

### ***Según: A Space Builder into Mirativity***

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Evidentiality has been considered a grammatical category, which primarily encodes the information source (Aikhenvald). The study of the way in which evidentiality is coded across languages has attracted considerable attention among scholars, specially once evidential markers were recognized as a grammatical way of encoding the speaker's stance regarding the information being reported (Aikhenvald; Chafe; Chafe and Nichols). Different languages express the source of information in different ways; some languages encode evidentiality in grammar, while others do so through lexical forms, commonly known as evidential strategies. Spanish has been recognized as one of the languages in which evidentiality can be lexically encoded. This can be done through the word *según* 'according to', which has been considered as one of the many evidential strategies used to encode second hand information, either reported by others or learnt from another source (González Vergara). This is illustrated in (1) where the speaker's judgment is based on census information:

- (1) Según el censo 2002, el 26,8% de los hogares chilenos tiene conexión a internet con banda ancha. (La Tercera. 10 de septiembre de 2008).  
'According to **the 2002 census**, 26.8% of Chilean households has broadband internet' (González Vergara, 150)

*Según* has been characterized as a *bona fide* evidential marker so long as "authors mean no less than their source of information" (Alonso-Almeida & Adams; Alonso-Almeida). In medical reports *según* refers "either to previous research or owned evidence" (Alonso-Almeida & Adams). This is nicely attested by (2):

- (2) *Según los resultados de dicho estudio*, el SM aumenta 4 veces el riesgo de nuevas complicaciones cardiovasculares.  
'According to the results of such study, the SM increases 4 times the risk of new heart complications'

Yet a more broad set of contexts, show that *según* has attained not only different types of evidential meanings but also further extensions that suggest a move towards mirativity. The evidential meaning of *según* can be extended to hearsay reports (3), and can also restrict the value of what is being conferred to the realm of a speech act participant (4), or, finally, it may even convey cases where some participant only pretends to do something, as in (5):

#### *Hearsay*

- (3) *Según se rumora* si no refinamos gasolina aquí/ ¿qué podemos hacer?  
'As rumors go, if we don't refine the gasoline here, what can we do?'

#### *Restrictive*

- (4) y le digo/ “bueno/ a ver/ *según* tú/ ¿cuánto vale tu libertad?”/¿sabes esto cuánto...?  
 ‘and I tell him, “well let’s see, *in your view*, how much does your freedom cost?” Do you know how much it costs?’

*Pretend*

- (5) y me ponía a leer/ *según* yo me ponía a leer/ ¡y empezaba!/ a deletrear así/ este/ de una en otra letra  
 ‘and I was reading, well *I was kind of reading* I started to spell the letters one by one’

The purpose of this paper is to offer a comprehensive account for *según*, both as a plain evidential marker and as pragmatic marker that questions the veracity of what is being conferred. We suggest that the pragmatic values for *según* are restricted and motivated by the content of its root meaning and, as determined by its content, it operates as a 'space builder' that mirrors the content of a preceding context. In section one, we propose a space builder account for the basic evidential meaning of *según*. In section two, we account for some loose and restrictive uses and other mirative extensions. Section three offers, by way of conclusion, some considerations about evidential strategies in Spanish.

#### I. *Según* as evidential marker

As already mentioned, *según* is a grammatical marker used to express evidential meaning that reproduces the content retrieved from some source of information (Alonso-Almeida & Adams; Alonso-Almeida; González Vergara). This core meaning evolves from Latin *secundare* ‘to second, to follow’ and as such it copies or emulates the content of some source taken as a trustworthy authority. Before *según* begins operating as an evidential marker, it has the meaning of 'acting according to established rules'. Prime examples of such value are (6) and (7):

- (6) Ahí arranca la acción dramática y se inicia la peripecia, *según* los cánones de la composición dramática. CREA. Prensa. 1996.  
 ‘That is where the drama starts and the vicissitude starts *according* to the canon’
- (7) Trabajar *según* los cánones establecidos  
 ‘To work *according* to the established canons’

