

## Epistemic legitimization & inter/subjectivity in the presidential discourse of Cristina Fernández de Kirchner

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**RESUMEN:** El presente estudio examina cómo la ex-presidenta argentina Cristina Fernández de Kirchner (2007-2015) utilizó las estrategias de legitimación epistémica y el posicionamiento inter/subjetivo para incrementar tácticas de manipulación discursiva tales como la presentación selectiva y la manipulación de la presuposición. Esta investigación emplea una metodología desarrollada por Marín Arrese (2015), la cual analiza la frecuencia de los recursos de actitud epistémica y su potenciales usos manipuladores. En general, los resultados del análisis cuantitativo reflejan las conclusiones de otros análisis cuantitativos previos sobre Fernández de Kirchner, esto es, su excepcionalmente creíble auto-representación discursiva. Los datos también muestran una clara preferencia por la recurrencia a posturas de completo compromiso y por la asunción de responsabilidad personal por sus declaraciones. No obstante, Fernández de Kirchner exhibe asimismo una tendencia a mistificar su responsabilidad por medio del uso explícito de expresiones intersubjetivas, una estrategia indicativa de una utilización manipulativa de la presuposición para justificar sus afirmaciones.

**Palabras clave:** Cristina Fernández de Kirchner, análisis del discurso, discurso político, pragmática.

**ABSTRACT:** The current study examines how former Argentine president Cristina Fernández de Kirchner (2007-2015) utilized epistemic legitimization strategies and inter/subjective positioning to augment manipulative discursive tactics such as selective presentation and the manipulation of presupposition. This investigation employs a methodology developed by Marín Arrese (2015) which analyzes the frequency of epistemic stance resources and their potential manipulative uses. Overall, the results of the quantitative analysis reflect the conclusions of previous qualitative analyses of Fernández de Kirchner, namely that of her discursive self-representation as exceptionally credible, and the data show a clear preference for full commitment stance resources and the assumption of personal responsibility for her claims. However, she also displays a tendency to mystify her responsibility by using explicit intersubjective expressions, a strategy indicative of her manipulative use of presupposition to justify her statements.

**Keywords:** Cristina Fernández de Kirchner, discourse analysis, political discourse, pragmatics.

### 0. INTRODUCTION

As noted by Paul Chilton (2008), political actors cannot rule by physical force alone, and therefore must rely on discursive strategies such as coercion, (de)legitimization, and (mis)representation to demonstrate the validity of their claims. This paper is an attempt to demonstrate how the use of epistemic legitimization strategies and inter/subjective positioning strengthen and support the wider manipulative strategies, such as polarization, selective-presentation, and presupposition manipulation, documented in the existing analyses of former Argentine president Cristina Fernández de Kirchner's (CFK) discourse. CFK's presidential discourse has been thoroughly investigated by various rhetorical and discourse analysts, and four main conclusions can be drawn from these analyses: CFK discursively represents herself as being

exceptionally capable and credible (Vitale and Maizels, 2011; Bitonte, 2010; Maizels, 2014), CFK constructs a negative representation of her adversaries and discursively “others” them (Pérez, 2014), that a high degree of presupposition is required to understand her discourses (Raiter, 2009), and that the narration of the past is fundamental in the discourse of CFK (Raiter, 2014). Although CFK’s discourse has been studied in terms of its rhetoric and topology, studies relating to the conceptual domain of epistemicity, or “justificatory support” (Boye, 2012: 2-3), have been scarce.

The present study continues this previous work, expanding the scope to include epistemic legitimization strategies and inter/subjective positioning. The former “refer to speaker/writer’s positioning regarding beliefs, knowledge or evidence that support or justify their claims in making an assertion”, and the latter represent “the degree to which the speaker assumes personal responsibility for the evaluation of the evidence (subjectivity) or whether the assessment is ‘potentially’ shared by others” (Marín Arrese, 2015: 1). These strategies are useful in identifying potentially manipulative discourse because they “may be aimed at the management of hearers’ acceptance of information in the discourse, thereby seeking to legitimise the truth or validity of a representation and overcome hearers’ cognitive mechanisms for epistemic vigilance” (Marín Arrese, 2015: 1). To annotate and analyze these strategies, this investigation makes use of a methodology developed by Marín Arrese (2015) by which I intend to further characterize CFK’s presidential discourse and to identify the (continued) use of potentially manipulative discursive strategies by CFK. This investigation employs a quantitative and qualitative analysis of eight state of the union addresses, given March 1st of 2008-2014, and two inaugural addresses given December 10th of 2007 and 2010, respectively. These discourses, all constitutionally mandated and performed on pre-established dates, took place in the Argentine National Congress in front of the legislative body and public spectators watching from the balconies above the chamber. They were also broadcasted live on the national television network.

