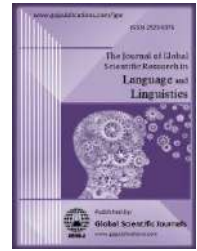




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# Evidentiality in English and Arabic: A Contrastive Study

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### ABSTRACT

Evidentiality is a semantic concept which helps people to know whether speakers and writers are reliable and truthful about the statements they convey or not. The term is expressed through different linguistic expressions. These expressions can either be functional (lexical) or grammatical. This article aims to show how evidentiality is expressed in English and Arabic with more focus on the most common used evidential markers in Arabic. After defining and illustrating the term "evidentiality", the article lists the different types of English evidential markers within their degree of reliability. Then, the study lists and explains with examples how evidentiality and information source are expressed via using different lexical and grammatical evidential markers in Arabic. The article ends with some conclusions about English and Arabic evidential markers on one hand, and some recommendations for further studies on the other.

## 1. Introduction

Evidentiality is any grammatical or lexical strategy that indicates the way the information is expressed and acquired in an utterance on one hand, and how certain it is on the other (Johnstone, 2008).

Evidentials indicate how and to what extent people are accurate and truthful in the information they communicate. The degree of evidentiality in any statement or proposition depends on the type of evidential markers on which the statement is based. For example, whether speakers hear the event directly or from someone else indirectly, see and witness it, infer it or learn it from other people (Chafe, 1986). In other words, every statement is required to specify the type of source on which it is based. For

example, whether the speaker sees it, hears it, infers it from indirect evidence, or hears it from someone else.

Studies conducted on evidentiality distinguish between languages in which evidentiality is expressed through obligatory grammatical (closed) system and languages in which evidentiality is expressed through a functional (opened) system (Cornillie, 2009).

From a typological perspective, languages can be classified into two groups of evidentiality: Evidentiality in group (A) languages and evidentiality in group (B) languages. In the former group, evidentiality is obligatory and it is generally expressed by a closed set of morpho-

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syntactic evidential markers such as the grammatical particles in Makah language “w”, “pid”, and “wad” (Speas, 2010, p. 1):

1.

a. Wiki-caxa-**w** 'It's bad weather' (directly experienced).

b. Wiki-caxa-k-**pid** 'It looks like bad weather' (inference).

c. Wiki-caxa-k-it-**wad** 'I'm told it was bad weather'.

In the latter group, evidentiality is expressed through optional (opened) set of functional evidential markers such as adjectives, adverbs, lexical nouns, lexical verbs, and modal verbs (Aikhenvald, 2004; Diewald & Smirnova, 2010; Abbas, 2017). English, for example, has a large number of lexical evidential markers as in this example:

2. Evidently, he is in China.

This research is an attempt to study evidentiality in English and Arabic with more focus on evidentiality in Arabic and its most common evidential markers.

## 2. Evidentiality

Crystal (1991) defines evidentiality as a semantic term used for a type of epistemic modality where statements require justification and clarification. The role of evidentiality is to strengthen the speaker's statement or proposition in terms of the available evidence. The available evidence may be direct as in “I saw it happen”, indirect as in “I heard that it happened”, inferred as in “I gather that it happened”.

The degree of evidentiality in the speaker's statements or propositions depends on the type of the evidential markers used. In other words, if speakers participate in the event or witness it clearly, then they most likely show high degree of certainty towards their propositions as in (*I see her coming*); this is called direct evidentiality. The speaker experienced the event or witnessed it. However, if speakers did not participate in the event or witness it, then they most likely show a

low degree of certainty or evidentiality towards their statements as in (*people say that he lives abroad now*); this is called indirect evidentiality. The speaker does not witness the event; rather s/he infers it or hears about it (Friedman, 1986; Mushin, 2001).

According to Anderson (1986: 273–312), evidential markers offer an explanation or justification for a factual claim. Such markers explain how something is the way it is, how someone does, thinks, says, and feels something or why someone behaves a certain way.

On the basis of Anderson's definition, the bracketed constructions in (3-8) are, indeed, evidentials:

3. The toast [must have] burned.

4. [I hear] Mary won the prize.

