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## PATTERNS OF EVIDENTIALS USE IN DREAM NARRATIVES

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### Abstract

The article presents a study on evidentials use in dream reports collected from online dream journals. First, I discuss the relation between the categories of stance and evidentiality. Specifically, I define evidentiality for the needs of this research as a semantic category that labels the source of information in the English language. Evidentiality encompasses perception, reportative evidentiality, and inferential judgment. The role of evidentials in rendering the dream experience is considerable due to the quasi-perceptual and specific experientiality of dreaming. Therefore, the core categories of evidentiality were singled out for this study, such as revelative, sensory and sensory-inferential, reportative, non-sensory inferential and mirative (marking unexpected information). The sample was then manually processed to count the relative frequencies of the means rendering these subcategories of evidentiality. The main findings reside in the role of revelative evidentials in marking the status of dream vs. real narrative spaces. Additionally, the classic assumption about the visuality of dreams was confirmed by the high number of visual perceptual evidentials, while aural and other perceptual mode instances are much fewer in the sample. Finally, the choice of evidential subcategories in dream reports is conditioned by the narrators' need to account for vague recollection of dreaming experience with the preference for simpler inferential forms. In turn, the category of mirativity (i.e. labeling of unexpected information) is discussed as a prospective research avenue due to its rich potential in subtle yet informative marking of the speaker's reaction to the information communicated or to the channel of obtaining it.

**Key words:** evidentiality, evidentials, stance, dream reports, narrative.

### 1. Introduction

The linguistic characteristics of dream reports reflect the subjective nature of the dream experience that is neither real nor created deliberately. Formally, retold dreams are narratives of personal experience. In the latter, the narrator recounts and evaluates events that (allegedly) happened to them (Fludernik, 2002, p. 239). Dreaming (and remembering a dream) constitutes the narrated event that accounts for the narratives eventfulness. At the same time, dream narratives expound the dreaming mind's production, which constitutes subjective psychological reality but not the consensus reality (the state of affairs generally accepted as reality). Dreaming is a mental state that occurs periodically during a person's sleep and is characterized by hallucinations, delusions, cognitive distortions, emotional bursts and amnesia (Hobson, 1988). This experience diverges from known scenarios that can be expressed by linguistic means without particular difficulty (Blechner, 2001, p. 9, 25). Specifically, dream narrative should be distinguished from an arbitrary fantasy since the dream events

are subjectively perceived as real in dreaming but not anymore in retelling. Therefore, dream narrative renders a specific epistemological status of events in that the state of dreaming is “real” while the dreamed scenario belongs to the subjective reality. The epistemology of dreaming prompts a selection of evidential means and patterns that narrators employ to render their reality-dream perception and mark the status of the events.

The linguistic research in the latest decades has seen an interest to the means of expressing subjectivity and positioning the agent in discourse. The researchers use the term ‘stance’ (Englebretson, 2007; Du Bois, 2007; Baynham, 2011; Ushchyna, 2016, 2018, 2020; Morozova, 2011; Georgakopoulou, 2013; Johnstone, 2009; Kärkkäinen, 2003) to refer to a broad conceptual model that may encompass subjectivity, evaluation, affective and attitudinal components, and epistemic position of the agents in discourse (Englebretson, 2007; Du Bois, 2007). For this study, the epistemic positioning is the primary area of interest, with a specific emphasis on evidential positioning means that denote the source of information or the epistemological status of events described (Mushin, 2001, p. xi). Evidentials and means of epistemic positioning of the narrator found in dream reports constitute the **subject** of the research. In the first place, the **relevance** of the study of evidentials in dream reports is due to the need to fill in the current gaps in research on the means of evidentiality markers in languages that do not have a grammatical category of evidentiality. English has no morphological means of encoding evidentiality; it is expressed exclusively lexically. Secondly, the study’s **novelty** is conditioned by the special status of dreaming events that determines the unique discursive stance of the speaker retelling them and prompts them to select evidential and epistemic means, accordingly.

**The aim** of the study is to identify the patterns in the use of evidential and epistemic means employed to render the dreaming experience. Achieving this aim involves the following **objectives**: 1) to pinpoint the evidentials that mark the oneiric nature of the narrated experience and 2) to compare the frequency of different groups of evidentials/epistemic markers in dream narratives. **The material** of the study is a corpus of 65 narratives of dreams (19859 words) randomly sampled from the dream journals published in the public domain on the website dreamjournal.net (DreamJournal).

## 2. Theoretical background of the study

Given the existing prolific research on the category of evidentiality in different languages, the next section discusses the scope and definition of the category in the English language, explaining how the category is approached in this study.

