

Offre de thèse avec contrat doctoral. Université de Caen Normandie

*From Visual Perception to Evidentiality in French:
 A Diachronic Corpus Analysis (1550-1800)*

(EVIDIA)

Job information		
	Organisation / Entreprise	Université de Caen Normandie
	Research Field	Humanities and social sciences
	Researcher Profile	First Stage Researcher (R1)
	Country	France
	Application Deadline	10/05/2026
	Type of Contract	Temporary (3 years), from october 2026
	Job Status	Full time
	Is the Job funded through the UE Research Framework Programme ?	NO
	Is the Job related to staff position within a Research Infrastructure ?	NO
Offer description		
	Doctoral project description	<u>Project description</u> The EVIDIA project focuses on expressions that originally come from sensory perception. Over time, these expressions often develop non-perceptual meanings, as in the case of the English verb “see”, which has acquired the meaning of “understand” (cf. Sweetser 1990). This study examines markers derived from visual perception that

		<p>indicate the source of information — so-called “evidential markers,” such as <i>il semble que</i>, <i>apparemment</i>, <i>il est visible que</i>, and others.</p> <p>The thesis explores how these diverse structures — impersonal constructions and adverbs — evolved during a pivotal period in French (mid-16th to 18th century) before stabilizing as evidential markers in Modern French. It draws on a corpus of diverse texts, covering multiple genres over a period of 250 years. Each expression is analyzed in its broader context, allowing us to study its usage through both quantitative and qualitative methods.</p> <p>The research adopts three complementary perspectives. First, it will investigate how evidential constructions developed syntactically and semantically by identifying the transitional contexts that enabled this change. Next, it will inquire the role of texts combining features from different discursive traditions. These include, for example, correspondences and long narrative texts that combine narrative sequences with argumentative passages. In such texts, the same speaker may adopt different enunciative perspectives. Finally, it will examine the pace of change and how it became integrated into usage by studying authors who wrote throughout their lives and tracing the evolution of their style across different textual genres.</p> <p>Bibliography</p> <p>ADAM, J.-M. [1992] (2017). <i>Les textes : types et prototypes</i>. 4e édition. Paris : Armand Colin. • AIKHENVALD, A. Y. (2004). <i>Evidentiality</i>. Oxford : Oxford University Press. • APOTHÉLOZ, D. (2003). La rection dite « faible » : grammaticalisation ou différentiel de grammaticité ? <i>Verbum</i> (Presses Universitaires de Nancy), La grammaticalisation en français, 25 (3), p. 241-262. • CHAFE, W. L. et NICHOLS, J. (éd.) (1986). <i>Evidentiality: the linguistic coding of epistemology</i>. Norwood : Ablex. • DENDALE, P. & TASMOWSKI, L. (2001). Introduction: Evidentiality and related notions. <i>Journal of Pragmatics</i>, n°33, p. 339-348. • DENDALE, P. et VAN BOGAERT, J. (2012). Réflexions sur les critères de définition et les problèmes d'identification des marqueurs évidentiels en français. <i>Langue française</i>, n°173(1), p. 13-29. • GOLDBERG, A. (1995). <i>Constructions. A Construction Grammar Approach to Argument Structure</i>. Chicago : University of Chicago Press. • GOLDBERG, A. (2006). <i>Constructions at work: The Nature of Generalization in Language</i>. Oxford : Oxford University Press. • GOSSELIN, L. (2010). <i>Les modalités en français. La validation des représentations</i>. Amsterdam : Rodopi. • HEINE, B. (2002). On the role of context in grammaticalization. Dans Ilse Wischer et Gabriele Diewald (dir.), <i>New Reflections on Grammaticalization</i>. Amsterdam : John Benjamins, p. 83-101. • LARTHOMAS, P. (1998) <i>Notions de stylistique générale</i>. Paris : Presses Universitaires de France. • LAZARD, G. (1956) « Caractères distinctifs de la langue tadjik », <i>Bulletin de la Société de Linguistique de Paris</i>, n°52, p. 117-186. • LEHMANN, C. (2002). <i>Thoughts on grammaticalization</i>. Second, revised edition. Seminar für Sprachwissenschaft der Universität Erfurt. • LENEPVEU, V. (2020). Entre objectivité et subjectivité : <i>il est évident que</i> (P). <i>Travaux de linguistique</i>, n°80(1), p. 107-130. • MÉLAC, É. (2014). <i>L'évidentialité en anglais — approche contrastive à partir d'un corpus anglais-tibétain</i>. Thèse de doctorat. Université de la Sorbonne nouvelle — Paris III, 2014. Français. • MOLINIÉ, G. (2014) <i>La Stylistique</i>. Paris : Presses Universitaires de France. • NØRGÅRD-SØRENSEN, J. HELTOFT, L. et SCHØSLER, L. (2011). <i>Connecting grammaticalisation</i>. Amsterdam/Philadelphia : John Benjamins. • PETRÉ, P. et VAN DE VELDE, F. (2018). The real-time dynamics of the individual and the community in grammaticalization. <i>Language</i>, n°94(4), p. 867–901. • SQUARTINI, M. (2004). Disentangling evidentiality and</p>
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		<p>epistemic modality in Romance. <i>Lingua</i>, n°114(7), p. 873-895. • SWEETSER, Eve. (1990). <i>From Etymology to Pragmatics. Metaphorical and cultural aspects of semantic structure</i>. Cambridge : Cambridge University Press. • TRAUGOTT, E. C. et TROUSDALE, G. (2013). <i>Constructionalization and Constructional Changes</i>. Oxford : Oxford University Press. • YAVORSKA, Y. (2025). De la perception visuelle à l'évidentialité en français : le cas du verbe <i>sembler</i> dans le tour impersonnel <i>IL (PRO) semble</i> (1550-1800). Troisièmes rencontres des jeunes chercheur·ses en linguistique historique, Grenoble (France), 4-5 décembre 2025.</p>
	Salary placement	2300 € / month
Requirements		
	Admission requirements	Holding a Master's Degree
	Eligibility	Subject to the acceptance of the head of the institution, on the proposal of the ED director after consultation with the director of the research team and the thesis supervisor
Application		
		<p>A complete application must contain :</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) A personal letter with a brief description of your research interests and motivation (2) A curriculum vitae (CV) (3) Certified copies of grades, diplomas, and documentation of completed academic courses (4) Contact information for two references
Work location		Université de Caen (Normandy, France)

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