5. [I heard] (that) Mary won the prize.

6. [I understand that] Mary won the prize.

7. [I have it on good authority that] Mary won the prize.

8. [I smell] a pie baking.

## 3. Evidentiality in English

Previous studies on evidentiality found out that Indo-European Languages lack grammatical categories and markers (Siau, 2013). In other words, evidentiality, in English, is expressed through functional (lexical) system. Such functional system includes modal auxiliaries such as *may, might, can, could, should, will, must*, verbs of sense and percept such as *know, feel, feel like, sound like, look like, hear, see, and smell*, and adjectives and adverbs such as *clear, clearly, obvious, obviously, probable, probably*.

Ifantidou (2001:5-8) illustrates that evidentials have two main functions: they indicate the source of information and the speaker's degree of certainty about the information that is expressed. Evidentials which indicate the source of information can be expressed by observation (the evidence should be sensory and perceptual) as in:

9. I see him coming
10. I hear her taking a shower
11. I feel water in my shoes
12. The food tastes good

Less degree of reliability in the information source is found in verbs such as *feel like, look like, smell like, sound like* as in:

13. It feels like a hot sauna
14. She looks like she is a sleep
15. He sounds like he is deaf
16. It smells like roasted chicken

By hearsay evidentials such as *tell, hear, say, repute, allegedly, reportedly* which can perform this function as in:

17. John tells me you got a job
18. I hear you got a job
19. People say he's trustworthy
20. He is said to have done it
21. He is reputed to be very learned
22. Allegedly, the computer has been stolen
23. Reportedly, he is the burglar

There are other less direct hearsay devices which give rise to doubt or uncertainty about something such as *it seems, it's supposed to, and apparently* as in (Chafe, 1986):

24. It seems he is the burglar
25. It's supposed to be the best play of the year
26. Apparently, she is very efficient

Inference is another evidential category by which speakers make or form a belief based on the information they have. The most common devices of this category are *presumably, must, seems to,*

and *gather* as in the following examples (Chafe, 1986; Ifantidou, 2001):

27. Presumably, he is capable of teaching 'A' levels
28. John seems to/must be here now
29. John must have arrived
30. I gather that Tom's in town

Another category which marks evidentiality is memory (the ability to remember and recall information, experiences, and people). The evidentials that perform this category are *remember, recall, recollect*, as in (Ifantidou, 2001):

31. I remember that John won the prize
32. I recall that it was raining on my wedding day
33. As I recollect, his childhood was not easy

Indicating the speaker's degree of certainty is the second function of evidentiality. This degree of certainty depends on the type of evidential marker used during the communicative process. Different evidential constructions are used to perform this function. One of these evidentials is "belief constructions" such as *I think, I know, I suspect, I guess, and I suppose* as in (Chafe, 1986; Mayer, 1990; Blakemore, 1994):

34. I think that John is in Berlin
35. I suspect that he is the burglar
36. I suppose that he will have to resign

The degree of reliability of any given information can also be expressed through the use of certain adjectives and adverbs such as *certain-certainly, obvious-obviously, probable-probably, possible-possibly, sure-surely, evident-evidently, doubtful-doubtfully, clear-clearly, likely* as in (Chafe, 1986; Mayer, 1990; Blakemore, 1994):

37. He is probably the best actor of the year
38. John is possibly coming tonight
39. Evidently, the ball was over the line

Epistemic modality is another crucial category used to measure the degree of reliability of the information source. Modal verbs such as *may, might, can, could, will, should, must, ought to* are used for this category as in (Anderson, 1986; Chafe, 1986; Ifantidou, 2001):