### 2.1. Correlation of the concepts of stance and evidentiality

In this present study, the category of evidentiality is interpreted broadly as the English language semantic category that contains information about the source of the message and its epistemic evaluation by the speaker (in other words, the degree of confidence in the truth/valid status of the information reported) (Arrese, Haßler & Carretero, 2017; Chafe, 1986, p. 262; Langacker, 2017; Mushin, 2001; Englebretson, 2007; Du Bois, 2007; Biber & Finegan, 1988, 1989; Kärkkäinen, 2003). In the recent studies, linguists define evidentials as grammatical and lexical means that encode information about the way knowledge was obtained, the relation of this information to the speaker’s knowledge about the world, and the speaker’s assessment of this information as true or reliable (Mushin, 2001, p. xi; Arrese, Haßler, & Carretero, 2017). This definition makes the category of evidentiality operationally independent and yet theoretically close to the concept of stance.

In turn, the concept of “stance” covers a wide range of phenomena, including the evidentials. Multiple phenomena such as subjectivity or epistemicity may be studied under the umbrella model of stance, which makes an all-encompassing definition of stance problematic. According to the researchers, stance should be considered as a dynamic discursive action (stancetaking) (Englebretson, 2007, p. 3), taking a position on the content or manner of expression (Du Bois, 2007). Such action may include the expression of views, attitudes, evaluative judgments, affective or epistemic positions (the degree of confidence in a statement) by grammatical or lexical means (Englebretson, 2007,

pp. 14-17) or contextually (Du Bois, 2007). Means of subjective positioning include markers of epistemic modality and evidentiality, vocabulary with evaluative connotations, and affective markers (Du Bois, 2007). Conceptual and pragmatic bases of evidential and epistemic coding of information give grounds to consider the latter as manifestations of stance (Kärkkäinen, 2003; Mushin, 2001, p. 29). The fact that stance is studied as a dynamic discursive action correlates with the cognitive approach to the study of dream retelling, which requires taking into account the process of conceptualization of this complex subjective experience and its integration with the speaker's knowledge of the 'real' world.

## 2.2. Definition and classification of evidentiality subcategories

While there is a limited classic interpretation of the concept of evidentiality as an exclusively grammatical category present in a small number of languages of the world, a broader approach to evidentiality now gains popularity. It postulates that evidentiality should be considered a semantic category that can be expressed grammatically, lexically, and paraphrastically (Mushin, 2001, p. 17). In this study, I depart from a broad definition of evidentiality.

As a linguistic category, evidentiality reflects the status of knowledge and is directly related to epistemic assessment/stance. The basis of evidentiality resides in the speaker's identification of the source of the reported information, but the vast majority of modern researchers recognize that, as a linguistic category, evidence is closely related to epistemic modality and also accounts for the subjective positioning of the speaker/narrator (Arrese, Haßler, & Carretero, 2017; Boye, 2012; Cornillie, Arrese & Wiemer, 2015; Langacker, 2017, pp. 18-19; Mushin, 2001). Evidentiality reflects the subjective perspective, "speaker's imprint" in the discourse, and allows the positioning of information in the context and in relation to the speaker (Mushin, 2001, pp. 1-15). Consequently, the category of evidentiality includes both the indication of the source of information (direct perceptual or reporting (reported from the words of a third person) evidentiality) and the expression of an epistemic assessment (Chafe, 1986; De Haan 1999, 2001; Langacker, 2017, pp. 18-19; Willett, 1988, p. 57; Aikhenvald, 2004), which is the approach this study embraces.

The category of evidentiality is semantic in English. Classical evidentiality subcategories are a) direct (attestative) evidentials – visual, auditory or other sensory, b) indirect evidentials – reportative, and c) inferential evidentials (judgment, probability assessment or deductive assessment of the status of information) (Willett, 1988, p. 57). Aikhenvald identifies visual and other sensory (direct), inferential and deductive (indirect), reporting, and quotative (which conveys a third person's speech verbatim) evidentials (Aikhenvald, 2004). These subcategories are the key ones, while the debate among scholars is mostly about inferential subcategory and the possibility to classify it under evidentiality<sup>(1)</sup>, modality<sup>(2)</sup>, or epistemicity<sup>(3)</sup> (see Notes for definitions).

## 3. Method

For the purposes of this study, I combined the classifications of the evidentiality subcategories suggested in the literature (Aikhenvald, 2004; Chafe, 1986; Rooryck, 2001a). As a result, I single out the following key **categories of evidentiality**: **revelative**<sup>(4)</sup>, **sensory**<sup>(5)</sup> and **sensory-inferential**<sup>(6)</sup>, **non-sensory inferential**<sup>(7)</sup> (which splits into speculative (personal assumptions) and modal inductive and deductive (Chafe, 1986), **reportative**<sup>(8)</sup>, and **mirative**<sup>(9)</sup> (marking unexpected information (Aikhenvald, 2012; De Haan, 2012)). The selection and grouping of categories is conditioned by the material that demonstrated the contextual sensitivity and ambiguity of most markers, which required manual annotation of all categories.

