

Evidentiality and humor in Spanish

About *Buenafuente's* monologues

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The aim of this paper is to shed light on the evidentiality functions used by the comedian Andreu Buenafuente during his monologues in Spanish (2007–2011). Firstly, some hypotheses are proposed: (1) genre may determine pragmatic evidentiality functions; (2) evidentials are integrated into a monologue's expository-argumentative structure; (3) several evidentiality strategies may be distinguished with regard to this structural role; (4) one of these strategies in humorous texts consists of acting as a humorous evidentiality marker. Secondly, reportative evidentials (Willet, 1988; Plungian 2001; Dendale & Tasmowski, 2001, p.343) such as *según*, *según dicen*, *dicen que* ([they/people] say) and *se ve que* (lit. 'it is seen that/apparently'), and a direct attested evidential, *claro* (of course), are analyzed. Both quantitative and qualitative analyses serve as the basis to confirm the hypotheses posed and finally to propose a semantic-pragmatic framework for evidentials and evidentiality in Andreu Buenafuente's humorous monologues. The corpus comprises 203 printed monologues from the books *Sigo diciendo* (I still say) (2009), *Digo yo* (So I say) (2010) and *Hablar es gratis* (Speaking is free of charge) (2011).

Keywords: humor, evidentials, humorous monologue

1. Introduction

This paper seeks to analyze evidentiality in the humorous monologues by Andreu Buenafuente, one of the most famous comedians in Spain, as evidenced by the fact that he had a daily TV show between 2005 and 2015.¹ Evidentiality in Spanish

1. The program was broadcast on the Spanish television channel *Antena 3* during its first stage (between January 2005 and June 2007); it was called *Buenafuente* or *BF* in its abbreviated form. From September 2007 until June 30, 2011, the program was broadcast by another national TV channel, *La Sexta*, keeping its name – *Buenafuente* – but with a new abbreviation, *BNF*.

will be considered a semantic and functional framework (Cornillie, 2007; Hassler, 2010; Albelda, 2016) wherein a number of evidentiality strategies (Aikhenvald & Dixon, 2003) are developed. Although the corpus shows other forms of evidentiality, this paper examines the most prominent ones in our corpus, namely: *según*, *según dicen*, *dicen que* ('[they/people] say'), *se ve que* (lit. 'it is seen that/apparently') and *claro* ('of course'). The following hypotheses can be proposed on the basis of these forms and through a semantic and pragmatic conception of evidentiality:

1. Genre could determine the pragmatic functions of evidentials (Estellés & Albelda, 2014, p. 57), since some discourse traditions such as parliamentary debate in Spain allow speakers to avoid responsibility for utterances by using evidentials such as *al parecer* or *por lo visto* (both of which mean 'apparently'). Humorous monologues could thus use a variety of evidentials either to show the source of information or to persuade the audience.
2. These evidentials are integrated into the monologue's expository-argumentative structure (thesis, argumentative body and conclusion).
3. As for their structural role, several evidentiality strategies may be distinguished. Furthermore, taking into account the domain of evidentiality, (Willet, 1988; Plungian, 2001; Dendale & Tasmowki, 2001), indirect reportative evidentials such as *según*, *según dicen*, *dicen que* ('[they/people] say that') and *se ve que* (lit. 'it is seen that') serve to reveal the monologue's thesis, whereas direct attested evidentials like *claro* ('of course') become integrated into its argumentative body.²
4. An analysis can be made of the strategies underlying evidentials associated with humorous texts, or expressed differently: *humorous evidentiality markers*. A marker is a linguistic element that helps to understand humor. Examples include: intonation, discourse markers, evidentials, phraseology, etc. (Ruiz-Gurillo, 2010b, 2015). An indicator is a *per se* humorous element, as Ruiz-Gurillo explained (2014). Polysemy, phraseology, or intentional register variation could become an indicator in a specific context. As regards evidentials, they frequently

Between 2013 and 2015, Buenafuente headed the program *En el aire*, also on *La Sexta*. Before his appearance in these national programs, Andreu Buenafuente had worked in two regional programs, *La cosa nostra* and *Una altra cosa*, broadcast in Catalan language by the Catalan television channel TV3. Both the national and regional programs were produced by El Terrat, a production company founded by Andreu Buenafuente in 1989. The monologues analyzed in this research work belong exclusively to the period of September 2007 to June 2011, during which the program's name was abbreviated to *BNF*.

2. Thus, evidentiality overlaps epistemicity (Dendale & Tasmowki, 2001), since *claro* expresses epistemic modality and consequently it could be considered a direct attested evidential.

act as markers of information sources. Although an evidential can act as a humorous marker, (1) it is integrated into the monologue's argumentative structure to introduce the *jab line* or the *punch line*;³ (2) it changes implicatures associated with this context in a negative or different way; (3) it points out the figurative meaning of the expression. More precisely, *se ve que* might be used not only as an indirect reportative evidential but also as an indirect inferred evidential – in which case, it would likewise act as a humorous evidentiality marker guiding inferences. Apart from its epistemic functions as a direct evidential, *claro* ('of course') could also develop ironic-negative functions as a humorous evidentiality marker.

These hypotheses could also confirm two evidentiality functions: (a) one related to the semantic meaning of evidentials, according to which they are classified as direct and indirect, reportative and inferred; and (b) the other associated with humorous texts, or to put it another way, with their contextual functions as humorous evidentiality markers that guide ironic-negative meaning, polyphony and persuasion. Thus, this paper focuses on general evidentiality strategies as well as on humorous evidentiality ones.