40. I may not come tonight

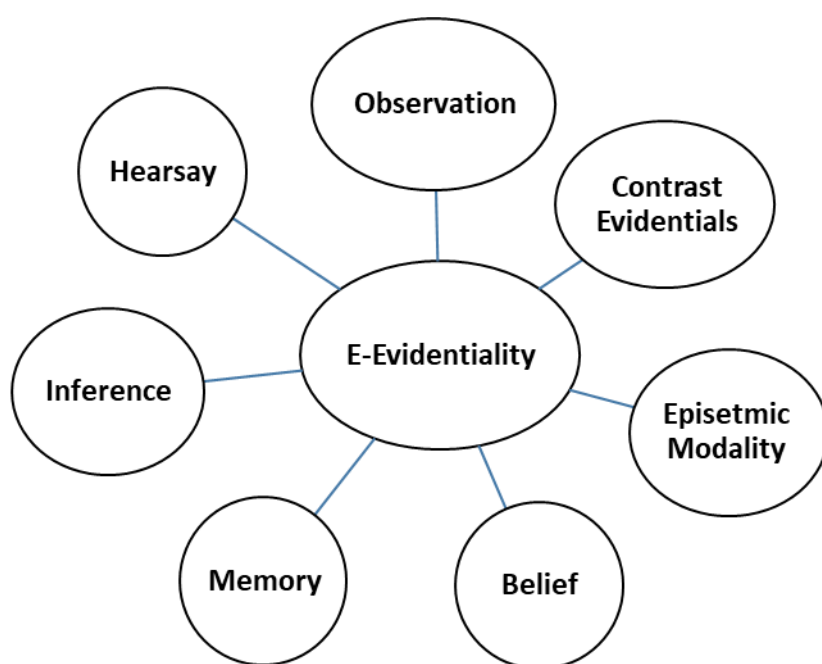
41. He could be ill

42. Helen must be better today

43. That'll be the postman.

Expressions such as *sort of, kind of, about, approximately, in fact, but, nevertheless, actually, of course, at least, oddly enough, however, and even* are also used to mark evidentiality. Chafe (1986) names such expressions "contrast evidentials" because they give a sense of contrast and a belief that something will happen or likely to happen as in:

44. He was in fact near death by the time they reached him



**Figure 1.** The main seven evidential categories in English

#### 4. Evidentiality in Arabic

Because many scholars believe that evidentiality does not exist as a semantic category in Semitic languages, the term has not been taken into consideration yet. Evidentiality has scarcely been studied in Arabic. One significant study has been done by Alhaisoni et al. (2012). Their study was not enough. They only list small number of evidential markers in Arabic. This article aims to

develop what Alhaisoni and his colleges have reached in their study of evidentiality in Arabic and put some recommendations and suggestions for further studies on Arabic evidentiality.

The transliteration of Arabic words and examples in this article follow the consonants and vowels transcription proposed by the Encyclopedia of Arabic Language and Linguistics and Journal of Semitic Studies as follows:

### Transcription of consonants

|   |          |   |          |   |          |   |          |
|---|----------|---|----------|---|----------|---|----------|
| ء | ا        | د | <i>d</i> | ض | <i>ḍ</i> | ك | <i>k</i> |
| ب | <i>b</i> | ذ | <i>ḏ</i> | ط | <i>ṭ</i> | ل | <i>l</i> |
| ت | <i>t</i> | ر | <i>r</i> | ظ | <i>ẓ</i> | م | <i>m</i> |
| ث | <i>ṯ</i> | ز | <i>z</i> | ع | ‘        | ن | <i>n</i> |
| ج | <i>j</i> | س | <i>s</i> | غ | <i>ġ</i> | ه | <i>h</i> |
| ح | <i>ḥ</i> | ش | <i>š</i> | ف | <i>f</i> | و | <i>w</i> |
| خ | <i>x</i> | ص | <i>ṣ</i> | ق | <i>q</i> | ي | <i>y</i> |

### Short and long vowels

Short vowels are /a, i, u/

Long vowels are /ā, ī, ū/

According to Alhaisoni et al. (2012), Arabic language has a category of verbs called “ḍanna wa axawatuhā” (to suppose and its sisters). These verbs mark evidentiality in SA. According to Ibn Aqīl (1995), the verbs are further sub-divided into two sub-categories namely, afa‘al al-qulūb (verbs of hearts) and afa‘al al-taḥwīl (verbs of conversion). Verbs of hearts are further divided into two types according to the degree of certainty (reliability) of the information they give: the first type is called afa‘al al-yaqīn (verbs of complete

certainty or verbs that express high degree of reliability in the information source). This type consists of (5) verbs: yara (consider), ya‘lam (know), yajid (find), yadri (know), ya‘lam (learn). These verbs give high degree of reliability (certainty) in speakers' statements. Speakers should only use these verbs when they are very sure (100 percent) about their statements (Al-Hashimī 1999). Table (1) below lists the verbs, their semantic content (meaning in English), and one example for each verb:

**Table (1):** Verbs of complete truthfulness (al-yaqīn) in Arabic (high degree of evidentiality)

| No | Verbs in Arabic | Verbs in English | Examples in Arabic                       | Examples in English                                        |
|----|-----------------|------------------|------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. | yara            | consider         | Yara al-ḥuquqīn al-‘adla ḍruryun         | Jurists consider that justice is necessary                 |
| 2. | Ya‘lam          | know             | Ya‘lam al-ṣuḥufiyu al-ḥabar ṣaḥīḥun      | The journalist knew that the news is true                  |
| 3. | yajid           | find             | Wajada al-ṭalibu al-t‘alīm sahlun        | The student found that learning is easy                    |
| 4. | yadri           | know             | Darat Fatima ijthadiha sabab najaḥiha    | Fatima knew that her diligence is the cause of her success |
| 5. | Ya‘lam          | learn            | Ta‘alam Zayd musa‘adat al-fuqarā wajibun | Zaid learned that helping the poor is a duty               |

The second type is called afa‘al al-rujḥān (verbs of possibility, uncertainty, and suspicion). These

verbs give low degree of reliability (50 percent and lesser than 100 percent) in speakers'

statements or propositions. Speakers only use these verbs when they are not sure (uncertain) or having some doubt about their statements. This type consists of (8) verbs: *xala* (suppose), *ḥasiba* (think), *ḍana* (believe, suspect, think), *zaʿima* (claim), *waʿida* (consider), *ḥaja* (think, believe),

*jaʿila* (make), *wahaba* (think). These verbs share mutual semantic content depicted in the sense of 'believe' and 'think' (Hasan, 1980). Table (2) below lists the aforementioned verbs with the meaning they share in English and examples:

**Table (2):** Verbs of possibility and suspicion (al-ruḡḡhān) in Arabic (low degree of evidentiality)

| No | Verbs in Arabic | Verbs in English | Examples in Arabic                                     | Examples in English                                     |
|----|-----------------|------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. | <i>xala</i>     | suppose          | <i>xala al-tilmīḍu al-laʿiba afḍala mina al-dirasa</i> | The pupil supposed that playing is better than studying |
| 2. | <i>ḥasiba</i>   | think            | <i>ḥasiba al-sariqu al-sariqata nafiʿatun lahu</i>     | The robber thought that the robbery is useful to him    |
| 3. | <i>ḍana</i>     | believe, think   | <i>ḍanantu al-luʿbata sahlata</i>                      | I thought that the game is easy                         |
| 4. | <i>zaʿima</i>   | claim            | <i>zaʿima al-ṭabību al-maraḍa basiṭun</i>              | The doctor claimed that the disease is simple           |
| 5. | <i>waʿida</i>   | think            | <i>ʿaditu al-ṣadiq muʿawinun li fi ṣidati</i>          | I thought that the friend helps me in my problem        |
| 6. | <i>ḥaja</i>     | think, believe   | <i>ḥaja al-walada al-mujrimu mutasawilun</i>           | I thought that the criminal boy is a beggar             |
| 7. | <i>jaʿila</i>   | make             | <i>Anta jaʿilta al-ḥaqa baṭlun</i>                     | You made the right void                                 |
| 8. | <i>wahaba</i>   | Think, believe   | <i>Hab ana al-xaṭara waqʿun</i>                        | Believe that danger will occur                          |

