

# Evidentiality and epistemic mood in Lakondê

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## 1 Introduction

Lakondê represents one of the dialects of Northern Nambikwára, which itself belongs to the larger Nambikwára linguistic family. Already the earliest sources locate the Nambikwára groups in central western Brazil in an area near the Bolivian border, where they still live today. The Lakondê's first official contact with the non-indigenous society occurred during the first half of the twentieth century. Intertribal fighting with the enemy group Cinta-Larga (Tupí-Mondé Family) and with other Northern Nambikwára subgroups, as well as illnesses brought into the region by non-Indians since the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century progressively reduced the number of the Lakondê Indians and eroded their autonomy as a people.<sup>1</sup> Today, the remaining Lakondê total seven individuals; only one woman still has knowledge of her mother tongue.

The Nambikwára family is considered one of the “smaller families of the Southern Amazon” (Rodrigues 1986: 73) and consists of three languages that are mutually unintelligible: the Northern language, with five dialects/languages (Lakondê, Latundê, Mamaindê, Nagarotê and Tawandê); the Southern language, with eleven dialects/languages; and Sabanê, which has no dialectal division. The extent of intelligibility among the dialects within a language group is variable. No accurate studies on the degree of distance/proximity between them are available.

Until the first half of the 1990s, only two languages of the Nambikwára family had been studied systematically, by members of the Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL): Kitãulhu, of the Southern Nambikwára group, was studied by the couple Barbara and Menno Kroeker as well as by Lowe (Barbara Kroeker 1972, 1982; Menno Kroeker 1963*a*, 1963*b*, 1963*c*, 2001; Lowe

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<sup>1</sup> See Telles (1997-2001).

1999) and Mamaindê, of the Northern Nambikwára group, by Kingston and Eberhard (Kingston 1974, 1976, 1979; Eberhard 1995). Early proposals for the classification of the Nambikwára languages can be found in Roquette-Pinto (1935: 213-14); Lévi-Strauss (1948: 7-13); Rondon & de Faria (1948: 27-73); Loukotka (1968: 96-99); Price & Cook (1969); and Price (1978).

In 1998, a large-scale research program was started involving the phonological and grammatical description of the most severely endangered languages of the Nambikwára family: the Latundê and Lakondê dialects of the Northern Nambikwára branch (Telles, 2002), Katitãulhu (also known as Sararé) of the Southern Nambikwára group (Borella, in prep.), and the Sabanê language (Antunes 2004). The three studies form an integrated project, *The Nambikwára Indians, a description of their languages and of their cultural identity* (Wetzels 1999), which also includes a study of comparative and reconstructive (Proto-)Nambikwára (Costa & Wetzels 2005), and an anthropological study tracing the history of the peoples whose languages are studied in the project, with some discussion of the causes of language loss (Reesink 2005).

From the point of view of ‘morphotactic’ typology, Lakondê is a polysynthetic language, characterized by words that can take a large number of morphemes. The marking of the main participants is obligatory within the verb complex. Part of the verbal morphology is of the active-stative type. The verbal and nominal morphology are predominantly suffixal. The large number of different suffixes that can be attached to the verb often allows it to function as an integrated sentence, so that no other constituents, such as external arguments, adjuncts and complements, are necessary. The canonical order is SOV. There are four lexical classes, two of which are open (nouns and verbs), and the other two are closed (adverbs and interrogative pronouns). Among these word classes, the verb is morphologically by far the most complex.

Semantically, there are both inflectional and non-inflectional verbal affixes. The inflectional suffixes codify the causative functions, and those of person (subject/direct and indirect objects), evidentiality, aspect, tense, mood, and conjunctives. The grammatical affixes that codify the directional, agentive, benefactive/goal/source (applicative) and causative functions are derivational and occur closest to the verbal root.

Table 1. The structure of the verbal word in Lakondê.