## 4. Discussion

The following section presents the relative frequencies of the evidential subcategories found in the dream reports sampled for this study and discusses the implications of the evidential patterns for the conceptualization of the dreaming experience.

#### 4.1. Revelative evidentiality

The central evidentiality subcategory for dream narratives is revelative evidentiality, which encompasses direct mentions of the oneiric source of information. Revelative evidentiality (a term introduced by Jakobson) is defined as information linguistically marked as created in the mind of a subject without directly obtaining information from the outside world, which includes dreams, visions/revelations, hallucinations, inspirations, etc. (Kratschmer & Heijnen, 2010, p. 333). In this study, this category includes expressions with the lexeme *dream* (*in the dream, this/the dream, to dream of*), which quantitatively constitute the most common evidentiary marker (11.9% of all identified evidential groups in our corpus).

This high number is unsurprising even considering that many entries in the dream journal omit an opening commentary stating that the narrated story is a dream. Such a prerequisite would be more common in oral communication, but with dream journal entries, the status of the narrative is evident from the profile of the platform hosting the story. The narrators' choice of evidentiality means is conditioned by pragmatic factors (Mushin, 2001, p. xi), therefore, the lack of need for a dream journal to indicate the oneiric nature of the experience makes the revelative evidentiary markers excessive. However, the high frequency of the lexeme *dream* also accounts for this narrative genre. In support of our assumption, Mushin draws attention to the conventionality in opting for an epistemic position to discuss the experience of a certain type among representatives of the linguistic community (Mushin, 2001, p. 57). Secondly and more importantly, the labeling of certain information as oneiric experience is caused by the need to juxtapose it to the comments about real life. Such evidential markup helps to construct and interpret an oneiric narrative.

Conversely, in dream narrative, some information is marked as real. A typical way to label it as such is by the expression *in real life* or extra-narrative commentary (often in brackets) frequently featuring words *actually* and *true*. In the sample of dream reports analyzed in this study, 4.5% of markers distinguish dream events from comments that emphasize their difference from the real life of the narrator:

- (1) *I really liked the fact that I had a cat and it kinda scared me. I thought about the responsibility of having so many of them under my care (in real life, the only pets I ever had were some bombyx mori my mom's coworker got her when I was like, 8). (DreamJournal, n.d.).*

In example (1), the narrator comments on the absence of cats as pets, and resorts to an explicit indication of the status of events for easy understanding of the narrative.

Hence, the markers of revelative evidentiality in dream narratives serve to signal the status of experience and to distinguish information about sleep and reality. Without references to the latter, a dream narrative is often impossible. Furthermore, Ronald Langacker sees evidentiary means as propositional grounding strategies that account for the epistemic assessment of the existential status of a profiled event and epistemic control (Langacker, 2017, p. 20). This definition may be applied to characterize the process of conceptualization and verbalization of the dreaming experience as the narrator always relies on their knowledge of the real state of events and the assumed knowledge of the world of the addressee. Therefore, comments about real life are indispensable in dream reporting.

#### 4.2. Sensory and sensory-inferential evidentiality

Sensory evidentiality constitutes an important category for the oneiric narrative because the experience of dreaming is sensorily specific. Subjectively, dreams are perceived as if a person sees, hears, or feels them; however, the dreaming experience is not perceptual (Blechner, 2001). This paradox inspires the interest in typical means of describing the dreaming experience.

**4.2.1. Visual sensory evidentiality.** The results from our sample confirm the classic perception of dreaming as a predominantly visual experience. **Visual sensory** evidentiality dominates dream reports: direct references to a visual source (*see, notice, spot; I look at . . . and /*

*when I look at ... there's*) account for 8.9% of cases in affirmative predicates and 2.5% of cases in negative predicates. Similarly, the structure *X looks + adj, past participle, like* is common (10.4%) in the sample.

The visually marked dream experience can constitute both schematic and detailed, vivid imagery. The finding is well-situated in the context of a recent discussion of dream imagery schematicity by Fortescue (2017). The author points out to the dream imagery operating the perceptual information stored in memory in the form of gestalts of phenomena, for instance, faces and voices, or as their specific fragments or characteristics (Fortescue, 2017, p. 83). However, dreams do not only operate schematic gestalt items but also produce vivid mental imaginary. In waking, perceptual information stored can be visualized “in the mind’s eye” (p. 83), and the detailed descriptions from our sample allow hypothesizing that it is fair for dreaming as well.