In Arabic and any other language, the meaning of any word depends on the context. In a logical sense, the verb of possibility '*ḍana*' (believe) indicates both high and low degrees of evidentiality. By depending on the context, one can distinguish between the low and high degree of evidentiality of the verb '*ḍana*'. For example, the verb '*ḍana*' in the sentence '*ḍanantu Zaydun ṣaḥubica*' (I thought that Zayd is your friend) indicates low degree of evidentiality. The speaker is uncertain about his statement. In other contexts, the verb '*ḍana*' is used to mark high degree of evidentiality as in the Quranic verse:

(**Waḍanū** ana lā maljaʾ min Allah ilā ilayh) {*sūra* al-Tawbah: 118}

**And they knew** it for certain that there is no fleeing from Allah (and no refuge) but to Himself

In the above Quranic verse, the verb '*ḍana*' in (*waḍanū*) indicates high degree of evidentiality and has the meaning of 'know' not 'believe'. The purpose behind this verse is to prove and illustrate that believing in Allah will definitely lead humans to salvation.

(Inahum **yarawnahu** baʿeidan) {*sūra* al-Maʿraj: 6}

Surely **they think** it (the Day) to be far off

This verse also illustrates the importance of the context in changing the meaning in Arabic. The verb of certainty (*yara*) in '*yarawnahu*' indicates low degree of evidentiality. It is used to refer to the infidels who think that God's punishment will not happen and impossible to happen. The pronoun 'it' refers to God's punishment. Although the verb '*yara*' is used to give high degree of evidentiality, but in this verse, it is used with the

meaning of 'think' to refer to the infidels and their lack of knowledge concerning God's punishment.

Like English, direct and indirect verbs of sense and percept in Arabic (afa'al al-iḥsās wa al- š'ūr) also indicate direct and indirect evidentiality. These verbs include yasm' (hear), yara (see, not consider), yashum (smell), yataḍawāq (taste), and yaš'ur (feel). The context illustrates whether these verbs show direct evidentiality as in *sami'tu al-infijār* (I heard the explosion). In this example, the speaker was there and heard the explosion, while in *sami'tu ana al-infijār qad waq' fi Baghdad* (I heard that the explosion has taken place in Baghdad), the speaker was not there but he heard the news from other people. Another indirect hearsay device is the predicate 'yaqūl' (it is said) used to mark indirect evidentiality.

In Standard Arabic (SA), grammarians demonstrate that there are two main tenses: perfect and imperfect. The former expresses an action or state completed at the time of speaking or at a time spoken of, while the latter expresses an incomplete action or state (Abboud & McCarus, 1983; Aziz 1989). The perfect form (the past tense) also marks evidentiality in Arabic. According to Sibawayhi (760: vol. 1: 460), the perfect in Arabic occurs either by itself, or preceded by the particle QAD. QAD is sometimes preceded by the coordinators 'WA', 'LA', and 'FA'. The perfect form is used to indicate high degree of evidentiality. The particles QAD is used to express that something is correct and definitely occurred without any doubt (Dahl & Talmoudi, 1979; AZMI, 1988). The following examples illustrate how the perfect tense gives high degree of evidentiality in Arabic:

Kanna al-qīṭāru QAD inṭalaqa (perfect) 'ndamaa waṣaltu al-mahaṭṭata

'The train had already gone when I reached the station'

LAQAD ibtasam-a (perfect) Zaydun

'Zayd did smile'

The above examples are taken from Bahloul (2008: 76-77) in which the particle QAD precedes the perfect (past) verbs 'inṭalaqa' and 'ibtasam-a' respectively to indicate high degree of

evidentiality in the two sentences. The perfect form with the particle QAD in the two sentences indicate that the train has definitely gone and Zayd has absolutely smiled.

(Qāl inama ana rasūl rabuki l'hiba laki ḡulamun zakiyun. **Qālat** anā yakūnu li ḡulamun wa lam yamsasuni baṣarun wa lam aku baḡya. **Qal** kaḍalika Qal rabuki huwa 'la hayn) {sūra Mary: 19-20}

**He said:** "Nay, I am only a messenger from thy Lord, (to announce) to thee the gift of a holy son.

**She said:** "How shall I have a son, seeing that no man has touched me, and I am not unchaste?" **He said:** "So (it will be): Thy Lord saith, 'that is easy for Me'.