(Directional)	<b>Derivational Prefixes</b>	<b>Theme</b>	<b>Verb</b>
(Agentive / Resultative)			
(Incorporation of body parts )			
<b>ROOT</b>			
(Benefactive - target-Source)	<b>Derivational Suffixes Incorporated roots</b>		
(Causative)			
(Root)			
(Incorporated Nominal Root/ Classifier)			
(Verbal Classifiers )			
Object	<b>Argument Status</b>		
(Number)			
(Comitative)			
(Reflexive)			
(Locative)			
(Demonstrative)	<b>Adverbial Status</b>		
(Negation)			
(Temporal)			
(Internal motivation)			
(Intensifier/Emphatic)			
(Suppositive)			
(Intensifier/emphatic)			
(Inclusive)			
(Veracity)			
(Desiderative)			
(Permissive)			
(Dubitative)			
(Iminentive)			
(Admonitive)			
(Exhortative)			
(Potential)			
(Completive)			
Future Tense	<b>Inflectional Suffixes</b>		
Subject			
Evidentials			
Aspect			
Past Tense			
Mood: Epistemic, Deontic			

Another category of affixes, which have more lexical content and are used optionally, is formed by the prefixes that denote parts of the body, by the incorporated verbal roots linked to the main verb functioning as aspect or negative clauses, and by the classifier suffixes. All of these morpheme classes operate in a productive manner to create the verbal word. Among the verbal affixes, there are still other suffixes that take on the function of verbal modifiers, and as locational, demonstrative, evidential, modal and aspect indicators. Among these, some are transcategorial, i.e. they can also serve as suffixes for the noun class. The structure of the verbal word is visualised in Table 1 above.

According to Aikhenvald (2003:1): “Every language has some way of making reference to the source of information; but not every language has grammatical evidentiality”. With respect to this particular category, Aikhenvald considers that “evidentiality is a category in its own right, and not a subcategory of epistemic or some other modality, or of tense-aspect”, and that “[a] number of grammatical categories, such as conditional mood or perfective aspect, can each acquire a secondary evidential-like meaning without directly relating to the source or information. Such extensions of grammatical categories to evidential-like meanings will be referred to as ‘evidentiality strategies’ ” (p. 2).

As we will argue in the sections to follow, the evidentiality category in Lakondê presents differences in form and function and is divided into two distinct subsystems. The basic semantic distinction between the two subsystems corresponds to second-hand and first-hand information. The formal difference between these categories is expressed by the fact that they belong to different affixal classes: whereas the suffixes that express second-hand information are derivational in nature, occupying a slot close to the verb root, the ones that refer to first-hand information are inflectional, occurring at the end of the verbal complex. The first subsystem has an exclusively evidential function. The suffixes in this category are optional, and their realization is conditioned by the communicative intentions of the speaker. This subsystem therefore does not correspond with the requirement of obligatory occurrence proposed by Aikhenvald (2002) as a general property of evidential categories. The other subsystem in Lakondê is inflectional in nature and therefore obligatory. The inflectional evidential categories function as part of a series of cumulative morphs: single formatives that simultaneously mark evidentiality, tense/aspect and mood. By their nature, the suffixes that belong to this category should be classified as an ‘evidentiality strategy’, according to Aikhenvald (2003: 2).

## 2 The system of evidentiality in Lakondê

Of the two evidential (sub)systems of Lakondê, the first contains the suffixes that occupy a medial position within the word. Lakondê grammar does not require the use of any of the suffixes that belong to this class. The second subsystem is part of the inflectional morphology of the verb. Each well-formed sentence must contain one of the suffixes of this subsystem, which occur in word-final position.

From a semantic perspective, the first subsystem refers to information obtained by way of another person (hearsay). It contains two elements, which display the semantic values of ‘auditory source (hearsay)’ and ‘quote’. The second subsystem specifies, for first-hand information, whether it is based on visual or non-visual (sensory) evidence, whether it results from sensorial inference, and whether it is considered reliable, possible or supposed on the part of the speaker. The two subsystems are described in subsections 2.1 and 2.2 below, together with a description of the relationship between the different evidential categories. Section 3 presents the conditions for the interaction of the two subsystems with the categories of tense/aspect and with different clause types.

### 2.1 Second-hand information

There are two suffixes with an evidential function, which are positioned inside the verbal complex: *-<sup>1</sup>se?* and *-setaw-*.

