

## The evidential strategy of Modern Irish: An RRG account

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Consistent with other European languages, Modern Irish does not have a grammaticalised evidential system in the sense defined by Aikhenvald (2003:15), where evidentiality is a grammatical category that refers to an information source. Instead, Irish has an evidential strategy whereby evidential reporting on a knowledge source can be facilitated, and is understood as stating the existence of a source of evidence for some information, including that i) there is evidence, and ii) specifying the actual type of evidence. In this strategy, Irish uses a mix of lexical, syntactic and adverbial means to encode this evidential information. The lexical means include judicious use of verbs of perception related to the senses, and verbs of cognition, while the syntactic means avail of a range of syntactic structures that allow for a speaker to denote some knowledge source as fact with a possible graded commitment. The adverbial means allow the speaker to overtly hedge their commitment to the veracity of the knowledge source. While both evidentiality and epistemic modality are to do with knowledge, they are quite different and not at all the same. Evidentiality is about identifying a source of knowledge or information (the *evidential channel*) and specifying the actual type of information (the *knowledge*), while epistemic modality (Nolan 2008) records a speaker's *stance* on some piece of knowledge (De Haan 1999). This account provides, within the Role and Reference Grammar (RRG) model, a characterisation of evidentiality in Modern Irish. Evidentiality is shown to have wide scope as an operator at clause level in the layered structure of the clause. It has been noted in studies of the European languages (Diewald & Smirnova 2010) that the Celtic languages, including Irish, are understudied and under-reported as regards evidentiality. This paper make a contribution to address this.

### References

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