Indeed, schemas abstracted from experience and stored in memory blend and morph in dreaming (Fortescue, 2017), which is widely referred to by the narrators retelling their dreams. Researchers since Freud have drawn attention to dream-typical mixed representations of concepts (‘condensations’ (Freud, 1900/1996; Blechner, 2001) and ‘interobjects’ (Blechner, 2001)). Such elements suggest that the visual component of dreams is schematic, and that a person’s holistic gestalt perception of dream elements take over individual visual details of the image that could be recalled, as in (2):

- (2) *I guess the lady was right because a new movie started, and I was both observing the film and a part of it. The film starred these two men who were friends. One looked like a mix of a younger Tom Baker (from his Doctor Who days) with an older Keanu Reeves to me, so I will call him Keanu Baker (DreamJournal, n.d.).*

However, other examples suggest that mixed objects/concepts (‘interobjects’ according to (Blechner, 2001)) may also exhibit a high degree of detail in visual descriptions, such as (3):

- (3) *The first one was like a bear but it looked feline. It had long fur the color of a lion’s but sometimes the way the sun incided on it made it look colorful like a prism. Sometimes it was like it came from a 6-year-old’s drawing but the fur always looked real and shiny (DreamJournal, n.d.).*

Thus, the presentation of oneiric experience by means of visual evidentiality dominates the English-language narratives of the dream experience. This finding might appear quite intuitive from within the European cultural standpoint. However, typical evidentiality means for describing dreaming experiences are conventional and specific for individual linguistic communities and differ across the world. The divergence is rooted in the variation of the social interpretation of dreaming in different cultures (Aikhenvald, 2018, p. 173). In particular, for the speakers of the Amazon languages that have grammatical evidentiality systems, it is characteristic to avoid direct perceptual (visual) evidence for talking about the dream, since the dreaming experience is thought to be an indirect, third-party-inspired vision that requires the use of reporting evidentials (Aikhenvald, 2018, p. 344). This perception of the dreaming experience by the linguistic community is rooted in the idea that dreaming is a message from an unknown source, not a personal experience (Kracke, 2009, p. 73). However, it is widely known that dreams in Western culture are conventionally perceived as a (quasi-)visual experience (Scioli, 2015, p. 6), and the results of our study support this assumption.

**4.2.2. General sensory evidentiality.** General sensory evidentiality (subjective feelings with an indefinite source) is another statistically significant category in dream reports. In the sample, 4.2% of evidential marking instances include *feel* and *sense* lexemes in the sense of a general feeling about the situation: (*feel (like), sense, have a sense, get the feeling, have a (bad) feeling, I/it feels (like/that/adj), the feeling is that when*); and several indications of physical feelings (*feel (well, weak),*

*a suffocating feeling, It's like I'm floating, felt our entire house being carried away, feel his weigh on top of me, felt soft).*

Narrators describe ambiguous perception by general sensory evidentiality markers:

- (4) *The **feeling** is that when your parents are coming to pick you and you're having a cheerful conversation with people you like (I've been walking home from school, even though the places are not that close to each other, **but I remember the feeling well**)* (DreamJournal, n.d.)

Similarly, references to general sensory evidentiality allow storytellers to label subjective information access to which is untypical outside dreaming, as in example (5):

- (5) *I could feel what all of them were feeling, like I was the whole room at once* (DreamJournal, n.d.).

General sensory evidentiality in dream narratives is the second most frequent evidentiality group of markers that offers flexible labels to render subjective experiences.

**4.2.3. Auditory and olfactory sensory evidentiality.** Auditory and olfactory evidentials are less frequent than visual ones, accounting in the sample for 1.5% and 0.2%, respectively. Nominal references to auditory experience (*voice, music, noise*) were included into the study to allow for a more definite interpretation of the finding and were also found to be rare. Such frequency allows to conclude that dreams are predominantly visual with rare auditory or olfactory effects. Additionally, example (6) demonstrates that auditory impressions in dreams are also often perceived as abnormal:

- (6) *I hear the voice of a black woman in my head* (DreamJournal, n.d.).

In general, auditory and olfactory evidentials are scarcely represented in the sample.

### 4.3. Reportative evidentiality

Reportative evidentiality is widely represented in English dream reports. Reportative evidentiality (*x told me, let me know, said, made a comment, warned, texted*) accounts for 9.7% of all evidentials in the sample. Quotative evidentiality, which consists in rendering the direct speech of the characters (*X said /replied/screams: / He's like ". . ."* / *It goes:*) stands for 5.2%. These results are poorly correlated with a low number of auditory evidentiality markers (*hear*), and therefore suggest that for narrators, quotations may be a simpler form of describing the interactions with dream characters rather than reporting direct speech, while their aim is to render the general scenario of events.

There remains the question of whether to consider the narrator's own lines as reportative evidentiality. In my research of dream narratives, I consider the narrator's agency and its perspective different from the "I-perspective/agency" of dreaming. Indeed, what the narrators said in the dream is often described as an unexpected, external experience for the "waking agency" retelling the dream. Therefore, I propose to consider self-reportative evidentiality as one of the subcategories of evidentials in dream reports, accounting for 9.2% of evidentiality markers.