In its base form, *según* introduces an adverbial clause referring to events that follow some established content, be it rules, norms or well-established procedures. Drama in (6) and work in (7) are to proceed according to the norms. We propose that *según* operates as a *space builder* (Fauconnier 1985), in which the content of the alternative space must fulfill the conditions of the referent space as represented in Figure 1. Following Fauconnier’s classic representations, each circle represents a mental space. The line from circle to circle represents that the two spaces are linked:

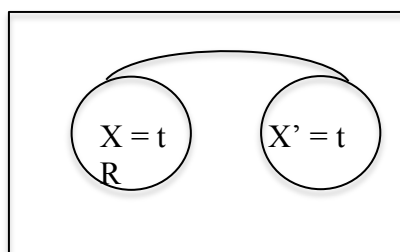


Figure 1. Basic pattern

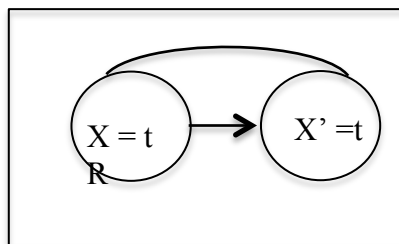
The space builder connects an *alternative space* to the *reference space* (R) such that X' is true as long as it follows the content of X in R. Work (X') in (7) is done following the canon (X in R). What is crucial about this meaning is that it establishes a schematic representation that sets the base for further developments. There is a set of causal relationships established among events. In the most obvious case, there is causal determinacy, as in (8) and (9):

- (8) El timbre de su voz cambiaba *según* las preguntas que me hacía  
 'Her voice pitch changed *depending on* the questions she asked me'
- (9) a veces voy cada ocho días/ dos veces por semana/ *según* como estén las ventas  
 'sometimes I go once a week, twice a week *depending on* how sales are going'

In (8) the type of question determines the pitch in her voice so much as in (9) success in sales determines the number of days to work. A more abstract type of causality encoded by *según* is the temporal one. A preceding event determines the occurrence of a following one, as in (10) and (11):

- (10) tendría que conformarse con cerveza. El calor aumentaba *según* el sol ascendía  
 'he would have to be content with a beer. The temperature increased *just as* the sun went up'
- (11) E:¿qué tanto/ no sabes?// o/ no sé/ ¿a qué [nivel?]  
 I:[pues] más bien poco a poco/ *según* va viéndose el problema  
 'E: how much you don't know? Or, I don't know, at what depth?  
 I: Well, little by little, *just as* we face the problem//as the problem arises'

The case of (10) links the temporal and the causal relationship. It is a causal fact that temperature raises as the sun goes up but in order for that to happen the movement of the sun must precede the temperature increase. The sequential effect is more evident in (11) where knowledge about the problem increases step by step as we search and find each piece of information. We suggest that this is simply an elaboration of the basic schema where X' is true as it follows the determinacies of X in the reference space. This is illustrated in Figure 2:



**Figure 2.** Causal determinacies

The arrow in Figure 2 only elaborates the causal relationship between the two events. All other components match the basic pattern. We may now address the issue of evidential *según* as it operates in precisely the same way only in the dominion of discourse and communication: whatever is reported is based on previous attested information. Among examples (1) and (2) we find other illuminating examples:

*Documents*

- (12) ...o sea/ que se murieron/ bastantes gentes/ bueno bastante es decirlo// según ahí dice que se murieron como unas diez  
 ‘...so a lot of people died, well, just to say something, según it says that ten people died’

*Third Party*

- (13) ya este/ sabemos que es una banda salvadoreña” según él/ dice \_\_\_\_\_ “¿hablaban como los de Chiapas?” “sí/ así hablaban”  
 ‘we already know that it is a Salvadoran gang según he says “they spoke like they were from Chiapas” “yes, that’s how they talked”’

Notice that, as in the case of medical reports (Alonso-Almeida & Adams 2012), reference is made to either documents (12) or people whose authority is not under scrutiny (13). What is reported is taken at face value. As in Figure 1, all properties of X’ correspond to those of X. The relationship is not a causal one. *Según* simply repeats the information of X conveyed in the reference space and it is the fact that the source of information is trustworthy that corroborates the veracity of the information itself. In the same way that we may have documents as reliable sources, we may also have institutions, as in (14), and even more reliable are cases where *según* confers shared knowledge, as in (15):