#### 2.1.1 Auditory source (hearsay)

The suffix *-<sup>1</sup>se?* is used to let the listener know that the given information comes from an auditory source (second hand). The semantic value of this form corresponds to ‘I have heard’ or ‘somebody said to me’, without revealing the identity of the person from whom the information originated. The examples below contain constructions in which this evidential morpheme is used. In this type of construction, the evidential morpheme is relevant because it expresses how the speaker obtained the information he is expressing, without the source of the information being relevant within the communicative context.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> The following abbreviations are used in this paper: <sup>a</sup> (superscript) = high pitch, A = agentive, ANT = anterior, AN = animate, ASS = assertive, AUD = auditive, BEN = benefactive, CL = classifier, COM = comitative, CMPL = completive, CUR.EV = current evidentiality for both speaker and listener, D = dual number, DES = desiderative, DIR = directional, EMP = emphatic, EV = evidential, FUT = future, IMPF = imperfective, LOC = locative, M.EMP = mild emphatic, N.PROX = non-proximity to the referent, N.VIS =

- (1) *ã-<sup>1</sup>pat-ho<sup>1</sup>te-<sup>1</sup>ten-<sup>1</sup>seʔ-∅<sup>1</sup>tãn-hi*  
 A-leave-for.sb-DES-EV:AUD-3S-IMPF-NEU  
 ‘She is going to leave it for me, I heard.’
- (2) *'tu-ka-<sup>1</sup>hat-n-<sup>1</sup>ten-<sup>1</sup>seʔ-∅<sup>1</sup>tãn-hi*  
 get-Sou-not.have-2O-DES-EV:AUD-3S-IMPF-NEU  
 ‘He doesn’t want to get it from you, I heard.’
- (3) *ta<sup>1</sup>nũh-∅<sup>1</sup>seʔ-∅<sup>1</sup>tãn*  
 give-3O-EV:AUD-3S-IMPF  
 ‘She gave it to him, I heard.’

### 2.1.2 Quotative subsystem

The other suffix, *-setaw-*, functions as a quote. When the quotative morpheme is used, the person from whom the speaker obtained the information can either be identified or not, depending on the communicative purposes of the speaker. When the source is identified, the quotative morpheme functions as a proform, and the source (or) subject of information can be recovered by the listener either through the linguistic or the situational context. In these cases, the semantic content of the clause corresponds with ‘someone (identifiable) told me’, as in the following example.

- (4) *ta<sup>1</sup>wen    'teh-<sup>1</sup>naw    ta-<sup>1</sup>qjh-wi-setaw-<sup>1</sup>tãn*  
 woods    path-LOC    DIR-walk-1D-EV:QUO-IMPF  
 ‘Let’s walk to the path in the woods, someone (identifiable) told me.’

When the person from whom the information originated is known, he/she can coincide with the subject of the clause when the subject is human, as in:

- (5) *ho<sup>1</sup>te    ãn-∅-∅-setaw-<sup>1</sup>tãn*  
 monkey    kill-3O-3S-EV:QUO-IMPF  
 ‘He said that he (himself) killed the monkey.’
- (6) *'qjh    'tu-<sup>1</sup>tq-<sup>1</sup>ho-∅-setaw-<sup>1</sup>tãn*  
 go    get-joint.action/associated-AN/COM-3S-EV:QUO-IMPF  
 ‘She is going to get (something) with you, she herself said.’

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non-visual, NEG = negative, NEU = neuter, O = object, PL = plural, POS = possibillitive, PRES = present, PST = past, QUO = quotative, REF = referential, nominal suffix, S = subject, Sou = source, SUP = suppositive, VIS = visual, ∅ = zero morpheme and <sup>1</sup> = primary accent (before the accented syllable). Singular number is left unmarked.

When there is no co-reference between the person from whom the information originated and the subject of the reported information, either the subject of the reported information cannot be human or the reporter and the subject of the reported information cannot be identical.

- (7) *mãn-∅-setaw-<sup>1</sup>tãn-hi*  
 burn-3S-EV:QUO-IMPF-NEU  
 ‘The house burned, someone (identifiable) told me.’
- (8) *<sup>1</sup>qjh-ni-∅-setaw-<sup>1</sup>tãn-hi*  
 walk-arrive-3S-EV:QUO-IMPF-NEU  
 ‘She arrived, someone (identifiable) told me.’

If the source subject of the information is undetermined, the quote will have a semantic correlation of the type: ‘it is said (that) Noun Verb’. With this construction, the speaker avoids revealing the source subject of the information to the listener, intentionally or not. The examples in (9) and (10) below illustrate this type of construction.

