is not acquired firsthand and therefore the speaker/writer can not vouch for it.

- (45) Un Antonov 24 della compagnia di bandiera Air Mali
 INDEF Antonov 24 of.DEF company national Air Mali
 si è schiantato al suolo al momento del decollo
 REFL be.3SG crash.PTCP to.DEF ground at.DEF moment of.DEF take-off
 sulla pista di Timbuctu. I morti, *sembra*, sono 50;
 on.DEF runway of Timbuctu. DEF victim.PL seem.3SG be:PRES.3PL 50;
 un solo passeggero *sarebbe sopravvissuto*.
 one only passenger be:COND.3SG survive.PTCP.
 A bordo c'erano a quanto pare una decina di stranieri.
 At board LOC. be.IMPF.3PL as much seem.3SG INDEF teen of foreigner.PL
 'An Antonov 24 of the national airline Air Mali has crashed while
 taking off in Timbuktu. Apparently, the victims are 50. Only one
 passenger seems to have survived. There were apparently about ten
 foreigners on board.' (La Repubblica corpus online 2458973: <http://sslmit.unibo.it/repubblica>)

- (46) Nella prova orale spariranno *sembra* i noti quiz,
 In.DEF proof oral disappear.FUT.3PL seem.PRES.3SG DEF.PL known quiz,
sembra, e tornerà il colloquio individuale,
 seem.PRES.3SG and come back.FUT.3SG DEF conversation individual,
 in cui si dovrà dimostrare di conoscere le norme
 in REL IMPERS must.FUT.3SG demonstrate of know.INF DEF.PL rule.PL
 della circolazione.
 of.DEF circulation.

'In the oral exam, it seems that the well-known quizzes will disappear and the interview in which you have to demonstrate your knowledge of the highway code will be restored.' (La Repubblica corpus online 34581663: <http://sslmit.unibo.it/repubblica>)

Other semi-grammaticalized constructions are found for which the epistemic extension related to the speaker's evaluation of the truth of the proposition seems to prevail over the evidential meaning.

Si vede che 'one sees that' is a constructions etymologically expressing direct EV which may take on an inferential value based on reasoning or assumption. Unlike the cases of *dice* and *pare*, this construction has preserved its syntactic and phonological integrity but has undergone semantic erosion, resulting in the loss of the etymological value of visible evidence, as is shown by the following example, quoted from Pietrandrea (2005):

- (47) *Si vede* che ha fatto tardi e
 IMPR see.PRS.3SG that have:PRS.3SG do:PTCP late and
 si vergognava a dir-lo
 be ashamed:IMPF3SG to say:INF+PRO.3SG.M

‘Probably he was late and he was ashamed to tell you’ (Pietrandrea 2005:60)¹²

Auditory EV is not grammaticalized in Italian. However, a verb of sensory perception like *sentire* may acquire a hearsay meaning if it is followed by the complementizer *che*¹³:

- (48) *Ho* *sentito* *che hai* *un* *nuovo lavoro*
have:1.SG hear:PTCP that have:2SG INDEF new job
‘I have heard that you have a new job.’

Here *sentire* does not have its proper auditory meaning. A possible English translation could be ‘I have been told that you have a new job’ (or ‘I have come to know...’).

From this brief survey an interesting generalization has emerged, namely that Italian (in the spoken variety) tends to create new forms for the expression of EV drawing on saying and perception verbs. It is certainly not surprising that verbs of saying are a source of evidentials (Aikhenvald 2004:271ff, Ramat & Ricca 1998:239 among others); for the development of reported speech markers from verbs of saying in Georgian see section 2. To be sure, it is noteworthy that in Italian several lexical means have acquired grammatical features, particularly in the domain of quotative EV, rather than in that of inferential EV.

4. Some conclusions

As is clear from the above discussion, various grammatical and lexical sources interact in expressing the conceptual notion of EV in the languages examined. At the cross-linguistic level, the existence of EV as a grammatical category does not seem in doubt, not only in some Amerindian languages, as is recognized by Lazard (1999) and defended by Aikhenvald (2004), but also in those languages that have developed “special paradigms” whose meanings include inference, mirativity¹⁴ and hearsay. Among these we can mention Albanian, Bulgarian, Turkish, West Armenian, Persian (Friedman 2000, Lazard 1999).

Standard Georgian does not squarely belong to the latter group because the evidential meanings of inference, hearsay and mirativity are special uses of the perfect in affirmative statements, so that EV does not constitute a grammatical category in its own right. As was shown in section 2, the diachronic evidence seems to suggest that evidential uses developed from temporal/aspectual ones. In Italian too, the verb forms which convey evidential meanings, such as the imper-

fect, the future and the conditional, have the temporal functions of past, future, and future in the past reference as their central values, although their modal extensions – which are used to indicate various degrees of factuality relating to a situation and speaker's commitment – are documented since Old Italian (Squartini, to appear). The priority of the temporal functions is generally accepted, except for the future, since modal values were present in the original formation of this tense in Romance (Latin *cantare habeo* > Italian *canterò*, etc.).