Our corpus includes 203 printed monologues from the books *Sigo diciendo* (SD) ('I still say') (2009), *Digo yo* (DY) ('So I say') (2010) and *Hablar es gratis* (HG) ('Speaking is free of charge') (2011). Buenafuente's monologues show certain idiosyncratic features. Overall, the structure in most of his monologues is determined by the presentation of a current news item. In fact, they tend to be expository-argumentative rather than narrative, because there is also an intention to generate an opinion or to persuade the audience about a particular [social, political or economic] state of affairs.

The present paper is structured as follows: an initial description of the structure that characterizes Buenafuente's monologues along with its evidentials illustrated by means of a monologue – *Seguridad Social* (SD, 2010, p. 57) – and complemented with a quantitative analysis about the evidentials used in the book *Sigo diciendo* (SD) ('I still say') (2009) (§ 2) is followed by a separate treatment of *según*, *según dicen*, *dicen que*, *se ve que*, and *claro* (§ 3, § 4, § 5 and § 6). After this, a reference to the semantic-pragmatic framework of evidentials and evidentiality in humorous monologues (§ 7) and a conclusions section (§ 8) rounds off our research work.

3. *Jab lines* may appear anywhere in the text, whereas *punch lines* may close the text. Both are completely integrated into the narrative body. (Attardo, 2001).

2. Evidentials in the structure of Buenafuente's monologues

As suggested by Ruiz-Gurillo (2013, 2019), the structure of a monologue by Andreu Buenafuente revolves around a current piece of news, which is why these texts are mainly expository-argumentative and not narrative – unlike what happens in most of the humorous monologues created by other comedians. These expository-argumentative texts present a thesis usually stemming from the current item of news that serves as the basis for their construction. This thesis is followed by the argumentative body, often composed of 4 or 5 arguments supported by examples, analogies, etc. The line of argument finishes with a conclusion that summarizes the idea or ideas defended in the monologue – which ends with a humorous final touch. Each one of these monologues starts with a serious premise that eventually leads to a humorous conclusion, either being introduced as a *jab line* or closing the monologue as a *punch line* (Attardo, 2001; Ruiz-Gurillo, 2012). A *jab line* is a humorous element integrated into the humorous plot that helps to understand the incongruity, and a *punch line* is also a humorous utterance that permits to close the monologue (Attardo, 2001, p.82–83; 2008). Table 1 describes the typical structure of a monologue by Andreu Buenafuente:

Table 1. Overall structure of a monologue by Andreu Buenafuente

Monologue parts	Serious premise	Humorous conclusion
Thesis	Serious premise	Humorous conclusion jab line
Argumentative body	Serious premise	Humorous conclusion jab line
	Serious premise	Humorous conclusion jab line

Conclusion	Serious premise	Humorous conclusion punch line

Considering this overall structure as well as the second hypothesis proposed, evidentials are integrated into the humorous plot. Table 2 illustrates the structure of a monologue – *Seguridad Social* (SD, 57) – where the indirect inferred evidential *se ve que* (lit. ‘it is seen that/apparently’) comes to form part of the thesis and two different uses of the direct attested evidential *claro* appear in the argumentative body:

The general structure of this selected monologue shows how certain evidentials become integrated into it. The indirect evidential *se ve que* appears in the thesis for the purpose of introducing the humorous conclusion of this first argument. The argumentative body consists of various arguments. A relevant role corresponds to *claro* in two of them, even though its functions are different. In the first case, *claro* acts as a humorous marker that gives way to the ironic argument (Ruiz-Gurillo, 2010b). On the other hand, in the second case, *claro* conveys

Table 2. Structure of the monologue *Seguridad Social* (SD, 57)

Parts	Arguments	Serious premise	Humorous conclusion
Thesis		<p><i>Obama quiere copiar nuestro sistema sanitario. Pero, tranquilos todo tiene una explicación.</i></p> <p>[Obama wants to copy our healthcare system. However, calm down, it all has an explanation]</p>	<p><i>Se ve que cuando le dijeron la edad de Fraga⁴ pensó que la sanidad española tenía que ser la hostia.</i></p> <p>[Apparently, when they told him how old Fraga was, he thought that Spanish healthcare had to be cracking good/the bomb]</p>
Argumentative body	<p>1. SISTEMA DE DIGITALIZACIÓN [DIGITIZATION SYSTEM]</p> <p>2. CENTROS DE ATENCIÓN PRIMARIA [PRIMARY CARE CENTERS]</p>	<p><i>Lo primero que hará Obama será copiar el Sistema de digitalización del expediente médico. Que aquí estamos muy avanzados. Está todo informatizado.</i></p> <p>[The first thing that Obama will do will be copying the Digitization System of the medical file. We are very advanced here, you see. Everything is computerized.]</p> <p><i>Pero sobre todo lo que quieren implantar allí son los centros de atención primaria.</i></p> <p>[But, above all, they want to introduce primary care centers there.]</p>	<p><i>De hecho, el otro día entré en el Facebook y ponía: “la gripe te ha añadido como amigo”</i></p> <p>[In fact, I logged into Facebook the other day and it said: “the flu has added you as a friend.”]</p> <p><i>Claro, si aquí funcionan de maravilla. ¿¿Listas de espera?? ¡Qué va! Sin ir más lejos, yo mañana tengo hora con el médico de cabecera. A ver si me corta el cordón umbilical.</i></p> <p>[Of course, they work wonderfully here. Waiting lists?? No way! As it happens, I have an appointment with the family doctor tomorrow. Let’s see if he can cut my umbilical cord.]</p>

...