This paper is organized as follows: the first section offers a brief introduction into CFK’s background and presidential terms. The second section is a review of the relevant literature, including observations about CFK’s discourse, epistemicity, manipulation, epistemic legitimization, and inter/subjectivity. The third section is a detailed description of the research procedure, and the fourth section is dedicated to the results of the corpus study and the analysis. The final section is devoted to my conclusions.

**0.1. Cristina Fernández de Kirchner.** As Lara (2017) notes, to understand CFK’s discursive strategies it is first necessary to understand the historical context in which they were utilized (Lara, 2017: 30). Kirchnerism, defined as the combination of practices, ideas, and politics organized around the presidential figures of Néstor Kirchner and Cristina Fernández, is a political movement that proposed a powerful State apparatus which would serve as the solution to social inequalities and promoter of economic opportunity (Jakovchuk, 2017: 18). While Kirchnerism encompasses the historical period between their presidencies: 2003-2007, and 2007-2011; 2011-2015, respectively, Kirchner and Fernández’s influence in Argentine politics extends far earlier (Lara, 2017: 30). With the return to democracy in 1983, the pair, then members of the Justicialist Party of Río Gallegos, began a decades-long political trajectory that would eventually lead both of them to the Casa Rosada<sup>1</sup>. Kirchner dedicated himself to the executive branch, first as mayor of Río Gallegos (1987-1991) and then as governor of Santa Cruz (1991-2003). Fernández, however, preferred the legislature, serving as provincial representative of Santa Cruz (1989-1995), senator of Santa Cruz (1995-1997; 2001-2005), national representative of Santa Cruz (1997-2001),

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<sup>1</sup> The executive residence and office of the President of Argentina.

and senator of the province of Buenos Aires (2005-2007) (Lara, 2017: 44). Known especially for her outspoken criticism, CFK was a protagonist of Argentine politics long before assuming the presidency. However, CFK's legitimacy as a viable presidential candidate was by no means a certainty. Alternatively, her connection to Néstor and Kirchnerism challenged CFK to create a unique public image that redefined herself as president rather than first lady (Jakovchuk, 2017: 22). Nonetheless, in December of 2007, CFK became the first female elected president of Argentina after winning 45.28% of the vote in the first round of elections (Lara, 2017: 33). In many ways CFK's presidency can be characterized similarly to her husband's: advancing policies related to human rights, asserting the role of the State in the economy, and increasing cooperation between other South American populist governments (Lara, 2017: 33).

However, CFK's two presidential terms are unique in that they were marked by a series of conflicts between herself and various sectors of Argentine society. The first of these conflicts occurred only months into her presidency and it would act as a catalyst for the numerous confrontations that followed. In early 2008, CFK's government proposed increasing export taxes on soybeans (and raising the government's share of returns on such exports) which led to a four-month confrontation between the administration and the agricultural industry, resulting in nationwide strikes, roadblocks, and most crucially –a 23% approval rating of CFK. After this dispute, CFK and Kirchnerism as a whole became increasingly populist –in politics and in rhetoric– and CFK began denouncing a new adversary: the Argentine media (Lara, 2017: 34). In 2010, Néstor Kirchner died unexpectedly, and consequently CFK's government received a massive outpouring of support, propelling her to easily win the 2011 presidential elections (Lara, 2017: 35). However, CFK's list of adversaries continued to multiply. Her feud with the media continued, especially with the *Clarín* news organization. CFK attempted to break *Clarín's* supposed monopoly on the Argentine media sector through the Law of Audiovisual Communication Services in 2009, and while it passed through Congress, a number of injunctions on behalf of *Clarín* was preventing its implementation (Lara, 2017: 35). Frustrated with the delay, CFK launched a discursive campaign against the Argentine Judiciary, proposing a series of reforms to restore “popular control” to the institution (Lara, 2017: 35). In terms of foreign policy, CFK used anti-imperialist rhetoric to assign blame for economic hardship and high inflation, such as when she blamed the United States' “extortion” and vulture funds for Argentina's 2014 default, or to bolster her personal popularity by “standing up” to British governance of the Malvinas Islands. All in all, this period is characterized by an increase in social and political polarization; while those in power championed themselves as progressive social reformers, the growing opposition accused CFK's government of corruption and authoritarianism (Lara, 2017: 36). CFK's personal response to protests, embattled policy implementations, and media critiques was always the same: an insistence on the “evil” nature and othering of these groups in her discourse, whether that was in press releases, on Twitter, or in public forum –she rarely participated in press conferences. The polarized environment in which her political speeches occurred make CFK an ideal subject for critical discourse analysis and the identification of potentially manipulative discursive structures.