To be sure, a common feature of Georgian and Italian EV is that in both languages EV distinctions are part of the verbal system. Affixal morphemes and clitics seem to play a minor role. One exception is the reported-speech marker *-o* in Georgian, whose status deserves further attention. Firstly, it does not strictly speaking behave as a verbal clitic, but can be cliticized onto other constituents. Secondly, it is purely reportive, and does not seem to imply any epistemic judgment. This confirms the assumption that not all EV markers are modal, while “an evidential supplement can always be seen in an epistemic marker” (Plungian 2001:354).

From our analysis an interesting difference emerges between Italian and Georgian. In Georgian the perfect functions as a general indirect evidential form, while in Italian there is a division of labour among the grammatical expressions of EV. The conditional covers only reportive meanings; inference is expressed by the future (and a range of various lexical means) while admiring meanings are expressed through intonation or exclamative particles.¹⁵ In Georgian, and to a different extent in the Balkan languages and in Turkish, the three notions tend to cluster together in the same forms.¹⁶

This distribution of EV markers can be placed against a typological background. Plungian (2001:354) has argued that there are systems where the most prominent opposition is that of direct vs. indirect access to information. In such systems, quotatives are only a pragmatic or contextual variety within a larger class of indirect EV values. Such systems usually have only one “broad range” evidential marker. This situation is typically found in the Balkans and Caucasus languages and in Ob-Ugrian languages and is reflected in the Georgian data. By contrast, Italian should belong, in Plungian's terms, to more complex, “equilibrated” systems, in which both personal involvement (as direct and inferential access) and mediated evidence are given some relevance.¹⁷

It must also be noted that in both languages considered here the means of EV expression are a domain in movement, as is testified by the presence of grammaticalization processes involving lexical items

and, in Georgian, by the increasing use of adverbial constructions. As a possible motivation, the need to disambiguate the interpretation and to reinforce the epistemic or evidential value of an utterance can be adduced.

One might speculate that between the close and often inextricably related notions of inferentiality and reportivity there is a possible direction of change, i.e. a possible grammaticalization path. Wiemer (2005) has proposed a grammaticalization path from epistemic/inferential to quotative. The epistemic domain, he observes, seems to be “a transitional zone” for the evolution of quotative functions for a couple of Russian and Polish items which etymologically express comparison: Russian *jakoby* ‘allegedly’, literally ‘as if’ and *kakby* ‘as if’ (Lithuanian *esq*)” (Wiemer 2005:126). The Italian conditional seems to have followed the same path, since the restriction on its use for reported speech is not old (Squartini 2001).

By contrast, Aikhenvald (2004:179) has described examples of “epistemic extensions of reported evidentials” where reported evidentials are used to shift responsibility or to mark disagreement or irony (similar pragmatic developments are attested both for the Italian conditional, Georgian *–o* and for Spanish *dizque*, see example (24). Such cases go in the opposite direction to that outlined by Wiemer because markers of reported speech develop into epistemic markers. It does not seem possible to identify a unique direction of change from reported speech to epistemic meaning or vice-versa. At the moment we are not able to make any strong claims on the direction of grammaticalization; given the heterogeneity of information source expressions, we may well expect multiple paths.

As for lexical EV, in a typological investigation of sentence adverbs in Europe, Ramat & Ricca (1998) and Ramat (1996) have studied the distribution of reportive/quotative adverbs like *allegedly*, *reportedly* and epistemic adverbs like *probably*, *possibly*. Results show that there are gaps in the range of possible adverbs and that there are languages which have to resort to phrasal solutions to express the notion conveyed by *reportedly* (Italian is a case in point). Georgian and Italian are, however, not distant from each other on the scale measuring the number of lexical sentence adverbs for each language: Georgian ranges between 18-20, Italian between 21-23 (Ramat & Ricca 1998:218). Ramat (1996:296) also observes that expressing the notion of ‘reportedly’ through adverbs is rarer or more marked from a linguistic point of view than ‘allegedly’. This could be explained in terms of the tendency to express the semantic domain of reported speech preferably through grammaticalized or semi-grammaticalized

means, as in the case of the two languages examined here, or through modal verbs, as with German *sollen*, Italian *dovere*, etc.

The various evidential forms analyzed in this work should contribute to defining the semantic space of EV, in which synchronic relations and diachronic connections should shape the universal space (Plungian 2001:350). Both more general semantic properties related to the conceptual notion of “information source” and language specific variation should be taken into consideration, and, as is suggested by Plungian, the grammatical system of each particular language should be regarded as a subset of the universal inventory. Probably, a non-hierarchical semantic map reflects the data distribution and the multifunctionality patterns better: in it inference and report should be adjacent, as the two notions are often expressed by the same forms. Unfortunately, at present, we are able to put together only fragments of this map.

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Notes

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² Aikhenvald (2004:64) introduces a useful distinction between *quotative*, for reported information with an overt reference to the quoted source, and *hearsay*, for reported information without any overt reference to the source.