Table 2. (continued)

Parts	Arguments	Serious premise	Humorous conclusion
	4. RECEPCIONISTAS [RECEPTIONISTS]	Luego están las recepcionistas que te dan la hora [Then we have the receptionists who give you the appointment.]	Simpatiquísimas todas. Son gente que sufre mucho, eso es verdad y claro, el carácter les ha desaparecido, ya no tienen carácter. [Extremely nice, all of them. They are people who suffer a lot, and of course, their character has disappeared (is gone), they no longer have any character.]
Conclusion		En cualquier caso, quiero decirle al señor Obama, que sé que se está leyendo esto, que gracias por fijarse en nuestra Seguridad Social. [Anyway, I want to say to Mr. Obama, “as I know he is reading this, “thanks for paying attention to our Social Security.”]	Pero, sobre todo, recuerde que: “Este monólogo no es de un medicamento. Ría atentamente todos los chistes. En caso de no entenderlos, consulte con Wyoming.” ⁵ [But, especially, remember that: “This monologue is not about a medicine. Carefully laugh at all the jokes. Should you not understand them, please consult Wyoming.]

its direct evidence meaning as a way to reinforce – together with “*eso es verdad* (‘that’s true’)” – the argument “*el carácter les ha desaparecido* (‘their character has disappeared’)”. Consequently, a variety of evidential uses can be found in this monologue that allow us to structure this paper around the types of evidentiality and the functions carried out in Buenafuente’s monologues.

Having said that, this illustration does not suffice to confirm the hypotheses posed, especially the third one. Since the book *Sigo diciendo* (2009) contains 68 of the 203 monologues analyzed, as well as most of the evidentiality occurrences found, the table provided below gives some clues about the insertion of evidentiality occurrences in the thesis, the argumentative body or the conclusion with

4. A Spanish politician who lived until the age of 90 and developed an intense political work until his death

5. A very famous comedian.

the forms *según*, *dicen que* ('[they/people] say that'), *se ve que* (lit. 'it is seen that/apparently'), and *claro* ('of course')⁶:

Table 3. Evidentials in the argumentative text from the book *Sigo diciendo* (2009)

	<i>Según</i> (+ free form: <i>según un estudio, según una encuesta, etc.</i>)		<i>Dicen que</i>		<i>Se ve que</i>		<i>Claro</i>	
	Occurrences	Percentage	Occurrences	Percentage	Occurrences	Percentage	Occurrences	Percentage
Thesis	6	46.16%	3	23.07%	2	11.76%	2	4.34%
Argumentative body	7	53.84%	9	69.23%	14	82.35%	44	95.65%
Conclusion	0	0%	1	7.69%	1	5.88%	0	0%
	13	100%	13	100%	17	100%	46	100%

Therefore, although *claro* ('of course') prevails over the other forms in terms of frequency when it comes to the argumentative body, the same cannot be said about *dicen que* ('[they/people] say that') or *se ve que* (lit. 'it is seen that/apparently'), since their occurrences are quantitatively lower in the thesis (23.07%/11.76%) than in the argumentative body (69.23%/82.35%). As a result, the third hypothesis cannot be confirmed only with this quantitative analysis because it does not suffice to develop a line of argument about the structural appearance of evidentials and their functions. Such data combined with a detailed analysis about each one of the evidential forms will therefore enable the aforementioned third hypothesis to be confirmed or rejected.

Thus, attention will initially be paid to the use of less grammaticalized evidentiality forms such as those introduced by *según*, after which the analysis will refer to the reproduced indirect evidential *según dicen*. The role played by *se ve que* as an indirect reportative evidential and as an indirect inferred evidential is dealt with next. Finally, *claro* is examined in its diverse functions as a visual attested direct evidential and as a humorous evidentiality marker, as suggested in the second and fourth hypotheses.

6. The expression *dicen que* is not documented in this book, although it does appear in the other two, *Digo yo* (2010) and *Hablar es gratis* (2011).

3. Indirect reportative evidentials with *según*

The form *según*, which introduces the source of indirect reportative knowledge (Willet, 1988: 57; Dendale & Tasmowki, 2001), combines either with reportative phrases that indicate the source in a free manner (*según ha dicho ella misma; según un estudio*) or with more grammaticalized expressions (*según dicen*) in the corpus. This is why it is not unusual to find *según* in the thesis of a monologue (46.16%) introducing the news item that constitutes the starting point for that monologue:

- (1) *Según el Instituto Nacional de Estadística, los españoles estamos ahorrando más que nunca* (According to the [Spanish] National Statistics Institute, [we] Spaniards are saving more than ever before).
(Andreu Buenafuente, *Ahorro familiar* ('Family savings'), SD, 143)

In Example (1), *según (el Instituto Nacional de Estadística)* introduces the news item: "[we] Spaniards are saving more than ever before".

Despite maintaining its basic function of introducing the reportative source of information, it can introduce the jab line that follows the presentation of the news item, as in (2):

- (2) *Recientemente hemos sabido que "la esperanza de vida en España es de las más altas del mundo". Somos el lugar con más ancianos por metro cuadrado después del plató de "Cine de barrio". Según este estudio, nuestra esperanza de vida es de 81,1 años. Ese coma uno es inquietante. ¿Qué es? ¿Medio mes?*
(‘We have recently discovered that “life expectancy in Spain is one of the highest in the world”. We are the place with most seniors per square meter after the studio of [lit.] Neighborhood Cinema.’⁷
According to this study, our life expectancy is 81.1 years. That ‘point one’ is disturbing. What is it? Half a month?’).
(Andreu Buenafuente, *España, el país más longevo* ('Spain, the most longevous country'), HG, 21)

In Example (2), *según este estudio* presents a comment that the speaker makes after this piece of news (“our life expectancy is 81.1 years”). Although this comment is not humorous, the following questions open an evaluative and humorous conclusion (“That point one is disturbing. What is it? Half a month?”).