- (14) cuando estuve en Aseguradora Hidalgo/ me/ me enfermé de las/ según me habían informado que tenía yo tres discos  
 ‘when I worked at Hidalgo Insurance Company, I got, *according to what they had informed me*, that I had three cervical disks’
- (15) y en realidad/ ¡jella!/ según se sabe ahora/ fue informante de/ de Martín Luis Guzmán  
 ‘And really, it was her! *According to what is known* now, she was Martín Luis Guzmán’s informer’

The basic evidential value of *según* fully corresponds to the semantic content of the lexical form now taken into the sphere of discourse. *Según* changes from the dominion of actual events and actions to that of discourse. This is a case of dominion shift that preserves the schematic representation of the base form entirely. Further developments diminishing the truthfulness of the reported assertion are analyzed in the following section.

### I.1 Questioning truthfulness. Diffuse source

There are two main forms in which the veracity of what is being conveyed can be called into question: the informational source may be under scrutiny or the validity of what is being said is restricted to a specific space. The most obvious form is the well-known case of “hearsay” where the trustworthiness of the informational source is not solid, since there is no one specific identifiable source. Examples of this type are highly common:

- (16) *Según se rumora* si no refinamos gasolina aquí/ ¿qué podemos hacer?  
‘*Según rumors go*, if we don’t refine the gasoline here, what can we do?’
- (17) E: qué mala/ qué mala suerte le tocó a este de la Madrid/ ¿no?  
I: pues sí/ con esas dos desgracias/ pero bueno ahí se vio/ *según dicen*/ ¿no?/ la solidaridad del pueblo// ¿no?/ ¡todos! tratando de cooperar  
‘E: What bad luck De la Madrid had, no?  
I: well with those two tragedies, but, well, there you could see, *según they say*, the solidarity of the people, couldn't you? Everybody! Trying to help’

In the case of (16) the validity of the information is questioned lexically as *según* introduces the verb *se rumora* ‘to rumor’. As such, *según* only connects two propositions. The case of (17) is however more typical since *según* introduces *decir* ‘say’ as in other examples; nonetheless, in this case the third person plural is a generic plural form, for which no particular illocutionary subject is to be identified. Lacking a responsible source, the information is to be questioned. An alternative way to encode non-identifiable sources is to use the neuter pronoun *esto/eso* ‘this/that’ as in (18-19):

- (18) y *según esto*/ esta mujer/ ya ves que es delegada ahí en Cuauhtémoc// *según ella*/ sus planes son// quitar el/ el/ el campo  
‘And *según that*, this woman, you know that she is the mayor in Cuauhtémoc, *según her*, her plans are to close the soccer field’
- (19) sí/ *según esto*/ ¿eh?/ y luego vas y te los pones en puntos por ejemplo en puntos de chacra/ como es el estómago  
‘yes, *según that*, right? and then you go and you put them in chakra points, as the stomach’

*Esto* is an indefinite anaphora referring back to some previous space where someone must have uttered something that is retrieved in current discourse. The source of information is, thus, diffuse. Indefiniteness of third plural and of *esto/eso* determines the lack of reliability of what is being reported. This is represented in Figure 3:

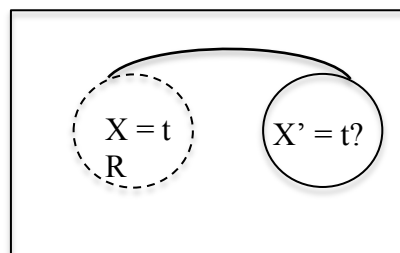


Figure 3. Hearsay representation

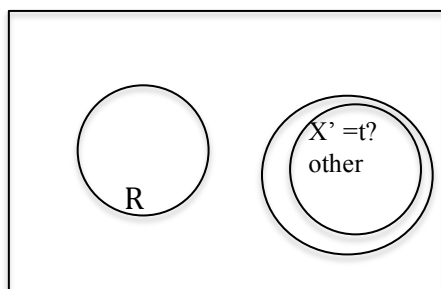
The lack of definiteness of the source of information is represented by the dotted circle. While the reference and the alternative space are still connected, the truthfulness of the information conferred is questioned (t?) as the source is not clearly identified. An alternative way to lose veracity is restricting the scope of predication. This is analyzed in the following section.