- (9) *tq-<sup>1</sup>soh*                      *we<sup>1</sup>li-ka-<sup>1</sup>jaw-∅-setaw-<sup>1</sup>len*  
 I-grandfather              cure-BEN-be-3S-EV:QUO-IMPF  
 ‘My grandfather was cured.’ (it is said)
- (10) *wet-<sup>1</sup>nãw*                      *ta<sup>1</sup>wɛn-<sup>1</sup>naw*    *loh*    *sũn-∅-∅-setaw-<sup>1</sup>tãn*  
 child-PL                      woods-LOC    lynx    hit-3O-3S-EV:QUO-IMPF  
 ‘The children in the woods, the lynx attacked them.’ (it is said)

### 2.1.3 Periphrastic quotative constructions:

Constructions using lexical means to specify the source of information are, in principle, possible in all of the world’s languages. In Lakondê, too, the clauses that exhibit morphologized hearsay evidentiality have parallel constructions in which the information source is provided periphrastically, such as ‘I heard/I didn’t hear, he left’ ‘somebody told me that he left’, etc. Below are examples of constructions with periphrastic evidentiality, in which an independent clause makes explicit that the information contained in the main proposition is reported. In a construction with a periphrastic quote, the part of the sentence that defines the given information as being quoted occurs after the main clause. In (11), the quotative construction has the same grammatical subject as the preceding clause. In (12), the subject of the quotative clause is undetermined, as in (10) above, in which the morphological quote does not provide the source of information. It should be pointed out that the semantic distinction between the quotative clauses in examples (11) and (12)

as it appears in the English glosses is derived from the non-linguistic context.

- (11) *hejn-ka-∅<sup>1</sup>tãn*            *hajn-∅<sup>1</sup>tãn*  
 wash-BEN-3S-IMPF        say-3S-IMPF  
 ‘He washed (the clothes), he said.’
- (12) *hejn-ka-∅<sup>1</sup>tãn*            *qaw-∅<sup>1</sup>tãn*  
 wash-BEN-3S-IMPF        tell-3S-IMPF  
 ‘He washed, he told me.’

## 2.2 First-hand information: Visual evidence, non-visual evidence, sensory inference and reliability, possibility and supposition – first-hand information

The inflectional evidential subsystem can be semantically divided into ‘visual evidence’ (or eyewitness), ‘non-visual (sensory) evidence’, ‘sensory inferred evidence’, ‘reliability’, ‘possibility’ and ‘supposition’. The ‘visual evidence’ category is divided into ‘past visual’ and ‘present visual’ and is expressed as part of a cumulative morpheme that also expresses tense/aspect and mood. The other categories are expressed by cumulative morphemes as well, which also express the mood category. The fact that this system is entirely grammaticalized, whereas the non-inflectional subsystem discussed above is not, suggests that it is older in the language than the non-inflectional subsystem. In our interpretation of the facts, the inflectional subsystem represents an independent system of evidentiality, because it is expressed through a different class of morphemes, located in a different slot in the verb complex. The flexional subsystem of evidentiality is treated here as part of the tense/aspect/mood system, with which it is paradigmatically fully integrated. Although part of the paradigm is represented by suffixes that do not express evidential meaning, these do not co-occur with the ones that do express evidential meaning. For example, the sentences in (13) and (14) below contain the mood suffix ‘neuter’ *-hi* and the ‘evidential visual past’ suffix *-<sup>1</sup>ti*, respectively, which are mutually exclusive, because they belong to the same paradigm of epistemic mood suffixes.

- (13) *°mãn-∅setaw-<sup>1</sup>tãn-hi*  
 burn-3S-EV:QUO-IMPF-NEU  
 ‘The house burned, someone (identifiable) told me.’

- (14) <sup>o</sup> *mãn-∅<sup>1</sup>tãn-<sup>1</sup>ti*  
 burn-3S-IMPF-EV:PST.VIS  
 ‘The house burned.’ (I saw it)

### 2.2.1 Visual evidence and sensorial inference and tense category

Visual evidence is expressed through the category of the ‘recent past’. Its occurrence and function is discussed in the following subsection.