A similar function corresponds to *según dicen* in (3):

7. A TV program that shows old Spanish films which are popular among people ‘of a certain age’.

- (3) *He leído que los españoles vamos al médico más de nueve veces al año.*
 [...] *Según dicen, también somos el cuarto país del mundo en consumo de fármacos. Siempre España en el top de lo malo.*
 ('I have read that [we] Spaniards visit the doctor more than nine times a year.
 [...])

According to what they say, our country is also the world's third largest consumer of medicines. Spain always at the top for bad things').

(Andreu Buenafuente, *Ir al médico* ('Visiting the doctor'), DY, 92)

In Example (3), *según dicen* introduces some information to complement the main news item in (3) ("I have read that [we] Spaniards visit the doctor more than nine times a year") and consequently has a reportative nature, although the speaker also adds an evaluative piece of information ("Spain is always at the top for bad things").

Therefore, the indirect reportative source of information may refer to highly specific data (*según el Instituto Nacional de Estadística; según este estudio*) or to an undetermined indirect source (*según dicen*). It is also common to find uses of other reportative evidentials such as *dicen que*, which – within the set of elements that designate the indirect source of information – imply a higher degree of consolidation.

4. Indirect reportative evidentials: *dicen que*

Dicen que ('[they/people] say that') is an indirect reproduced evidential (Willet, 1988, p. 57; Plungian, 2001; Dendale & Tasmowki, 2001; Alvarado, 2016) that indicates the source of knowledge, the same as other lexical units of a probably universal nature (Aikhenvald, 2004); examples include *I guess, they say, and I hear that*. This fact corroborates a high degree of grammaticalization in Spanish, with other reportative evidential markers such as *dice (que)* ('[he] says that'), *parece que* ('it seems that'), *al parecer* ('apparently') or *por lo visto* ('apparently'), similarly to *dizque* in the Spanish of Colombia, "employed by speakers to manage their relationship with one another, their audience, and their information source, using the concept of speaker stance" (Babel, 2009, p. 487). Exactly as happens with *según dicen*, its role in Buenafuente's monologues is structural because it quite often helps present the source of information through which the news item acting as the starting point for the monologue became known. It thus appears in the monologue's thesis (23.07%):

- (4) *Los estudiantes de bachillerato no pasarán de curso si suspenden más de dos asignaturas. Dicen que así se lo tomarán más en serio.*
 ('Upper secondary education students will not pass on to the next grade if they fail more than two subjects. People say that students will take things more seriously in this way'. (Andreu Buenafuente, *Suspenden bachillerato* (SD, 63))

In Example (4), *dicen que* presents the undetermined source of information ('[People/they] say that students will take things more seriously in this way').

Nevertheless, it can also be found in the argumentative body presenting one of the jab lines (69.23%) and consequently introducing a humorous evaluation:

- (5) *Otro juego típico del casino es la ruleta. Dicen que es como echarle una carrera a Fraga.⁸ tienes muchas posibilidades de ganar.*
 ('Another typical casino game is roulette. They say [that] it's like having a race with Fraga: you stand great chances of winning'.
 (Andreu Buenafuente, *Casinos*, SD, 41)

In Example (5), *dicen que* is an indirect reproduced evidential, such as in the monologue's thesis. However, this evidential also helps to present the jab line ('They say [that] it's like having a race with Fraga: you stand great chances of winning').

A wide range of indirect evidentiality forms found in Buenafuente's monologues have been analyzed so far (*según...*, *según dicen*, *dicen que*). These forms collaborate in presenting information and are reportative in nature. As shown by the corpus, in addition to identifying the indirect reportative source of information, they can sometimes contextually act as guides for the humorous inferences that the comedian carries out in the jab line (see Examples (2), (3) and (5)). Thus, these evidentials show reportative grammaticalized functions, though they can be used contextually as humorous markers.

5. Indirect inferred evidentials: *se ve que*

Unlike the reportative expressions examined above, whose basic use is sometimes to add an evaluative value, *se ve que* (lit. 'it is seen that/apparently') presents two distinct structurally marked uses. When appearing in the thesis of the monologue (11.76%), it often introduces the piece of news, in the same way as *según dicen*, *dicen que* and other similar forms. However, when *se ve que* forms part of the monologue's body (82.35%) and its conclusion (5.88%), it frequently acts as an indirect evidential with an inferential character (Willet, 1988, p. 57; Plungian, 2001; Dendale & Tasmowki, 2001). Both uses show evidential functions of this

8. A Spanish politician who had difficulty walking at the end of his life.

form in Spanish (Albelda, 2016). For this reason, its scope lies in the proposition, it presents semantic impersonality, it constitutes a verbal structure oriented to the object, and there is a *constructionalization* (Traugott & Trousdale, 2013) of the structure; or in other words, a *phraseologization* (Ruiz-Gurillo, 1997, 2010c), since it functions as a whole with an evidential meaning.

When introducing the humorous conclusion of the initial thesis, it acts as an indirect reportative evidential similar to *dicen que* ([they/people] say that). The news item in (6) is introduced by means of *se ve que*. Phrases such as *según el gobierno*, *según dicen*, etc. may be found in the same context:

- (6) *Empezamos con una noticia relacionada con el Plan Bologna. Se ve que el Gobierno quiere que la informática deje de ser una Carrera y el próximo martes está prevista una manifestación de informáticos.*
 ('We start with a piece of news related to the Bologna Plan. Apparently, the Government wants computing science to no longer be a degree course and there is a demonstration planned by computer programmers for next Tuesday'. (Andreu Buenafuente, *Informáticos*, SD, 61)

In Example (6) *se ve que* introduces a reportative piece of news ("the Government wants computing science to no longer be a degree course").