Reportative evidentiality in dreams is conspicuously marked by the narrators' confidence in the information communicated by dream characters. Narrators are not generally inclined to doubt the truthfulness of characters' messages, or, in rare cases, immediately label messages as lies. It is specific to dreams because for a conceptualizer who recounts dreams, it is not relevant whether the characters told the truth or lies, since they do not have their own agency and are only projections of the narrator's oneiric (sub-)consciousness. This clearly distinguishes the narrative of dreaming from the narrative of personal experience, where reportative evidentiality usually needs to be either robust or render doubts about the veracity of a third party's message.

#### 4.4. Non-sensory inferential evidentiality

Non-sensory inferential evidentiality occupies a special place in the system of evidential coding of the dreaming experience since it allows one to indicate the degree of confidence in the information or the narrator's guesses or assumptions. Dreaming experience tends to be fragmented and blurred in the narrators' memory, which conditions their use of a wide range of means rendering inferential evidentiality. Indeed, speculative subjective evidentiality verbalized by verbs with the meaning of "reliability of knowledge" such as *believe, think, guess, assume, suppose* (markers of personal confidence according to Chafe) makes 10.6%. Adverbial markers of inferential evidentiality (*maybe, probably, certainly, possibly, undoubtedly, surely, likely, apparently*) are 4.5% in the sample.

*I'm not sure* (2.2%) and *I'm (pretty) sure* (0.7%) are the most conspicuously recurrent markers of non-sensory inferential evidentiality. In general, these tools serve narrators to signal the blurring of dream memories or the obscure nature of dream events.

Modal inductive and deductive (*must* and *might, could* according to W. Chafe) evidentiality is scarcely presented in the narratives of dreams – 2.5%. These means may indicate a lack of confidence in the interpretation of dreaming events by the narrator both at the time when they subjectively experienced this mental experience (*but then we were concerned that my grandma **might have gotten** too close to the COVID patient*) and later during the recollection, conceptualization and narrativization of this experience (*It **must have been** by the ocean because I saw out of my peripheral vision on the left, a huge wave coming*).

Situational inferential evidentiality represented by phrases *It seems, it appears, it turns out, I could tell* accounts for 5%, which also indicates the narrator's need to refer to an indefinite source when they do not understand the source of certain information in the dream. Situational inferential evidentiality based on memory or previous experience is presented by the verbs of the corresponding meanings (*I realize/figure*) and accounts for 2.2%.

Among the means of expressing inferential evidentiality in dream narratives, simpler forms dominate (namely, there is the predominance of adverbial forms or phrases like *I think* over modal constructions). Such means allow narrators to build a subjective perspective and conceptualize the fantastic mental experience of dreaming that is often recollected in a disorganized incoherent form. Mushin approaches the concept of subjectivity as a fundamental element of the linguistic structure from the standpoint of Langacker's cognitive grammar, the main postulate of which is that linguistic expression is a product of conceptualization, and not a direct reflection of reality (Mushin 7). Mushin notes that the discrepancy between perceptual experience and inference and deductive judgments concerns less the difference in the channel of obtaining of knowledge, and it is rather about the degree of assimilation and integration of different types of information by the speaker (labeling information as reliable or unreliable) (Mushin, 2001, pp. 29-30). Langacker believes that the mental pursuit of a person for epistemic control is their desire to conceptually recreate reality and maintain the relevance of this concept to a new experience (Langacker, 2017, p. 20). Accordingly, the means of encoding evidentiality belong to the means of epistemic control and help to maintain more accurate ideas about reality through the involvement of information about the source and markers of accuracy or confidence in knowledge (Langacker, 2017, p. 29). Consequently, constant indications of uncertainty or unreliability of judgments in dream reports should be interpreted as attempts to establish epistemic control, while the narrated experience has a special existential status as a subjective mental reality.

#### 4.5. Mirativity

The evidential subcategory of mirativity is widely represented in dream narratives. Mirativity is rendered as labelling unexpected information. It is a relatively novel category that is either considered as a subcategory of evidentiality or a category in its own right, but close to that of evidentiality (De Haan, 2012). Mirativity is rendered by a large range of means (Lau & Rooryck,

2017; Peterson, 2017). Annotating for the mirative expressions was particularly challenging due to the need to determine its markers for a study. Such selection would presuppose a large volume of literary review and structuring work worth of a separate study. Furthermore, one would need to methodologically account for the mirative items' contextual sensitivity, which makes it a prospect for further research. Finally, being an evidential category, it does not appear heterogeneous enough in relation to other categories to compare them. Mirativity marks surprise while core evidentiality categories discussed in the study label information according to the source of its retrieval. Therefore, in this paper, I discuss the category of mirativity separately and only single out some of its realization means. Mirative juxtapositions of the new experience with previous experience or knowledge are common in dream narratives (such words and expressions as *of course*, *in fact*, *actually*, *at least*, *even*, *only*, *but*, *nevertheless*, *for some reason*). Markers of mirativity serve to compare dreaming and real experience:

- (7) *Then I'm walking around upstairs to different rooms, which **of course** looks totally different and bigger* (DreamJournal, n.d.).
- (8) *I swore up and down Tom Cruise was in *The Outsiders*, but I couldn't find information online (It's true **of course**)* (DreamJournal, n.d.).
- (9) ***And of course** the house didn't really look like my house* (DreamJournal, n.d.).
- (10) (from a Star Trek dream) . . . *the ship went through a wormhole, and I got to experience it from a first person perspective. I said, "Whoa." **Of course** the effects of the wormhole looked like not so high resolution computer graphics* (DreamJournal, n.d.).
- (11) *What they're calling a tobaggan is **actually** a row a canoes* (DreamJournal, n.d.).
- (12) *In my dream, she lived in a house in a small town (she **actually** lives in an apartment), and I went to pick her up at her home. I probably talked to her mother at some point or something* (DreamJournal, n.d.).

The examples illustrate that *of course* and *actually* are used by narrators to correlate dreaming experiences and understand the real state of things. In examples (7, 8, 12), *of course* and *actually* are used in brackets for extra-narrative commentary on real life and its similarity or difference from dreaming. Example (9) also demonstrates the expectations from the dreaming experience, where familiar objects are perceived as such, but are visually different.

The subcategory of mirativity represented by the juxtaposition of *of knowledge with verbal resources* (*sort of* (*sorta*), *kind of* (*kinda*), *something on the line of*, *like*) is widely presented in dream narratives due to the complexity of rendering subjective oneiric experience and the attempts of narrators to adapt the conceptualization to the available linguistic means. Only the identified means of mirativity markers of this type account for 156 cases in the sample. Indeed, the narrators are often uncertain about the way to identify objects or intents in a dream, and use varied linguistic means to render this uncertainty.

#### 4.6. Knowledge of an unknown origin

The study of the evidentiality means in the sample reveals the presence of explicit or contextual references to an unknown source of knowledge in dreams that cannot be classified according to the classic subcategories of evidentiality and epistemicity. In 3.5% of cases, narrators refer to the general knowledge they had when dreaming, which often contradicts perceptual information. I suggest calling such evidence "zero evidentiality" due to the absence of an indication of the source of information but an emphasis on the zero markedness of such knowledge in the mind of the narrator at the time of experiencing the dream:

- (13) *I was in my sister's apartment except it was mine and the exterior was different. Like a tropical hotel but I **knew** we were in LA apparently* (DreamJournal).



“Zero evidentiality” is inherent in dream reports and relies on the human universal experiential knowledge of dreaming.

(14) *And she **was actually** an alien taking the form of a human* (DreamJournal).

Although the *actually* marker was interpreted as a marker of mirativity, in example (14) it signals new information without any reference to the source of such sense. The narrator simply has this piece of knowledge in their sleep – the fragment does not contain any reportative references and indicates that the woman looked like a person.

Such knowledge may be visual in nature, but is not perceptual in terms of the channel of its obtaining:

(15) *I'm pretty sure he looked like the drawing of a circus presenter. **However, I don't remember actually seeing** him in the dream, and from this point on even his voice wasn't heard no more* (DreamJournal).

Formally, example (15) coincides with speculative non-sensory inference (*I'm pretty sure*) and visual experience (*he looked like*). However, the narrator indicates that he did not *see* the character, but just *knew* what he looked like.

Opposite to the means of perceptual tagging of the source of information, the revelative, reportative, inferential, mirative, and “zero” evidentiality involve the processes of analysis, inference and conceptualization of subjective experience. They reflect how the narrator tries to recall, reproduce, and render their dreams by available means of language. The purpose of the narrator in the use of such means is to establish epistemic control and create relatively coherent construction of experience.

#### 4.7. Summary

The frequencies of the evidential subcategories is presented below in Table 1, expressed as percent values calculated against the number of all evidentials identified in the sample. The percent numbers were counted to represent the result in relation to the whole sample and to compare the frequency of the categories against other evidential types. For the category of mirativity, the category marking the unexpected information, either no data or a raw number is provided as it was impossible to pinpoint all instances of this novel category that still requires elaboration.