#### 2.2.1.1 Visual evidence and the recent past

The tense system of Lakondê expresses the categories ‘past’, ‘present’ and ‘future’. The present tense is not marked overtly: it is the absence of a tense marker that expresses the present. The language distinguishes three ‘past tense’ categories: the ‘recent past’, which is expressed by the imperfective aspect morpheme <sup>1</sup>*tãn-*; the ‘anterior past’ (or ‘perfect past’), the form for which is *-ta-*, and the ‘non-recent past’, marked by the morpheme <sup>1</sup>*len-*. The ‘recent past’ generally refers to an event or action that took place on the same day as the speech act itself. The ‘anterior past’ is defined as “a past action with current relevance” (Bybee *et al.* 1994: 61). The occurrence of the ‘anterior past’ morpheme *-ta-*, combined with the imperfect aspect morpheme <sup>1</sup>*tãn-* (<sup>1</sup>*tãn-ta*) results in a ‘continuous anterior’, “in which a past action continues into the present time” (Bybee *et al.* 1994: 62). The semantics of the ‘continuous anterior’ is therefore similar to that of ‘state’. It is used in speech contexts in which the event or action referred to in the clause was eye-witnessed by both speaker and listener, thus codifying an evidential function.

The co-occurrence of the imperfective aspect morpheme with the anterior morpheme results in a construction in which the semantic aspect/ tense content of the sequence <sup>1</sup>*tãn-ta* aggregates a visual evidential value, referring to an event that has begun in the past and continues into the present, indicating that the progression of the action is projected onto the moment of speech.

- (15) *pan*                      <sup>1</sup>*ten-<sup>1</sup>tãn-ta*  
 be.two                      be.there-IMPF-ANT  
 ‘The two have been there.’ (I have seen it)
- (16) *mũn-nah-<sup>1</sup>tãn-ta*  
 be.beautiful -2S-IMPF-ANT  
 ‘You were beautiful.’ (I have seen it)



## **2.2.2 Visual evidence, non-visual evidence, sensorial inference, reliability, possibility and supposition vs. mood**

### **2.2.2.1 The mood category**

According to Palmer (1999: 229), “In its traditional sense, mood is a purely morphological category of the verb.” The more general concept of ‘modality’, in turn, usually refers to the entire system a language exhibits for expressing the attitudes and opinions of the speaker, involving such concepts as subjectivity, acts of speech, non-factuality, possibility, and necessity expressed linguistically through modal verbs and particles. The notion of modality may therefore coincide with semantic values expressed in evidential forms, since both the morphemes that belong to the morphological mood system and the ones that belong to the system of evidentiality proper may indicate the degree of the speaker’s commitment to the truth of the proposition. Traditionally, the modal markers that express the attitudes and opinions of the speaker are known as ‘epistemic’, occurring in declarative and interrogative clauses. On the other hand, the mood markers that express the illocutionary force of the imperative do not aggregate evidential content, since they bear no relation to the speaker’s attitude on the **status** of truth of the proposition. Markers that do not reveal the degree of the speaker’s commitment or his/her subjective posture regarding the status of the information transmitted are known as ‘deontics’ and are used in constructions that contain conditions of obligation or permission.

In Lakondê, the modal markers are inflectional morphemes realized in the final position of the sentence. Some of the epistemic modal morphemes that occur in declarative sentences also have an evidentiality function. Therefore, they are cumulative morphemes expressing the notions of sensorial inference, reliability or probability with regard to a given proposition. As modal suffixes, these evidentials reflect the attitude – or level of commitment – of the speaker and not the means through which the speaker obtained the information.

### **2.2.2.2 Epistemic modals with evidential function in declarative sentences**

Constructions that formally and semantically are complementary to the ones that express ‘interrogative’ or ‘imperative’ content fall in the ‘declarative’ category. Constructions in which there are no modal markers are considered epistemically non-marked (Palmer 1986: 26-29). Among the morphemes of epistemic modality presented below, the ones that occur in (a-c) express clear evidential notions, whereas the forms that are described in (d-e) may be considered as typically modal. Since both categories are expressed by differ-

ent forms of the same paradigm and therefore cannot co-occur, we will discuss all the forms that belong to this paradigm, in order to obtain a complete view of this morpho-syntactic subsystem.