In general terms, the evidential functions performed by *se ve que* help the monologist to carry out deductions or inferences from the topic addressed in the monologue. When it appears integrated within the argumentative body of the monologue or in its conclusion, *se ve que* (apparently) is also used as a humorous evidentiality marker. In the case of (7), it is inserted in an evaluative passage about the fear caused by Dracula. *Se ve que* serves to introduce the incongruous argument, the scenes which are more frightening than those involving vampires and surprisingly bank employees, a fact that produces humor:

- (7) *'Yo creo que los vampiros atraen porque a la gente, en el fondo, le gusta pasar miedo [...]. En el túnel del terror, la gente paga para que la asusten. Se ve que ahora están cambiando algunas escenas; antes venía un monstruo con una sierra mecánica y ahora están poniendo a un empleado de banca con la letra de una hipoteca, que acojona más. "Uuuuuuuuh".'*
 ('I think vampires are attractive because, deep down, people like to feel fear [...]. In the tunnel of horror, people pay to be scared. Apparently, some scenarios are now changing; before, a monster used to come out with a chainsaw, and now they have a bank employee with a mortgage statement, which scares you much more. Oooooooooh!'). (Andreu Buenafuente, *Drácula*, SD, 108)

This fragment (7) constitutes an evaluative sequence about the fear caused by Dracula. In fact, it is introduced by *I think*. One of the arguments provided is: "In the tunnel of horror, people pay to be scared". This serious argument is followed by the

jab line – introduced by the evidential *se ve que* (“some scenarios are changing now; before, a monster used to come out with a chainsaw, and now they have a bank employee with a mortgage statement, which scares you much more. Oooooooh!”).

Likewise, *se ve que* can be utilized to introduce the punch line that closes the monologue (5.88%), as in (8), with the same functions described in (7):

(8) ‘*Lo que más me sorprende de Estados Unidos es lo fácil que resulta conseguir un arma. Las venden en los supermercados. Es muy peligroso. Bueno, no sé si se han enterao... Se ve que el otro día un Chiquiprecio le disparó a otro. Un drama.*’

(‘What surprises me the most about the United States is how easily you can get a gun. They sell them in supermarkets. It’s very dangerous. Well, I don’t know if you’ve heard... Apparently the other day one *Chiquiprecio*⁹ shot another. What a drama.’)

(Andreu Buenafuente, *Estados Unidos* [United States], SD, 148)

In Example (8), *se ve que* presents the jab line (“the other day one *Chiquiprecio* shot another. What a drama”), that helps generate a humorous image of buying guns in supermarkets and their consequences.

Therefore, *se ve que* has two distinct functions in Buenafuente’s monologues:

- It can introduce the monologue’s thesis, and more specifically the source of the news, as is also done by other indirect reportative evidentials (*según dicen, dicen que...*); and
- It can also incorporate the humorous conclusion into the argumentative body or the conclusion of the monologue, thus behaving as an indirect inferred evidential. Hence, *se ve que* is integrated into the monologue’s argumentative structure to introduce the jab line; it changes implicatures since these are associated with humorous text (the incongruity of putting a bank employee in the tunnel of horror in (7) or the humorous image of buying guns in supermarkets in (8)). Finally, the expression shows a figurative meaning, ‘apparently’, related to an inferred evidential meaning. When this evidential plays this role, it could be proposed as a humorous evidentiality marker.

9. A puppet designed for an advertising campaign with the aim of publicizing the low prices in a supermarket. It became very famous in Spain during the 1990s.

6. Direct evidentials: *claro*

As the bibliography (Martín Zorraquino & Portolés, 1999; Portolés, 1999; Martín Zorraquino, 2001) has rightly described, *claro* ('of course') is a discourse marker of direct attested evidentiality. It expresses epistemic modality,¹⁰ thus conveying the idea that the supposition could be expected because it is based on assumptions shared by the speaker and the listener. It can therefore act as a marker of agreement between speaker and listener on a dialogical level.¹¹ Thus, it often appears as part of the corpus in dialogue sequences when the monologist plays several voices. Furthermore, the possibility exists of *claro* becoming a humorous marker that introduces the jab line and consequently allows negative inferences to be obtained from the argument that it introduces.

When *claro* acts as a direct evidential, it appears within direct discourse fragments performing the role of an agreement marker:

- (9) *Ahora los únicos que tienen dinero son las entidades de préstamos rápidos. De estos que "sí, sí, sí,..." te fiamos! "Huy, sí, cómo me fío." Tú vas a Cofidis, que tiene nombre de supermercado, y te encuentras un mundo de felicidad. Todos son superamables y te sonríen con cara de Michael Landon en La casa de la pradera (Lo hace): hay un tío tirando dinero. "Bienvenido a Cofidis, chico. ¿Quieres dinero? Claro hombre. ¿Cuánto? ¿Treinta mil? Toma cuarenta mil y quédate con el cambio."*

(‘Now quick loan entities are the only ones that have money. Those that say “yes, yes, yes...we’ll trust you with a loan!” “Yeah, right; how I trust them.” You go to Cofidis, which has a name like a supermarket, and you discover a world of cheerfulness. Everybody is really friendly and they smile at you with a face like Michael Landon’s in *Little House on the Prairie* (He does): there’s a guy throwing money around: “Welcome to Cofidis,¹² man. Do you want money? **Of course**, man. How much? Thirty thousand? Take forty thousand and keep the change.”’) (Andreu Buenafuente, *Bancos* (“Banks”), DY, 23.)