## 1. PREVIOUS RESEARCH AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

**1.1. The presidential discourse of Cristina Fernández de Kirchner: herself, “others”, and the past.** The political discourse of Cristina Fernández de Kirchner has been investigated from a variety of disciplines, most notably from discourse and rhetorical analysis. Although these investigations evaluate a wide range of contexts and utilize various theoretical frameworks, three main elements are examined in almost all of them: the image she creates of herself, the construction

of “others”, and the high degree of presupposition in her discourses. To begin, it is first necessary to understand how CFK’s discourses were delivered in order to comprehend their characterization. Overall, Kirchnerist discourse aligns with the “controlled communication model”, where there are no intermediaries between presidential discourse and the citizenry, control and centralization of the presidential figure as the source of information, a dichotomy between “friends” and “enemies”, and criticism/regulation of media organizations (Lara, 2017: 39). Regarding CFK, this took the form of nearly constant public speaking appearances, a significant increase in televised discourses, and less press conferences; CFK’s words were to be heard directly by Argentines, not reinterpreted by journalists or news anchors (Lara, 2017: 39-41). In respect to the rhetorical perspective outlined above, analysts have addressed the discursive creation of CFK’s *ethos* or self-image during her elections, inaugural speech, the celebration of Argentina’s Bicentennial, and the 2008 crisis with the agricultural sector (Vitale and Maizels, 2011; Romano, 2010; Bitonte, 2010; Maizels, 2014; Pedrazzini *et al.*, 2012). Although contextually different, the commonalities that emerge from these projects are evident; CFK always constructs an *ethos* of credibility in her discourse (Maizels, 2014). As president, she presents herself as an expert in economic data, national history, and *saber hacer* (know-how) needed to fulfill the demands of her position and successfully lead the country (Maizels, 2014: 177). This self-representation as exceptionally capable and credible is also constructed (and sustained) through a clear distinction between herself and her adversaries. If CFK presents herself as possessing reason, knowledge about the past, and the truth, then these “others” are defined by ignorance, lies, and even as “inhuman” (Bitonte, 2010: 9; Maizels, 2014: 177). In addition, Pérez asserts that there is no space for an explicit political opposition in CFK’s discourse; the voices of the “others” are often reduced to “*aquellos*” (those) or “*algunos*” (some) (Pérez, 2014: 72).

This generalization is one of the factors that contribute to the third discursive characteristic mentioned above: the high degree of presupposition required to understand her discourses. Raiter shows that, during her stand-off with the agricultural sector, she presented a “discursive para-reality” in which she attempted to link the 1976 military coup d’état with the current opposition from the agricultural workers (Raiter, 2009: 19). However, due to the arbitrary and obscure nature of this relationship, CFK failed to persuade the Argentine public and was forced to cede to the demands of the sector—even losing the support of her vice president. This exemplifies the high level of contextual and historical knowledge needed to even comprehend her discourses, especially when she references past events. In a similar study, Raiter summarizes this strategic narration of the past: “[she] pretends to erase the temporal axes in a syncretism that fuses the past, the present, and the future of the society in the same account” (Raiter, 2014: 77, translation my own). This association of current events with those in Argentina’s past is fundamental in the creation of a “mythic representation” of herself, an image founded upon the idea that she and Néstor Kirchner “rescued” Argentina from a terrible and tumultuous past (Raiter, 2014: 78). CFK reconstructs the past to construct the present, imparting to her supporters the “true” history of Argentina and discrediting her adversaries who were responsible for the problems of the past (Raiter, 2014: 79). Utilizing her privileged position as a legitimized speaker, CFK depicts herself as a national historian and presents her personal memories of the past as unquestionable fact.