**a) Past tense visual evidence:**

*-<sup>1</sup>ti-* is a cumulative morpheme, expressing at the same time ‘visual evidence’ and past tense’. It seems natural that evidence from a visual source is the result of a speaker’s past experience. In any case, this morpheme does not occur in the present or future tenses. By using this morpheme the speaker provides the information that the transmitted information was acquired visually.

- (23) *wi-<sup>1</sup>hat-∅<sup>1</sup>tãn-<sup>1</sup>ti*  
eat-not.have-3S-IMPF-EV:PST.VIS  
‘He did not eat.’ (I saw it)
- (24) *hejn-ta<sup>1</sup>lown-jãn-∅<sup>1</sup>tãn-<sup>1</sup>ti*  
wash-finish-EMP.M-3S-IMPF-EV:PST.VIS  
‘She washed everything.’ (I saw it)
- (25) *<sup>1</sup>e-<sup>1</sup>len<sup>a</sup>-<sup>1</sup>ti*  
see/look-2S.PST-EV:PST.VIS  
‘You saw.’ (I saw that you saw)

**b) Sensory inference**

The visual past tense suffix, *-<sup>1</sup>ti-*, can co-occur with the verb *hi-* ‘to have the impression’, followed by the ‘emphatic’ suffix, *-jãn-*. Only when the sentence simultaneously contains *-<sup>1</sup>ti-*, the verb *hi-*, and the emphatic suffix *-jãn-*, does the source of evidence expressed by *-<sup>1</sup>ti-* change from ‘visually observed’ to ‘deduced from evidence’:

- (26) *<sup>1</sup>qjh-hi-jãn-∅<sup>1</sup>tãn-<sup>1</sup>ti*  
go/walk-have.impression-M.EMP-3S-IMPF-EV:PST.VIS  
*<sup>1</sup>hat-ta-ta-<sup>1</sup>ti*  
not.have-NEG-ANT-EV:PST.VIS  
‘It seems that he went, no one is there.’

- (27) *wi-hi-jãñ-Ø¹tãñ-¹ti*  
 eat-have.impression-M.EMP-3S-EV:PST.VIS  
*'pratu-¹naw      'jɛn-ka¹loh*  
 dish-LOC      be.dirty-CL.flat.surface/unidimens  
*ã-¹pat-Ø¹tãñ-¹ti*  
 A-leave-3S-IMPV-EV:PST.VIS  
 'It seems that she ate, she left a dirty dish.'

**c) Non-visual or possibilitive**

-*si-* is a 'non-visual evidential' or 'possibilitive' marker. This suffix expresses two kinds of evidence for the source of information: the first is called a 'non-visual evidential', when the informational evidence originates from a non-visual sense, such as by way of smell or by the auditory senses (28). This morpheme, here called 'possibilitive', can also express the notion of simple possibility with respect to the information announced (29).

- (28) *'waja hejn-ka-ta-¹tãwn      'pat-¹tãñª-si*  
 you.PL wash-BEN-1O-CMPL leave-2S.IMPV-POS  
 'It is possible that you.PL have washed (sth) for me (because I heard the sound coming from the river).'
- (29) *hejn-ka-¹jown      'pat-¹tãñª-si*  
 wash-BEN-EMP leave-2S.IMPV-POS  
 'It is possible that you.PL have washed.'

**d) Reliability**

The suffix -*¹kã* is a 'categorical assertive' marker by means of which the speaker attests that he/she is absolutely certain about what is being said. With the categorical assertive, the speaker conveys to the listener that the information being announced is certain and reliable. This suffix may co-occur with any verbal tenses.

- (30) *wi-¹jown-ni-¹tã-¹kã*  
 eat-EMP-FUT-1S.IMPV-ASS  
 'I (certainly) am going to eat also.'
- (31) *ta¹nũh-Ø¹tãñª-¹kã*  
 give-3O-1S.IMPV-ASS  
 'I (certainly) gave (sth).'
- (32) *'jãñ      tɛh-ka-¹ten-ni-¹tã-¹kã*  
 soon cook-BEN-DES-FUT-1S.IMPV-ASS  
 'I (certainly) am going to cook soon.'

- (33) *ta'lown-hat-jān-∅'tāwn-ta-'kq*  
 finish-not.have-M.EMP-3S-CMPL-ANT-ASS  
 'It (certainly) is not ready.'