³ Plungian (2001:352ff) also claims that reported EV should be distinguished from other types of indirect evidentials. He argues that quotative is the only evidential value which refers to true mediated knowledge, in the sense that the speaker is separated from the situation by the barrier represented by another observer. Unlike direct uses and indirect inferential uses, quotatives normally exclude any personal involvement. To indicate this kind of “double distance”, Plungian proposes the expression “mediated evidence” (which is to be kept apart from the term *médiatif* used by Lazard 1999 and Guentchéva 1994 for the whole domain of indirect EV).

⁴ In Palmer (1986:66) evidentials are subsumed under the heading “epistemic modality” and quotatives are defined “a modal feature” (1986:7).

⁵ Estonian and Livonian are Balto-Finnic languages, Latvian and Lithuanian are Baltic languages of the Indo-European family. In all these languages active participles used instead of finite forms have developed EV meanings of the reported type, see Balode and Holvoet (2001:43), Aikhenvald (2004:290). On Lithuanian evidential markers see now Wiemer (2006).

⁶ There are, however, important differences. Balkan Slavic languages like Bulgarian and Macedonian have a marked “confirmative” form indicating the speaker’s assertion and an unmarked evidential form, while in Turkish and Turkic languages there is a contrast between a marked evidential *-miş* and a form which is unmarked with respect to EV (Friedman 2000). In this respect, Georgian patterns with Turkish. This might have consequences for the hypothesis of areal contact (Comrie 2000).

⁷ *Turme* is a compound made up of the conjunction *tu* ‘if’, particle *-re* ‘somewhat, a little’ and the indefinite particle *-me* (Boeder 2000). It can be translated as ‘apparently’, ‘evidently’, ‘observably’, ‘allegedly’, ‘supposedly’. From *turme* derives the Georgian term for “perfect”, *turmeobiti*.

⁸ The invariable modal particle *unda* ‘is necessary’ (3rd person form of the verb ‘to want’) has developed from the root verb into a marker of deontic modality.

⁹ Italian is unique among the Romance languages in having an independent distribution for the future and the conditional. The future is consistently used as an inferential marker, while the conditional, when used with an evidential meaning, is restricted to reports. It should be noted that this restriction is a recent development in Italian, since, in 19th century prose writing, inferential contexts for the conditional as the past form of the inferential future may still be found (Squartini 2001:325).

¹⁰ A special modal use of the imperfect is found in cases like *Che cosa c’era domani al cinema?* ‘What was on at the cinema tomorrow?’ (see Berretta 1992, Squartini 2001:308), in which the speaker is asking for confirmation of something which is part of presupposed knowledge shared by the speaker and the addressee. According to Squartini this meaning also pertains to EV.

¹¹ In Sardinian reported information is frequently expressed by *a ca* ‘that’ with no verb of saying. *A ca* is on its way towards becoming a grammaticalized marker of reported speech (Ignazio Putzu, personal communication).

¹² A number of expressions discussed in Pietrandrea (2005:64 ff), such as *mi sa che* ‘it is known to me that’, *capace che*, lit. ‘it is capable that’, *può darsi* ‘it may be given’, are to be regarded as “grammaticalized epistemic forms” in which no reference is made to an evidential source of information.

¹³ Similarly, English verbs of perception and cognition followed by an *-ing* complement clause have a sensory meaning, while, if followed by the complementizer *that*, they may take on a hearsay meaning (Aikhenvald 2004:120f).

¹⁴ On the status of mirativity as an autonomous category there are doubts. DeLancey (1997) has proposed that mirativity should be distinguished from EV,

but Lazard (1999) maintains that mirativity as a grammatical category is not well-established. Although from a conceptual point of view one can clearly see the difference with EV, only rarely do languages give independent expression to mirativity. Aikhenvald (2004:195ff) points out that the key semantic components of mirativity are ‘surprise’, ‘new information’ and ‘unprepared mind’ and presents some evidence which demonstrates that mirativity is a grammatical category. Plungian (2001:355) denies the evidential value of (ad)mirativity and stresses its modal value concerning a speaker’s expectations. The discussion as to whether mirativity is a distinct semantic and grammatical category is not immediately relevant to our topic: suffice it to say that in Georgian (and in general in Balkan languages and in Caucasian languages) mirativity overtones may be associated with evidentials, probably on the basis of pragmatic inferences, in front of something that is unexpected for the speaker or the hearer.

¹⁵ Guentchéva (1994:20) quotes an example of an admirative sentence in French, for which an Italian counterpart can easily be found:

⁽ⁱ⁾ Mais c’est qu’il a grandit cet enfant!

‘How (much) this child has grown up!’

Italian: ‘Com’è cresciuto questo bambino!’

¹⁶ Rumanian has developed a “presumptive mood”, a periphrastic form with invariant *fi* ‘be’, which covers reportive and inferential meanings. Possibly different types of contact phenomena may be involved (Friedman 2000:350), but the interesting point is that Rumanian is by now the only Romance language which has developed a dedicated category for EV (Squartini 2005).

¹⁷ According to Plungian (2001:353), Tibetan and Samoyedic languages have developed systems which retain the three types of visual, inferential, and quotative values. Of course, in Italian the degree of grammaticalization of EV with respect to these parameters is low, if not minimal, but the general organization seems to match.