The above Quranic verses are taken from Mary's sūra. The verses illustrate the dialogue that happened between the holy Mary and the angel (messenger) that is sent by Allah to tell her about her coming new holy son. It must be noted that the verb Qal (said) is in the perfect (past) tense to completely indicate that the story happened and it is undoubtedly true.

It should be noted that when QAD precedes a present verb [QAD+ present verb], the degree of evidentiality becomes low (50 percent) as in the sentence 'QAD yanjaḥu {Present verb} Zaydun haḍihi al-sana' (Zayd may pass this year).

Inferential evidentiality in Arabic is expressed by drawing an idea or a conclusion from an indirect evidence and reasoning. Since the speaker cannot perceive the event, s/he infers the event by depending on the available indirect evidence. The context plays a vital role in expressing inferential evidentiality in Arabic (Al-Malahmeh, 2013). The following example illustrates inferential evidentiality in Arabic:

-Ahmed and Mohammed enter Adam's room. They see his computer is still on and the game controller is connected to the PC.

-Mohammed tells Ahmed: Adam la'iba atari (Adam played video games)

In this example, Mohammed inferentially told Ahmed that Adam has played 'atari' (video games).

Al-Tawkid (emphasis) in Arabic is also used to remove suspicion and confusion about someone or something. In other words, emphasis in Arabic is interlinked with evidentiality since one of its functions is to remove skepticism, doubt, and uncertainty in one's statements. Consider the following sentence: *kalamani al-wazeer nafsahu* (the minister *himself* talked to me). If one says *kalamani al-wazeer* (the minister talked to me), the listener might suspect the statement and does not believe it since in our Arabic culture it is not easy to talk to a minister, but when the speaker uses the word 'nafsahu' (himself) before the noun 'al-wazeer' (the minister), he/she will remove the suspicion assuring that the speaker has definitely talked to the minister (Al-Nuqraṭ, 2003).

Constative (al-xabar) in Arabic is also used to mark evidentiality. According to Austin (1992), constatives are propositions that can be either right or wrong as in:

That man is my father

The truth or falsity of such statement can be assessed by the reference to the information in the world. Truthful constative statements are already known facts, correspond to reality and people believe in and accept them as in:

The water of the sea is salt

The water of the river is fresh

Two and two equals four

Untruthful or less evident constative statements are those that are not accepted by the people as well as they are not logically and scientifically accepted as in:

The week consists of five days

The sky is beneath us

Two and two equals five

In Arabic, there are certain tools by which constative statements can be more factual and contain high degree of reliability. They are presented with examples as follows:

**Ina:** its function is to make the statement more factual and truthful as in:

*Ina Allah gafoor Raḥeem* (Allah is Oft-forgiving, Most Merciful)

**Lam al Ibtidā** (Initial Lam) as in *la anta xayrun min 'raft* (You are the best of the people I have known), (*Ina rabi la samī' al du'ā* - for truly my Lord is He, the Hearer of Prayer!)

**Ama al-ṣarṭayah** (the conditional Ama) as in: *Ama zaidun faḍahibun* – Zaid will definitely go

**Ḥarf al-sīn** (the letter S) as in: *Ula'k Sayraḥamahum Allah* (On them will Allah pour His mercy).

**Ḍamīr** al faṣil (the separated pronoun) as in: *Mohammed howa al-nabi* (Mohammed (he) is the prophet).

**Al-qasam** (oath) and its letters are: al-baa (b), al-waw (w), al-taa (t) as in:

*Aqsam bi Allah* (I swear by God)

*Aqsam wa Allah* (I swear by God)

*Ta Allah la akedana aṣnamakum* (And by Allah, I have a plan for your idols)

**Nona Al-Tawkid** (the two Ns of Emphasis): the stressed heavy N of emphasis and the unstressed light N of emphasis as in:

*Wa li ana lam yaf'l ma amra li-yaṣjunun wa li-yakonun min al-ṣaḡrīn* (and now, if he doth not my bidding, he shall certainly be cast into prison, and (what is more) be of the company of the vilest!).