**e) Suppositive**

*-'sun* can be glossed as 'almost certain supposition': the speaker states that the content of the information is a supposition of which he/she is almost certain, though not based on concrete inference. This form is not generally used with reference to the first person. It is more commonly employed with regard to the speaker's supposition regarding some event or state which has yet to be realized by the listener or by a third party mentioned in the discourse. The occurrence of the suppositive morpheme is therefore used with the verb in the future tense.

- (34) *tq-su'niʔ-'nāw*                      *sa'nīn-ka-ta-'jown-∅'tān-'sun*  
 1-grandchildren-PL                      be.happy-BEN-1O-EMP-3S-IMPF-SUP  
 'My grandchildren are going to be happy with me (on my return).'
- (35) *'badi-'šjn*                      *wj-'jown-∅'tān-'sun*  
 goat-meat                      eat-EMP-3S-IMPF-SUP  
 'He is going to eat goat meat.'
- (36) *'waja*                      *wj-'tān<sup>a</sup>-'sun*  
 you                      eat-2S-IMPF-SUP  
 'You are going to eat.'

**3.3 Evidentiality and nouns**

There are a number of morphemes that frequently occur in nominal phrases. Since their use is optional, i.e. they may or may not be used in the same propositions under similar discourse conditions, it is not obvious that they can be considered suffixes, whether derivational or inflectional. The semantic content of these forms varies but is clearly lexical. Some of these suffixes can occur in other word classes. Two of these forms have a clear evidential meaning.

The first of these is *-te-*, which expresses the notion of 'visual evidence with respect to some distant entity' in relation to the participants of the conversation. This marker is the semantic opposite of *-ta-*, described below, which refers to the proximity of the entity referred to with regard to the speaker/listener.

- (37) *'sih-te-<sup>1</sup>te*  
house-N.PROX-REF  
'house (which we see at a distance)'
- (38) *wet-ki<sup>1</sup>n̄n-te-<sup>1</sup>te*  
child-CL.rounded/oblong/tridimens-N.PROX-REF  
'child (who we see at a distance)'

The form *-ta-* 'visual evidential', is the second form. It functions as an evidential suffix for both nouns and verbs, and occurs when the referent mentioned was or is being seen by the speaker.

- (39) *tq-<sup>1</sup>n̄n-ta-<sup>1</sup>te*  
1-larva-EV:VIS-REF  
'my coró' (kind of edible larva)
- (40) *'kq̄n-ki<sup>1</sup>n̄n-<sup>1</sup>n̄w-ta-<sup>1</sup>t̄n-ta*  
pineapple-CL.rounded/oblong/tridimens-PL-EV:VIS-IMPF-ANT  
'they are pineapples'

#### 4 Conclusion

In many languages that have grammaticalized evidentiality, evidential meanings may be synthesized with other grammatical categories, so that they are expressed as cumulative morphemes or restricted to specific clause types (cf. also Aikhenvald 2002). In Lakondê, 'pure' evidentials and epistemic mood suffixes occur in affirmative or negative declarative sentences, and may be restricted in their occurrence, being allowed to co-occur with specific tense categories only. Considering both subsystems that express evidentiality in Lakondê, eight distinctions are found, whose distribution is summarized in the table below. Besides the category of verbal evidentiality, two suffixes occur in the noun class with evidential purposes. Syntactically, the nouns that receive evidentiality marks occur as nominal phrase in either active or stative constructions assuming the function of clausal arguments.

The complexity of the system of evidentiality in Lakondê corresponds to that observed in other languages of the Nambikwára family, namely in the Kitãulhu language (Southern Nambikwára) (Lowe 1999) and Mamaindê (Northern Nambikwára) (Kingston 1974). However, there are no strict parallels between any of these systems and that found in Lakondê.

	Subsystem 1 2 <sup>nd</sup> Hand Non-Inflectional Suffixes		Subsystem 2 1 <sup>st</sup> Hand Inflectional Suffixes					
	Auditory Source	Reported (quotative)	Visual	Non-Visual	Possibilitive	Inferred	Reliability (mood)	Suppositive (mood)
Declarative Sentence	Present - Recent Past – Remote Past	Present - Recent Past – Remote Past	Recent Past - Remote Past	Recent Past - Remote Past	Recent Past - Remote Past	Recent Past - Remote Past	Present - Recent Past - Remote Past - Future	Future

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