## II. Restricting validity

Veracity can also be questioned via restriction. Since Spanish is a pro-drop language, the use of overt pronouns must convey specific pragmatic functions. This is precisely the case for *según*. The use of overt pronouns can correspond to identifying a legal source in order to validate the veracity of what is being reported. This has been the case for the basic evidential uses described in section I. There is however an alternative function for overt subject pronouns, which is to restrict the validity of what has been reported to the scope of that specific pronoun, excluding everybody else. Clear cases of restrictive third person can be seen in (20-21):

- (20) vivía en un lugar que se le/ muy/ muy bueno/ *según ellos*/ pero era la cosa más espantosa  
 ‘he lived in a place that they thought was really good, *según them*, but it was awful’
- (21) que él/ tiene algunos conocimientos de/ de ciertas/ teorías que *según él* ha estudiado de este Rod Steiner’  
 ‘That he has some knowledge of / of some theories that *según him* he has studied from this guy Rod Steiner’

In both cases whatever is being reported is only true for the people being referred to, i.e. *ellos* or *él*. In (20), the house was ugly in reality, but it was beautiful only for “them” and in (21) whether “he” actually studied with Steiner remains to be proved. The content of the *según* phrase is not part of reality and it is not a report from reality brought into an alternative space, thus pronouns restrict the interpretation as valid only for some other person. Figure 3 captures such representation:



**Figure 4.** Restrictive 3rd person

The clause headed by *según* only belongs to a restricted space, the space of a third person (others). This space is no longer connected to the reference space and excludes not only the hearer and the speaker, but also all other people that are not covered by the scope of the pronoun. Thus, the house is ugly for speaker, hearer and anybody else, except for *ellos*, the people the pronoun refers to anaphorically in the context. Nothing precludes having restrictions over the hearer and the speaker with quite similar effects. Second person pronouns also restrict the validity of the hearer's claims, as it is shown in (22) and (23):

- (22) le digo “bueno/ entonces/ ¿qué es un proyecto para ti?// o sea/ ¿cuáles son las necesidades que tú debieras apoyar *según* tú?”  
 ‘I tell her “well then what do you think is a project? What are the needs that you think you should support *según* you?”’
- (23) y le digo/ “bueno/ a ver/ *según* tú/ ¿cuánto vale tu libertad?/ ¿sabes esto cuánto...?/  
 ‘and I tell him, “well let’s see, *según* you how much does your freedom cost? Do you know how much it costs?’

Common to these examples is the presence of implicit questioning by the speaker about the stance of the hearer. Whatever the hearer holds is valid only for him, not for anybody else. The same is true for first person pronouns, since validity is restricted to the speaker only, as in (24-25):

- (24) *Según* yo nadie (sic) se daba cuenta/ no (risa)/ y nace la niña/ ¡en octubre!  
 ‘*Según* I, nobody knew it...no (laugh) and the girl was born in October’
- (25) porque/ *según* yo / los hombres no se meten a la cocina porque sus mamás no los dejan  
 ‘because *según* I, (in my view) men do not get into the kitchen because their moms don’t let them’

The girl in (24) was fooling herself wearing a baggy sweater to hide her pregnancy. In her view nobody saw what actually everybody could tell. In (29) the speaker manifests his traditional views about Mexican society, views that are exclusively his. This is a bridging context, as it not only shows a restrictive, but also an attenuative metalinguistic use. The speaker is showing his view in an apologetic manner. Using the

first person expresses his awareness that not everybody holds the same viewpoint. There is thus an extension from the restrictive use, as “valid only for me” to a pragmatic marker of attenuation, where the pragmatic strength of an assertion is diminished. More evident examples of this fact are in (26-27):

- (26) Entonces / lo que tienen que hacer/ *según yo*/ es ponerlo a/ a repartir cosas  
 ‘So what you have to do, *según I*, is to have him handing things around’
- (27) I: o sea no tenías derecho a// a cambiar la estructura/ [de]de las casas  
 E: ¿por qué?  
 I: pues/ *según yo entiendo*/ así como nos explicaron// porque/ estas planchas/ la plancha ...  
 ‘I: So you didn’t have the right to change the house structure  
 E: why?  
 I: well, *según I understand*, as they explained it to us because, those slabs, the slab...’