**1.2. Critical discourse analysis and manipulation.** While other authors have not explicitly classified CFK’s discursive strategies as manipulative, the present study examines these strategies using the definition of manipulation as conceptualized by critical discourse analysis (CDA). CDA is an interdisciplinary approach to discourse that views language as a form of social practice and focuses on the ways social and political domination are reproduced by text and talk (Fairclough,

2013). CDA typically examines a combination of linguistic features to discern how language functions in the reproduction of social structure. The present investigation utilizes a multidisciplinary and triangulated framework outlined by van Dijk (2006), which describes manipulation as:

1. a social phenomenon, “because it involves interaction and power abuse between groups and social actors” (van Dijk, 2006: 361). Socially, manipulation is a “discursive form of elite power reproduction that [...] hurts the interests of less powerful groups [...] and (re)produces social inequality” (van Dijk, 2006: 364).
2. a cognitive phenomenon, because manipulation always implies the manipulation of the minds of recipients (van Dijk, 2006: 361). Cognitively speaking, manipulation involves the interferences with processes of understanding and, therefore, the formation of biased mental models and social representations such as knowledge and ideologies. If manipulators want the recipients to understand a discourse as they see it, it is imperative that the recipients form, activate and use the mental models that the manipulators want them to, “restricting their freedom of interpretation or at least the probability that they will understand the discourse against the best interest of the manipulators” (van Dijk, 2006: 367).
3. a discursive-semiotic phenomenon, “because manipulation is being exercised through text, talk and visual messages” (van Dijk, 2006: 361). One of the discursive strategies most used to influence the minds of the recipients is the overall strategy of positive self-representation (e.g., “our good acts”), and the negative other-presentation (e.g., “their bad acts”), an ideological polarization that can be observed in the structures of many discourse levels (such as pragmatic, semantic, syntactic, etc.).

**1.3. Epistemicity, stance, and manipulation.** Linguists have explored at length the development of human communication, some more idealistically than others. While Grice (1975) argued that the fundamental principle of communication was cooperation and truthfulness, others, such as Sperber (2000), contend that it has also evolved as a means of deception and manipulation (Marín Arrese, 2011a: 1). To explain this behavior, Sperber proposed the existence of a ‘logico-rhetorical’ module by which speakers “seek to persuade and overcome hearers/readers’ ability to detect deceptive language use” (Marín Arrese, 2011a: 1). For, comprehension and acceptance are individual cognitive processes, and speakers have two objectives in communication: “to be understood and to affect the beliefs and behaviours of their audience” (Hart, 2011: 4). To achieve the latter function, Hart (2011) posits two macro-level speaker strategies: the legitimization of actions and the legitimization of assertions. These two strategies are supported by stancetaking resources, which “refer to the particular viewpoint or enunciational position of the speaker/writer [...] which reflects their attitudes, assessments and knowledge concerning the designated event and/or the enunciated proposition” (Marín Arrese, 2011b: 259). The framework utilized in the present study distinguishes two levels of stance: effective and epistemic. Effective stance resources include “expressions of deonticity, assessments, and attitudinals” (Marín Arrese 2011a: 1). In other words, effective stance acts are aimed at determining or influencing the course of reality itself and play a direct role in persuasion and the legitimization of actions (Marín Arrese, 2011a: 2). Epistemic stance resources pertain to the conceptual domains of epistemic modality and evidentiality, and assess the likelihood of an event and/or the validity of a proposition designating the event, and they aim at legitimizing claims, thereby playing an indirect role in legitimizing actions (Marín Arrese, 2011a: 2). Epistemic modals express a speaker/writer’s estimation concerning the veracity of the event and the likelihood of its realization, while the evidential expressions relate to the sources of

knowledge by which the speaker/writer has the authority to make an assumption and demonstrates their attitude towards the validity of the information communicated (Marín Arrese, 2011a: 2).