Example (9) shows *claro* introducing the affirmative response action of the second voice (“Welcome to Cofidis, man. Do you want money? **Of course**, man. How much?”), which has to be played by the monologist on stage and which is marked by the annotation “He does” in the written text. *Claro* acts here as an agreement marker.

10. See note 3.

11. This is one of the main values assigned to it by Pons (1998: 169–172 and 2006), who additionally stresses the fact that agreement constitutes an essentially dialogical category.

12. A financial entity that grants personal loans

Anyhow, the uses of *claro* as a humorous evidential marker are much more frequent in this humorous genre. *Claro* becomes a mark guiding the jab line towards ironic-negative inferences in these cases. As suggested by the GRIALE Group, irony leads to negative inferences that trigger the inversion of pragmatic principles (Rodríguez-Rosique, 2009, 2013; Ruiz-Gurillo, 2010b). This explanation is equally corroborated in the analysis of irony and evidentials presented by Santamaría (2009) and Gilmour *et al.* (2010). The role of *claro* as a direct evidence marker in such linguistic environments has to be contextually inferred as a mark guiding the irony of the context. The irony conveyed by the proposition is therefore inferred in an inverse or negative way, due to the infringement of a quality prerequisite (Levinson, 2000). Thus, irony is at the service of humor and *claro* may be understood as a humorous (negative) evidentiality marker.¹³

The confirmation that the preferential uses of *claro* as an epistemic agreement evidential tend to appear within ironic-humorous contexts can be found in examples like (10):

- (10) *‘Lo jodido es no saber fingir. Por ejemplo, las madres [...]. Yo llegaba de pequeño a casa con un cenicero de barro que había hecho en el cole, que parecía que lo había hecho un simio, pero lo había hecho yo... [...] Y ella (con cara de asco): “¡Huy! ¡Qué bonito!” (Tiene una arcada). Le daban arcadas y todo. Y yo: “Mamá, ¿me quieres? Y ella: (con otra arcada) “Claro, hijo.”*
 (‘The fucking difficult thing is not knowing how to pretend. For example, mothers [...]. As a kid, I’d arrive home with a clay ashtray that I had made at school, which looked like it had been made by an ape, but I’d made it myself... [...] And she goes (with a look of disgust): “Oh! How nice! (She retches). It even made her retch. And I go: “Mum, do you love me?” And she says: (retching again) “Of course, son” .

(Andreu Buenafuente, *Echarle cuento* (Telling stories), DY, 40)

In Example (10) the monologist plays several voices in a clearly ironic scenario, which leads to a negative interpretation of the context, where *claro* permits such inferences to be guided (<brother, it’s disgusting>). Note that the annotations (margin notes), which refer to the gestures that the monologist has to make while performing the monologue, help to interpret what is said in an ironic manner:

As stated above, *claro* is often found as a humorous evidentiality marker in our corpus. Thus, it appears in (11):

13. As the GRIALE Research Group proposes, irony and humor are mechanisms that invert contextually pragmatic principles of quantity, manner and informativity (Levinson, 2000). See for example Rodríguez-Rosique (2013: 29): “Irony exhibits an inclusive contrast, since it is triggered by an obvious and assumed transgression of quality. This infringement may directly affect what is said or may invert some of its systematic, normal inferences”.

- (11) *‘Como ejemplo, ha dicho que la gente no vaya a esquiar a los Alpes, sino a Sierra Nevada. Sí, claro, con la crisis estamos todos pensando en ir a esquiar.’*
 (‘As an example, he has told people not to go skiing in the Alps. Yes, **of course**, in the middle of the crisis we’re all thinking about going skiing.’)
 (Andreu Buenafuente, *Made in Spain*, SD, 23)

Despite the two agreement markers (*sí, claro*), the only possible interpretation of the jab line in Example (11) is the opposite of what has been said, <people cannot go skiing>, which consequently contributes to the line of argument according to which skiing is an expensive sport.

Other examples confirm the fact that, despite acting as a humorous marker, *claro* keeps its epistemic value and shows the presuppositions shared between Buenafuente and his addressees:

- (12) *‘Ayer, una señora de 92 años fue detenida en Barajas con cuatro kilos de cocaína encima. Pesaba más la cocaína que ella. Claro, no puedes decir que es para consumo propio. A lo mejor la señora dijo que era harina, para rebozar pechugas.’*
 (‘A 92-year-old lady was arrested at Barajas [airport] yesterday with four kilos of cocaine on her. The cocaine weighed more than her. **Of course**, you can’t say it’s for your own consumption. Maybe the lady said it was flour for battering chicken breasts.’)
 (Andreu Buenafuente, *Presupuestos (Budgets)*, SD, 155–156)

In Example (12), *claro* helps understand the jab line (“**Of course**, you can’t say it’s for your own consumption”) as a epistemic framework where humor is developed.

Therefore, *claro* reveals itself to be a direct evidentiality epistemic marker in our corpus. Even though this conventionalized use appears relatively often in the corpus, the utilization of *claro* as an ironic-humorous evidentiality marker seems much more frequent and prominent. In these contexts, *claro* is inserted in the humorous conclusion that follows the serious argument; it changes the inferences towards a negative interpretation; and it presents a figurative meaning albeit always related to the basic meaning.

7. A semantic-pragmatic framework of evidentials and evidentiality in humorous monologues?

Various evidentiality procedures in Andreu Buenafuente’s humorous monologues have been separately analyzed so far. It now seems more than advisable to reflect on the use of such evidentiality procedures in these monologues. As highlighted by Peterson et al. (2010), “the analysis of evidentials is a challenge for syntax, semantics and pragmatics.” Since the analysis presented here has revolved around

the utilization of evidential elements in the humorous monologue genre, a reflection on the pragmatic use of these elements becomes quite appropriate. Thus, on the basis of the three major themes in evidentiality pragmatics described by Peterson *et al.* (2010, p. 4), the discussion is organized as follows:

1. How is evidentiality used to code perspectival information?
2. How is evidentiality used at the speech act level?
3. How is evidentiality used to implicate another meaning?