Table 1

**Relative frequency of the use  
of evidentiality subcategories in dream reports**

Sub-categories of evidentiality		Markers	Qty.
Revelative		<i>to dream, in this dream</i>	11.9%
		vs. <i>real life, RL, parentheses+ actually, true</i>	4.5%
Sensory and sensory-inferential	General sensory	<i>feel (like), sense, have a sense, get the feeling, have a (bad) feeling, I/it feels (like/that/adj), the feeling is that when</i>	4,2%
	Visual sensory	<i>see, notice, spot ; I look at . . . (and) / when I look at . . . there's</i>	8.9%
		NEG <i>see / notice</i> <i>X looks</i>	2,5% 10.4%
	Auditory sensory	<i>hear</i>	1.5%
	Olfactory sensory	<i>smell</i>	0.2%
	Sensory, inferential, visual deduction	<i>I see</i> <i>(to see if he needed help</i> <i>see this outfit was placed)</i>	0.5%
	Sensory, inferential, auditory deduction	<i>sounded familiar</i>	0.2%
Reportative	Sensory-reportative	<i>I hear/ they say / I'm told / I've been told, x told me, x let me know, makes a comment / warn / texted</i>	9.7%
	Quotative	<i>X says / replies / screams: / He's like ". . ." / It goes:</i> <i>I say/tell*</i>	5.2% 9.2%
Non-sensory inferential	Speculative/reliability of knowledge	<i>I believe/ think / guess / assume / suppose</i>	10.6%
		<i>I'm not sure</i> <i>I'm (pretty) sure</i>	2.2% 0.7%
		<i>maybe, probably, certainly, might, may, possibly, undoubtedly, surely, likely /apparently</i>	4.5%
	Modal inductive and deductive	<i>must, might, could</i>	2.5%
	Situational inferential evidentiality: an indefinite source of knowledge	<i>It seems, it appears, it turns out, X seem(s), I could tell</i>	5%
Situational inferential: memory, previous experience	<i>realize/ figured</i>	2.2%	
Mirativity	Comparison with experience/ knowledge	<i>of course, in fact, actually, at least, even, only, but, however, nevertheless, for some reason</i>	*
	Matching knowledge to verbal resources	<i>sort of (sorta), kind of (kinda), something on the line of</i> <i>like</i>	*30 *126
Zero evidentiality		<i>I know; it was known that</i>	3.5%

In turn, Figure 1 features only main subcategories of evidentials with fewer details regarding their subtypes, which facilitates visual perception of the frequency comparison.

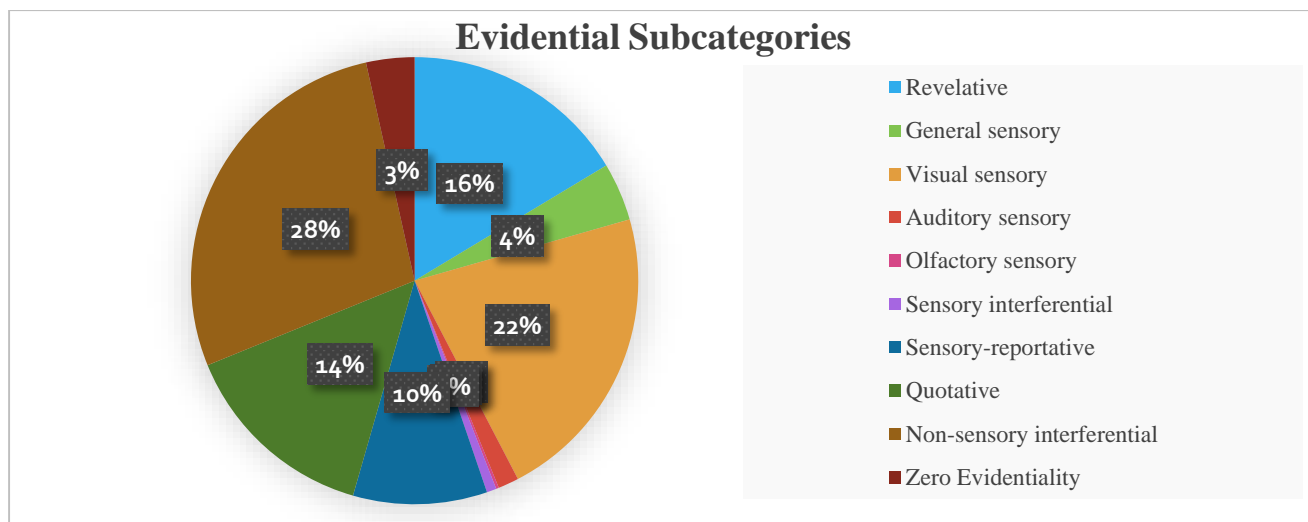


Figure 1. Visual aid for Table 1 representing only major subcategories of evidentials

### 5. Conclusions and prospects for future research

The study focused on the means of evidential tagging in rendering dreams, for which markers for the evidential subcategories were identified and their frequency ratio was calculated.

In terms of frequency, the main groups of evidentiality markers that speakers use to tell about the dreaming experience, are that of explicit revelative, sensory visual, and inferential evidentiality.