Although various communicative interactions are susceptible to distortion and deception, political communication is especially sensitive to manipulation due to the interests and power relations of the participants involved (Marín Arrese 2011b: 258). This investigation operates under the cognitive premise that speakers (political and otherwise) seek to establish 'epistemic control' in the discourse, and in turn may use stancetaking resources to serve ideological purposes (Marín Arrese 2015: 2). To manage the hearers' acceptance of the presented information, speakers may use expressions of epistemicity to persuade "addressees of the veracity of their claims and the validity of their information" (Marín Arrese 2015: 2). To achieve this epistemic control, and overcome the epistemic defenses of their audiences, speakers employ a variety of epistemic legitimization strategies which mark their degree of commitment and degree of responsibility towards/for the communicated information.

**1.4. Epistemic legitimization and commitment.** Epistemic legitimization strategies "refer to speaker/writer's positioning regarding beliefs, knowledge, or evidence that support or justify their claims in making an assertion" (Marín Arrese, 2015: 1). Speakers, in order to overcome the epistemic safeguards of their audience, offer guarantees for the truth of their assertions in various forms of evidence, attempting to influence the hearer/reader's exercise of epistemic vigilance and accept the assertion as true (Marín Arrese, 2011a: 2). These resources reflect different degrees of commitment of the speaker towards the communicated information, and a speaker may boost or mitigate the force of an assertion through the degree of commitment they express (Marín Arrese, 2015: 3). Marín Arrese (2015), working in the context of Spanish president José Manuel Aznar and British prime minister Tony Blair's parliamentary discourse, developed a methodology where these strategies are divided into three categories: those reflecting a speaker's full commitment, medium to high commitment, and low commitment to the communicated information.

In terms of full commitment to an assertion, cognitive factive predicates (CFV) and impersonal factive predicates (IFV) are utilized since they imply that the proposition is true (*Yo sé P, Creo que P, La verdad es P*) (Marín Arrese, 2015: 4).

- (1) *Creo* <EP<sup>2</sup>, CFV, SE> *que, por el contrario, es una estrategia que abona y que es absolutamente funcional a los objetivos que ellos pretenden lograr.*

**I believe** that, on the contrary, it is a strategy that pays and that is absolutely functional to the objectives that they hope to achieve.

Medium to high speaker commitment is marked by the use of epistemic modals (EM) and evidential expressions. Epistemic modal verbs and sentence adverbs "reflect the speaker's concern with the [hearer's] acceptance of the reality status assigned to events" (*quizás, probablemente, definitivamente, desde luego, debe ser, puede ser*) (Marín Arrese, 2015: 4).

- (2) *Entonces digo: lo que debe ser resuelto políticamente, debe ser* <EP, EM, SI> *resuelto en términos del Poder Legislativo y del Poder Ejecutivo.*

So I say: what should be resolved politically, **should be** resolved in terms of the Legislative Branch and the Executive Branch.

Evidential expressions indicate the source of knowledge that the speaker uses to justify the veracity of the communicated information, and Marín Arrese divides them into three categories: direct personal evidence (DTE), indirect inferential evidence (IIE), and indirect reportative evidence (IRE) (Marín Arrese, 2015: 5). The first references direct perceptual access to the evidence (*He experimentado*), the second represents indirect personal access to the evidence gained through

<sup>2</sup> Enunciational position. For a list of all abbreviations used in this section, please refer to Table 2.

inferential processes (*Evidentemente*), and the third indicates “indirect, non- inferential, non- personal access to the information [...] originating from some external source” (*Como han escuchado*) (Marín Arrese, 2015: 5).

- (3) [...] fue este Gobierno el que fijó un piso salarial en la propia Ley de Financiamiento de modo tal de contribuir a la equidad educativa con criterio federal porque, **evidentemente** <EP, IIE, ISI>, no es lo mismo un maestro en Jujuy que un maestro en Capital Federal.  
[...] it was this Government that determined a salary floor in the very Financing Law to contribute to educational equity with federal criteria because, **evidently**, a teacher in Jujuy is not the same as a teacher in the Federal Capital.

Low commitment, where the speaker is attempting to distance themselves from “a position of responsibility by claiming ignorance or lack of significant information” is marked by aphonic stance expressions (APH) and agnostic qualifiers (*No puedo recordar*) (Marín Arrese, 2015: 4).