From (26) it can be seen that the strength of the assertion, in fact an indirect command, is diminished to make it sound like a simple suggestion. In (27) the speaker is about to give an explanation and in order to shed her/his responsibility, s/he restricts the value of her/his viewpoint and gives credit to what has been explained to her/him. The evolution from restrictive first person to attenuative is expected. Things restricted to the sphere of the speaker are less valuable than things restricted to the second and third persons and even less so than things accepted in the world of shared knowledge. By inference, viewpoints that may not be shared by others are even lower in the scale of acceptance. The restrictive use then extends to situations where the illocutionary strength of the speaker is diminished, as in (26). The effects of restrictives to speech-act participants are captured in Figure 5:

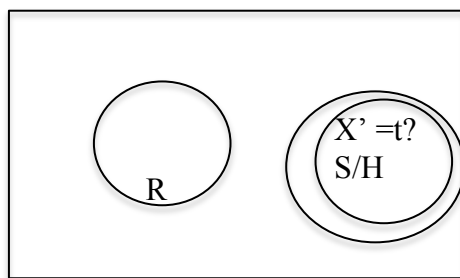


Figure 5. Restrictive > attenuative

The use of restrictive *según* has an even more interesting extension. These are cases where things are totally unreal, i.e. they cannot be connected to the space of reality. To the extent that things happen exclusively in the speaker or hearer’s dominion things need not be real. People can pretend to do things so long as there is a first (28) or second (29) restrictive pronoun:

- (28) y me ponía a leer/ *según yo* me ponía a leer/ ¡y empezaba!/ a deletrear  
 <~deletriar> así/ este/ de una en otra letra



‘and I was reading, well I was *según* I reading I started to spell the letters one by one’

- (29) I: [porque haz de cuenta] que *según* tú estás lavando a/ a los muertitos  
 E: si uno se [baña]  
 ‘I: because imagine that, *según* you are washing the dead spirits  
 E: if one takes a shower’

On one case, the man cannot read however he pretends to do so; in the other, the participant pretends to wash the dead people’s bodies (or their spirits) as she washes her own body. As long as it is restricted to the speech act participants, the possibility of creating different kinds of reality has no boundaries. We can see from Figure 6 that pretending is simply an extension of a restrictive interlocutor use:

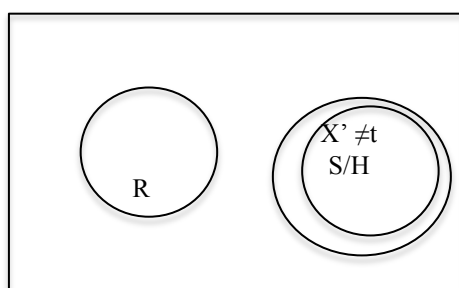


Figure 6. Pretend

Crucially, the idea that clauses headed by *según* are not real is correct only as long as the event is calculated from the referent space R. Nothing precludes the hearer or the speaker to say that these acts are real and they are in their own space. These meanings are obtained to the extent that pronouns operate as restrictors for the referred event. Interestingly enough this use of *según* overlaps with the pretend meaning of *dizque* (*dizque trabajaba de noche* ‘he *dizque* worked at night’, *dizque éramos amigos* ‘we were *dizque* friends’) where the idea of pretending is stronger and can even be extended to imaginary games (*dizque éramos bomberos* ‘we were *dizque* firefighters’). Just like *dizque*, *según* evolves from an evidential reportative into a mirative marker (De la Mora & Maldonado; Miglio). Yet the case of *dizque* covers a more ample set of false and pretend meanings that are only starting to emerge in *según*.

The analysis presented so far shows how *según* has undergone a process of semantic attenuation by which the basic pattern of following a previous model has lost some of its properties. The type of elements with which it combines shows fewer and fewer restrictions. First, only documents and trustable sources could operate as reliable sources. Then, things move from well defined to very diffuse sources and then, the source is reduced to speech act participants. The trustworthiness “feature” of *según* became dubious, as sources turned vague or restricted to the scope of some participant exclusively. Such restrictions licensed events to become unreal, leading the way towards mirativity.