**Al-ḥurūf al-zaidah** (additional letters) such as *ina almaksūrat alhamzah alsakinat alnūn*, and *ma, la, min*, and *baa*. All of these additional letters are used to give the statements high degree of evidentiality as in:

*Falama in jaa albaṣīr ilqah 'la wajhahu firtada baṣerun* (Then when the bearer of the good news came, He cast (the shirt) over his face, and he forthwith regained clear sight).

**Ḥurūf altanbīh** (letters of attention). There are two letters: *ila* and *ima*. They are both used to emphasize that the statements are true and certain as in:

*Ila ina awlyā Allah la xawfun 'layhum wa la hum yaḥzanūn* (Behold! verily on the friends of Allah there is no fear, nor shall they grieve).

*Ima wa Allah la qad najaḥtu fi al imtiḥān* (By God, I passed the exam).

Finally, there are some widely used **predicates** which express high and low evidentiality in Arabic. *Mina al-waḍaḥ* (it is clear) is one of these predicates which is used to mark high degree of evidentiality (100 percent) in speakers' statement as in '*mina al-waḍaḥ ana al-barlamān al-'iraqi qad istanfaḍa mudatahu al-dusturiyah*' (it is clear that the Iraqi parliament has finished its constitutional term). Other predicates which express high degree of evidentiality are predicates such as '*mina al-bayan*', '*mina al-jali*' (it is evident), '*mina al-muakad*' (it is certain), '*fi waqi' al-amr*' (In fact), '*qaṭ'un*' (definitely, absolutely), '*mina al-muḥtim*' (It is inevitable), and '*la šaka*' (no doubt, sure). There are other evidential predicates which give less degree of evidentiality such as '*mina al-muḥtamal*' (It is probable) as in '*mina al-muḥtamal an yuḥaqqiq al-'iraq al-iktifā al-ḍati mina al-kahrabā xilal al-a'wam al-xamsa al-qadimah*' (It is probable that Iraq will achieve self-efficiency in electricity during the next five years). Other such predicates includes expressions such as '*mina al-murjih*' (It is likely), '*Mina al-muftaraḍ*' (It is supposed to), '*mina al-mutawaqi*' (It is expected that), '*mina al-mumkin*' (it is possible), and '*mina al-mu'taqad*' (It is believed that).

**Figure 2.** The main evidential categories in Arabic

## 5. Conclusions

Questions such as how people present the information, how they acquired it, and how they knew it can only be answered through the term "evidentiality". Literally, evidentiality is a semantic term used to measure the degree of reliability of people's statements. Arabic, like any other language, has its own evidential system. In other words, Arabic has unique categories of verbs called verbs of certainty which give 100 percent degree of evidentiality, while verbs of possibility

give lesser degree of evidentiality 50 percent and less than 100 percent.

Another category of verbs which mark evidentiality is that of sense and percept. These verbs give both high and low degrees of evidentiality. When speakers witness, see, hear the event, their statements will have high degree of evidentiality but when they hear or convey the event from someone else, their statements will show low evidentiality.

The perfect or past tense marks evidentiality in Arabic and is used to give high degree of evidentiality as shown in the analysis of some selected Quranic verses and sentences. In addition to this, we collect many Arabic structures (predicates) which are widely used by speakers and writers to mark evidentiality.

The article also found out the importance of the context in Arabic and its crucial role in extracting the correct meaning of any lexical item as in the case of the verb '*ḍana*' which is used to mark low degree of evidentiality in some contexts but is used to mark high degree of evidentiality in some other contexts.

Having studied evidentiality in Standard Arabic, the researcher recommends that evidentiality needs to be studied in Arabic accents to find out different evidential markers and whether such markers are similar or different from one accent to another. A comparative study between Arabic and other Semitic languages such as Amharic, Hebrew, Tigrinya, etc. is needed to see how evidentiality is expressed semantically and pragmatically in these languages. Depending on single structures and vocabularies lead to inaccurate and false interpretations. Therefore, a study on the role of the context in changing the meaning is also needed, especially in Arabic.

## 6. References

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