- (4) **No sé** <EP, APH, SE> si ya la aprobó la Cámara de Diputados.  
**I don't know** if it was already approved by the Chamber of Deputies.

A final strategy, the use of a marked enunciational position (MEP), can either be categorized as indicating full or medium to high speaker commitment (*Yo le digo*). This depends on the “‘evidential standing’ of the speaker as a source of information”, which in the context of this study is a head of state speaking on state affairs, so the use of MEP would most likely indicate high commitment (Marín Arrese, 2015: 6).

- (5) [...] **les digo** <EP, MEP, SE> sinceramente que no podemos gastar tanto tiempo en estas discusiones.  
[...] **I say to you all** sincerely that we cannot waste so much time in these discussions.

**1.5. Inter/subjective positioning and responsibility.** Subjectivity is defined as “the expression of self and the representation of a speaker’s [...] perspective or point of view in discourse”, and is “indexed by expressions in which the speaker’s point of view is invoked, as in epistemic stance resources” (Marín Arrese 2015: 7). Conversely, intersubjectivity relates to “the explicit, coded expression of [the speaker/writer’s] attention to the image or ‘self’ of [the addressee/reader] in a social or an epistemic sense” (Marín Arrese, 2015: 7). In other words, the dimension of inter/subjectivity can be conceptualized as “the degree to which the speaker assumes personal responsibility for the evaluation of the evidence (subjectivity) or whether the assessment is ‘potentially’ shared by others” (Marín Arrese, 2015: 7). Although the responsibility and accountability for the veracity of the communicated information rest, by default, with the speaker, there are strategies that mystify the speaker’s role as conceptualizer, which have a function in “obfuscating speakers’ epistemic persuasive intent” and the responsibility for their claims (Marín Arrese, 2015: 3). As with epistemic legitimization strategies, Marín Arrese developed a continuum that categorizes inter/subjectivity from maximal to low salience of the conceptualizer in the communicated information: Subjective-Explicit, Personal Responsibility (SE); Subjective-Implicit, Personal Responsibility (SI); Intersubjective-Explicit, Shared Responsibility (ISE); and Intersubjective-Implicit, Shared/Opaque Responsibility (ISI) (Marín Arrese, 2015: 31).

Maximal degree of salience of the speaker as conceptualizer, or explicit personal responsibility, corresponds to expressions where the speaker is explicitly designated, foregrounding their epistemic attitude and their personal responsibility for the information (*Yo pienso, Yo supongo*) (Marín Arrese, 2015: 8).

- (6) **Pienso** <EP, CFV, SE> que tenían mala información [...] **I think** that they had bad information [...]

Shared personal responsibility is indexed by epistemic modal auxiliaries (*quizás*), sentence adverbs (*seguramente*), and some truth-factive adverbs where “the speaker is merely evoked as the ‘subjective centre of consciousness’” (Marín Arrese, 2015: 11). Although these expressions do

index subjectivity, they “mystify the role of the speaker as conceptualizer”, obfuscating their personal responsibility (Marín Arrese, 2015: 8).

- (7) *Seguramente* <EP, EM, SI> *estaríamos viviendo en los grandes países desarrollados, donde la industria siempre ha subsidiado al campo.*  
**Surely**, we would be living in the great developed countries, where industry has always subsidized the countryside.

Explicit shared responsibility is found in expressions which “explicitly designate a collectivity which includes the speaker (‘inclusive we’), or the addressee(s), and [in] impersonal uses of pronouns to index a virtual or general conceptualizer” (*Nosotros sabemos, Ustedes saben*) (Marín Arrese, 2015: 11). These intersubjective expressions strategically place attention on the addressee, explicitly assigning them responsibility for the validity of the evidence.

- (8) *Venimos, todos lo sabemos* <EP, CFV, ISE>, *de una sociedad desequilibrada, con fuertes crisis, de una Argentina volátil, de un pasado volátil.*  
 We came from, everybody **knows** it, from a disequibrated society, with strong crises, from a volatile Argentina, from a volatile past.