There is an even further development, a move where the conferred information is seen as not true. This is obtained by changing the scope of *según* to a VP or an NP. Here *según* overlaps again with *dizque* as it questions the veracity of the phrase, over which it has scope. The following examples illustrate this point:

- (30) bueno/ el señor/ *según* era mi papá  
‘That man, *según*, was my father’
- (31) I: ...te vendan cosas piratas y la delegación te de un permiso/ para que vendas esas cosas piratas... o sea ¿cómo te explicas eso? no y es que *según* están combatiendo eso  
‘they sell illegal things and the council gives you a permit to sell those illegal things. How can you explain that? No, and they are *según* fighting against that’

While still assuming the existence of some unidentified source, *según* questions the veracity of the phrase it heads. In (30) it is clear that the referred man was not his father, in (31) they are not really fighting corruption they are actually participating in it. Now the case of (32) is even more interesting because *según* has syntactic scope over the VP *avientan* ‘throw’ but actually questions the NP *rollo de billetes* ‘roll of bills’ for the roll only has one bill outside and plain paper inside:

- (32) qué no ves que hacen eso y/ y *según* avientan un rollo de billetes/ que ni es un rollo de billetes/ nada más es el que está encima  
‘Don’t you see that they do that and they *según* throw a roll of bills, that is not a roll of bills, only the first one is a bill’

The ‘questioning veracity’ function is by now so established that the marker needs not be adjacent to the element it questions. The whole scene is marked as being false in some respect and the precise element being questioned is left for the speaker to figure out. Since the robbers actually throw the “roll of bills”, the only element to question is the NP. This suggests again a behavior similar to that of *dizque*, which questions the actual element it has scope over, downplaying its original reportative evidential functions. A similar phenomenon has been documented in Finnish (Nordlun & Pekkarinen), in which the stance adverbial *muka* originally ‘as if, supposedly, allegedly’, has become a pragmatic particle used to indicate a speaker’s dubitative stance.

The expansion to cover questioning functions suggests again an overlap with *dizque* where the quotative evidential functions leave way to more mirative ones. In these last cases, there is not even a diffuse source of information backing up the content of the clause headed by *según*. The reportative evidential functions become totally transparent (Langacker). Yet the construction inherits the base function of introducing new information to the extent that connection to a source dies out and the connector reduces to a pragmatic marker where the speaker manifests disbelief. These data, along with our previous analysis of *dizque* (De la Mora & Maldonado), suggest that mirativity in Spanish can, in some cases, be linked to evidentiality, as opposed to DeLancey’s proposal that mirativity is independent from evidentiality (DeLancey 1997).

## Conclusions

In this paper we have tried to show that *según* has expanded its range of uses from a plain evidential to a pragmatic marker of disbelief moving towards mirativity (DeLancey 2001). *Según* is not only an evidential marker repeating information from some source, but it also covers a wide range of meanings that involve an attenuation process from total to no trustworthiness of the content of the information retrieved from

the source. We have suggested that the semantic configuration of the lexical form sets the base for it to operate as a space builder (Fauconnier). In the alternative space *según* introduces information retrieved from a source that can be trusted. From this basic configuration two processes unfold. Either the source backing up the validity of the conveyed information loses the properties that make it trustworthy, where the extreme consists of the subjective view of the conceptualizer (Langacker 1990, Maldonado 2010), or the source of information is made explicit via overt pronouns in a pro-drop language to drastically restrict the validity of the sentence being conferred to the dominion of a specific participant. In either case, veracity is called into question, but by different degrees. In the extreme case the meaning of "pretend" or total falseness is portrayed to suggest the presence of mirativity. *Según* does not display full mirative functions since it does not portray meanings of counter-expectations or surprise as initially defined by DeLancey (2001). However, crossing paths with *dizque*, *según* leans towards mirativity, as the lack of veracity characterizing miratives shows up as a consistent property of all extensions from the evidential quotative marker. The coincidence of *dizque* and *según* evolving from quotatives to markers of disbelief, suggests a cognitive path where sharing information is more and more subject to scrutiny. The truth of the information becomes weaker, as it shifts from space to space within the world of different interlocutors.

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