The key evidential subcategory is the revelative evidentiality, defined for English as the explicit labelling of certain information about the oneiric experience using the *dream* lexical unit. The use of revelative evidentials in dream reports is accounted for by the need to contrast the oneiric experience with the knowledge of the narrator about real life.

In addition to revelative evidentiality, it is conventional for English-speaking narrators to talk about their dreaming experience using direct sensory visual evidentiality and morphologically simple forms of inferential evidentiality to indicate uncertainty in the recollected oneiric details (such as, for example, *I think, I am not sure, maybe, probably*). Reportative evidentiality in dreams has no valence of reliability or doubt, and does not include the narrator's subjective assessment, characterizing the waking narrator's perception of dreams as a passive experience that does not require their assessment of the actions of characters. Finally, a specific evidential type for dream narratives is "zero evidentiality" that stands for a reference to unexpected knowledge about the dream scenario or characters (*I knew*) without indicating the source of knowledge.

The **prospects** of the study include building a wider sample to produce a more accurate calculation of the frequency of the use of subcategories of evidentiality in dream narratives and a detailed analysis of individual groups of evidentiality means employed for rendering the dreaming experience.

### Notes

<sup>1</sup> **Evidentiality** is a category that labels the source of information and is semantic in the English language unlike some language in the world where it is grammaticalized (the broad definition used in this paper; see Mushin, 2001; Chafe, 1986).

<sup>2</sup> **Epistemic modality** labels the degree of confidence in the information communicated that the speaker expresses (De Haan, 2001).

<sup>3</sup> **Epistemicity** is defined by researchers as a superordinate category that comprises both expressions of degree of certainty and expressions of information source (Aikhenvald, 2018).

<sup>4</sup> **Revelative** evidentiality is an evidential subcategory that consists in marking the information as obtained during a dream or a vision (see Kratschmer & Heijnen, 2010).

- <sup>5</sup> **Sensory** evidentiality (also called direct or attestative (Willett, 1988) is an evidential subcategory that refers to a direct sensory perception as the source of information (see Aikhenvald, 2018).
- <sup>6</sup> **Sensory-inferential** evidentiality marks the information communicated as an inference from the sensory material (e.g. *sounds like*, see Whitt, 2009).
- <sup>7</sup> **Non-sensory inferential** is an umbrella term that include evidential/epistemic/modal subcategories that mark information as inferred logically rather than obtained by senses, and render the degree of confidence in the information communicated. Non-sensory inferential evidentiality falls into **speculative** (personal assumptions) and **modal inductive and deductive** (Chafe, 1986) subcategories.
- <sup>8</sup> **Reportative** evidentiality marks information that was obtained from a third party (see Mushin, 2001). In turn, **quotative** evidentiality marks passages that render the third-party message verbatim.
- <sup>9</sup> **Mirative** marking refers to discursive signaling of the unexpected status of the information (Aikhenvald, 2012; De Haan, 2012) and was characterized as borderline evidential with a broad spectrum of discursive means.

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## ЕВІДЕНЦІЙНЕ МАРКУВАННЯ У НАРАТИВАХ СНОВИДІНЬ

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### Анотація

Дослідження присвячене евіденційному маркуванню у переказах сновидінь, зібраних з онлайн-щоденників сновидінь. На початку статті обговорюється співвіднесеність понять постави та евіденційності. Зокрема, для потреб цього дослідження евіденційність визначено як семантичну категорію в англійській мові, що позначає джерело інформації. Евіденційність охоплює пряму сенсорну, репортативну та інференційну евіденційність. Роль евіденційності у вербалізації досвіду сновидінь є значною через квазіперцептивну та специфічну природу досвіду сновидіння. Отже, для цього дослідження було виокремлено основні підкатегорії евіденційності, такі як ревелативна, пряма сенсорна та сенсорно-інференційна, репортативна, несенсорна інференційна та міративна (позначення неочікуваної інформації). В ході дослідження вибірка була оброблена вручну для підрахунку відносних частот евіденційних засобів за підкатегоріями. Основні результати стосуються ролі ревелативної евіденційності у маркуванні статусу наративних просторів сну та реальності. Крім того, класичне спостереження про візуальність сновидінь підтверджується великою кількістю маркерів візуальної сенсорної евіденційності, тоді як згадок про аудіальні та інші перцептивні способи сприйняття у вибірці значно менше. Нарешті, вибір підкатегорій евіденційності у переказах сновидінь зумовлений потребою оповідачів вербально передати нечіткі спогади про досвід сновидінь; при цьому, вони надають перевагу більш простим формам маркування. У свою чергу, категорія міративності (тобто маркування несподіваної інформації) розглядається як перспективний напрям дослідження через її багатий потенціал для глибоко контекстуального, проте інформативного маркування реакцій мовця на повідомлювану інформацію або на канал її отримання.

**Ключові слова:** евіденційність, засоби евіденційного маркування, постава, сновидіння, наратив.