Therefore, the evidentials analyzed are described below as elements signaling the evaluative information, as elements acting at the speech act level, and as elements implying other meanings such as irony.

1. Evidentials code the evaluative predicate. “Evidentials are [actually] tools for speakers to anchor information in particular discourse contexts not only to the source but also to their assessment of that source” (Mushin, 2000, p. 928). This evaluative nature becomes visible as a contextual meaning in some of the contexts examined. Although it is true that Spanish has coded some of its evidentials to express the source of information, as happens with *al parecer* (‘apparently’) or *por lo visto* (‘apparently’) (Ruiz-Gurillo, 2004, 2006; González Ramos, 2005; Cornillie, 2007; RAE, 2010; Martín Zorraquino, 2010; Kotwika, 2013; Estellés & Albelda, 2014), those analyzed here are characterized by lower degrees of grammaticalization. *Según dicen*, *dicen que* and *se ve que* identify the source information in the same way, though. In a number of contexts, for instance (2) and (5), *según este estudio* and *dicen que* can contextually introduce the evaluation of the jab line or of the punch line. On other occasions, *se ve que* expresses inferred evidentiality as an evaluation of the facts, as illustrated in (7) and (8). More precisely, *se ve que* in (7) is inserted inside the argumentative body in an evaluative passage of the monologue, which favors its use as an evaluative element introducing the jab line of the fragment. It is likewise worth highlighting their polyphonic function within the evaluative processes of these evidentials, insofar as some of them appear in dialogical passages, as is the case of *claro* in (9) and (10).
2. Evidentials cause an effect on the illocutionary act. Both those which are inserted in the introduction to the news item and those appearing in the argumentative body or in the conclusion of the monologue prove useful to the monologist when it comes to indicating the source of information from which he starts, either specifically (*según el Instituto Nacional de Estadística*) or generally (*según dicen*, *dicen que*). Since the actual reference to the source of information constitutes a significant argumentative mechanism (Bermúdez, 2002), the use of such procedures confers upon the monologist a certain

degree of authority concerning what he develops in the monologue and favors his ethos¹⁴ as a comedian (Greenbaum, 1999; Ruiz-Gurillo, 2012). Having reached this level where the source of information is specified, he resorts to other evidentiality elements that mark the inference of certain information (*se ve que*) or uses the direct evidential *claro*, mainly in the argumentative body. These elements help to guide the jab lines or the punch line, thus acquiring an argumentative function as elements that collaborate in persuasion. More specifically, they guide the audience towards certain perlocutionary effects typical of humor, including laughter, mockery or fun (Ruiz-Gurillo, 2013).

3. “Evidentials are used to convey other meanings such as mirativity, metaphor and irony” (Peterson et al., 2010: 3). Irony, which leads to the field of negation (Gilmour et al., 2010; Rodríguez-Rosique, 2009; Santamaría, 2009), may use various evidentiality markers, amongst which *claro* stands out in our corpus. Based on its polyphonic utilizations, as in (10), *claro* is inserted in an ironic context where it helps to guide the proposition towards negative inferences. The use of irony in contexts such as the one found in (11) facilitates the humorous effects of the jab lines or of the punch line.

Therefore, it can be argued that the evidentials detected in this corpus act as relevant elements in the evaluation, the polyphony, the argumentation, the persuasion, the irony, and the humorous effects sought by the monologist. Nevertheless, a distinction should be drawn between those presenting more core semantic uses of evidentiality typical of other texts, such as *según dicen* or *dicen que*, and those which acquire humorous functions as markers. Such is the case of the inferential value identified in *se ve que* and the ironic-humorous values conveyed by *claro*.

In the light of these ideas, a variety of types can be distinguished from their structural appearance in the monologue and from the functions carried out therein. Firstly, there are the indirect reportative evidentials (*según dicen*, *dicen que*) that show a conventionalized meaning in the corpus, which is present across other genres too. This meaning can be found in the presentation of the news or in the argumentative body. When they appear in the body of the news item, it is possible for them to contextually collaborate in the humorous evaluation of the jab line. Secondly, there is the evidential *se ve que*, which has two distinct structurally marked functions: the first one is of an indirect reportative nature; and the

14. According to Greenbaum (1999), stand-up comedy and comic narrative are based on rhetoric for the purpose of persuading the audience to adopt a specific ideological position. Thus, the comedian uses *ethos* to develop and maintain the comic authority, and to make it reliable and credible; his *kairos* to adapt to the diverse circumstances and to the public; his *natural talent* to reel off the monologues; and *theoria* and *praxis*, which facilitate his training and learning tasks.

second one has an indirect inferential character. In this second case, *se ve que* frequently appears as a humorous evidentiality marker. Finally, the direct evidential *claro*, which mainly appears in the argumentative body, can behave as a humorous evidentiality marker in ironic-humorous contexts. Table 4 summarizes the functions of evidentials in Buenafuente's humorous monologues:

Table 4. Functions of evidentials in Buenafuente's humorous monologues

Evidentials	Evidentiality functions	Convencionalized meaning	Pragmatic functions	Preferred insertion in humorous plot	Humorous functions
<i>Según...</i>	<i>INDIRECT</i> <i>REPORTATIVE</i> <i>EVIDENTIAL</i>	Information source	(evaluation)	<i>Thesis</i>	
<i>Según dicen</i>	<i>INDIRECT</i> <i>REPORTATIVE</i> <i>EVIDENTIAL</i>	Information source		<i>Thesis</i>	
<i>Dicen que</i> [it's said that]	<i>INDIRECT</i> <i>REPORTATIVE</i> <i>EVIDENTIAL</i>	Information source	(evaluation)	<i>Thesis/</i> <i>argumentative</i> <i>body</i>	
<i>Se ve que</i> [lit. it is seen that] [lit. it is seen that]	<i>INDIRECT</i> <i>REPORTATIVE</i> <i>EVIDENTIAL</i>	Information source		<i>Thesis</i>	
<i>Se ve que</i> [apparently]	<i>INDIRECT</i> <i>INFERRED</i> <i>EVIDENTIAL</i>	Inferred information	Evaluation Argumentation	<i>Argumentative</i> <i>body</i>	<i>Humorous</i> <i>marker</i>
<i>Claro</i> [of course]	<i>DIRECT</i> <i>ATTESTED</i> <i>EVIDENTIAL</i>	Information source	Epistemicity Polyphony	<i>Argumentative</i> <i>body</i>	
<i>Claro</i> [of course]			Negation-irony Argumentation Persuasion	<i>Argumentative</i> <i>body</i>	<i>Humorous</i> <i>marker</i>

8. Conclusions

The quantitative and qualitative analysis presented in this paper consequently allows the hypotheses posed to be refuted or confirmed:

1. The humorous genre (that is to say, the monologue and specifically the idiosyncratic features of Buenafuente's monologues) determines the functions that evidentials perform in those monologues.
2. These evidentials are integrated into the argumentative structure which characterizes the monologues by Buenafuente – thoroughly described in Ruiz-Gurillo (2013). Thus, they appear in the thesis, in the argumentative body or in the conclusion.
3. It is nevertheless impossible to differentiate various evidentiality strategies exclusively defined by their structural integration into the monologue (thesis, argumentative body and conclusion). This aspect must be complemented with the functions that they carry out in the corpus, which has made it possible to distinguish different trends: the evidentials of an indirect reportative nature (*según, según dicen, dicen que*) present this function as the main one, although they can contextually collaborate in the evaluation that introduces the jab line. The evidential *se ve que* has two distinct structurally marked uses: the first one (lit. 'it is seen that'), which has an indirect reportative character, and the second one ('apparently'), of an indirect inferential nature. In turn, *claro* shows a preference for appearing in the argumentative body (95.65%), which does not permit the aforesaid uses to be corroborated as a direct evidential or as a humorous marker. Also in the argumentative body, *claro* sometimes behaves as an ironic-humorous evidentiality marker.
4. One of the evidentiality strategies highlighted in this humorous genre consists of guiding humorous inferences; that is, acting as humorous evidentiality markers. In these cases, evidentials might introduce the jab line or the punch line, change the inferences, or present a figurative meaning. More precisely, *se ve que* conveys these values when it plays the role of an indirect inferential evidential. As for *claro*, this sometimes reveals itself as a humorous evidentiality marker guiding what is said towards ironic-negative interpretations.

The aspects analyzed here are only a sample of the functions carried out by evidentials in humorous texts such as Buenafuente's monologues and they show some frequency uses. The analysis of other monologues from other comedians, such as Eva Hache, David Guapo, Patricia Sornosa, Goyo Jiménez, etc., as well as a specific analysis of other humorous genres, e.g. jokes or parodies may broaden the scope of evidentials and evidentiality in humorous discourses. A deeper and more accurate quantitative results may also prove useful to confirm or refute the hypotheses that have been put forward here.

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Corpora

DY = Buena Fuente, Andreu. (2009). *Digo yo (Los monólogos de La Sexta)*. Barcelona: Planeta.

SD = Buena Fuente, Andreu. (2010). *Sigo diciendo (Los monólogos de La Sexta)*. Barcelona: Planeta.

HG = Buena Fuente, Andreu. (2011). *Hablar es gratis (Los monólogos de La Sexta)*. Barcelona: Planeta.

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Evidencialidad y humor en español: Acerca de los monólogos de Buenafuente

Resumen

El objetivo de este artículo es arrojar luz sobre los evidenciales y las funciones que desempeñan estos elementos en los monólogos que Andreu Buenafuente interpretó en español entre 2007 y 2011. En primer lugar, se proponen diversas hipótesis: (1) el género puede determinar las funciones pragmáticas de la evidencialidad; (2) los evidenciales se encuentran integrados en la estructura expositivo-argumentativa del monólogo; (3) pueden diferenciarse determinadas estrategias de evidencialidad en relación con su función estructural; (4) y una de las estrategias que dichos elementos de evidencialidad pueden desempeñar en los monólogos humorísticos se observa cuando actúan como marcas humorísticas de evidencialidad. En segundo lugar, se analizan ciertos evidenciales reportativos (Willet, 1988; Plungian 2001; Dendale & Tasmowski, 2001: 343) como *según*, *según dicen*, *dicen que* y *se ve que*, así como un evidencial directo atestiguado, *claro*. Tanto los análisis cuantitativos como cualitativos que se proponen sirven de base para confirmar las hipótesis propuestas y, en último lugar, para proponer un marco semántico

y pragmático en el que dar cuenta de las funciones de evidencialidad y de los evidenciales que aparecen en los monólogos humorísticos de Andreu Buenafuente. Por lo que se refiere al corpus analizado, está compuesto por 203 monólogos publicados en papel que proceden de los libros *Sigo diciendo* (2009), *Digo yo* (2010) y *Hablar es gratis* (2011).

Palabras clave: humor, evidenciales, monólogo humorístico

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