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## Understanding the development of evidentiality comprehension through intonation in Majorcan Catalan

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It is assumed that by the age of 2-3, children have already acquired intonational differences related to basic semantic distinctions (assertions vs. polar questions, polar questions vs. wh-questions, etc.). However, there is still limited knowledge about the acquisition of intonational contrasts related to constructions acquired beyond the age of 4. In languages like English, Catalan, Spanish, or French, intonation can indicate the speaker's degree of certainty (*epistemicity*) about the propositional content. It has also been shown that prosody can be a strategy for marking evidential distinctions. For example, Vanrell et al. (2017) demonstrated that polar questions characterized by the particle *que* and the L+H\* L% contour in Catalan express that the speaker has directly perceived the information encoded in the proposition. While many studies explore the early acquisition of evidentiality marked through lexicon or morphology, the acquisition of prosodic markers of evidentiality is less studied.

This paper investigated children's developmental paths regarding the comprehension of evidential marking through intonation in Majorcan Catalan, specifically focusing on directly perceived evidence. We also aimed to understand the role of conceptual development in the comprehension of intonational evidentiality. To achieve this, we explore children's general source-marking ability and their ability to make inferences based on directly perceived information. Data were collected through four tasks involving a total of 90 children aged 3-7. The results reveal that children make gains in source monitoring and evidence-based inferences during this developmental window. However, it is not until the age of 7 that a significant improvement (69% correct responses) in the ability to detect evidentiality is observed, which aligns with previous research (Papafragou et al. 2007, i.a.).

**References:** • Papafragou, A., Li, P., Choi, Y. & Han, Ch. (2007). Evidentiality in language and cognition. *Cognition* 103(2), 253-299. • Vanrell, M.M., Armstrong, M.E., Prieto, P. (2017). Experimental evidence for the role of intonation in evidential marking. Intonational constraints on pragmatic inferences: Theoretical and experimental investigations. In: Prieto, P. & Escandell-Vidal, V. (Eds.), Special issue, *Language and Speech* 60(2), 242-259.