Implicit shared/opaque responsibility (ISI), corresponding to the lowest degree of salience of the speaker as conceptualizer, is found in expressions “evoking an implicit conceptualizer, which may [be] construed as a virtual or generalized conceptualizer [...], or may be unidentified [...], and are opaque between personal and shared responsibility” (*obviamente, es claro que*) (Marín Arrese, 2015: 11) These expressions are opaque in their assignment of responsibility because they “leave open the possibility of potentially sharing the evaluation with other participants” (Marín Arrese, 2015: 9).

- (9) *Porque parece* <EP, IIE, ISI> *que fuera una obra del Gobierno de la Ciudad y no hay ningún cartelito indicando que es una obra del Gobierno Nacional, que son recursos federales.*  
 Because **it appears** that it was a work of the Government of the City and there is no sign indicating that it is a work of the National Government, that they are federal resources.

## 2. PROCEDURE

This investigation analyses the transcripts of eight of CFK’s state of the union addresses, given March 1st of 2008-2014, and two inaugural addresses given December 10th of 2007 and 2010, respectively. These discourses, all constitutionally mandated and performed on pre-established dates, took place in the Argentine National Congress in front of the legislative body and public spectators watching from the balconies above the chamber. They were also broadcasted live on the national television network. To analyze these speeches, I evaluated CFK’s use of epistemic legitimization strategies and her inter/subjective discursive positioning quantitatively in terms of their frequency and qualitatively in terms of their relation to Marín Arrese’s theoretical framework. A one-tailed t-test was also performed to determine if there was a significant difference between usage during the first and last three years of CFK’s presidency. The quantitative results were obtained using the AntConc concordance software (Anthony, 2019). As expressed above, the categories for the expressions of epistemic stance and inter/subjectivity and their respective tagging conventions are as follows:

Epistemic Legitimization					
Full Commitment (FC)		Medium to High Commitment (MHC)			Low Commitment (LC)
Cognitive factive verbs (CFV)	Impersonal factive predicates and speech-act adverbs (IFV)	Epistemic modal verbs and sentence adverbs (EM)	Evidential and pseudo-evidential expressions (DTE, IIE, IRE)	Cognitive attitude (CGA)	Aphonic stance expression and agnostic qualifiers (APH)
<i>Creo que P</i>	<i>La verdad es P</i>	<i>Quizás, probablemente, puede ser</i>	<i>He experimentado, evidentemente, Como han escuchado</i>	<i>Yo pienso P</i>	<i>Yo no sé P</i>
Marked enunciative position (MEP)					
<i>Yo le digo</i>					

Tabla 1 - Expressions of epistemic legitimization.

Inter/subjective Positioning			
Personal Responsibility		Shared Responsibility	
Explicit Subjective (SE)	Implicit Subjective (SI)	Explicit Intersubjective (ISE)	Implicit Intersubjective (ISI)
<i>Yo pienso P</i>	<i>Quizás, seguramente</i>	<i>Nosotros sabemos P</i>	<i>Es claro que P</i>

Tabla 2 - Expressions of inter/subjective positioning.

### 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Overall, the results of the quantitative analysis reflect the conclusions of previous analyses of CFK, namely that of her discursive self-representation and her manipulation of presupposition. In terms of epistemic legitimization, the data show a clear preference for full commitment stance resources (56.9%), signifying that CFK is discursively committed to the assertions she makes. This is logical considering CFK's *ethos* of credibility and her self-representation as an expert in Argentine affairs, and the data indicate these stance resources are a significant part of her discursive construction of credibility. With respect to inter/subjectivity, CFK prefers to assume personal responsibility for her claims (41.1%), again coinciding with her discursive self-representation. However, she also displays a tendency to mystify her responsibility by using explicit intersubjective expressions (22.9%), a strategy indicative of her manipulative use of presupposition to justify her claims. In terms of her use of these resources over time, there was no significant difference in any of the categories except in explicit subjective and explicit intersubjective expressions<sup>3</sup>. The former was significantly higher in the first three years analyzed while the latter was significantly higher in the last three years of her presidency.

Regarding the efficacy of the research procedure, the total frequency of epistemic stance resources is lower but still relatively similar to that of previous studies performed by Marín Arrese. I presume this result is due to three factors: the difference in communicative situation, the principle of immediacy, and the use of epistemic stances resources in the Spanish language. In terms of the former, Marín Arrese has applied this methodology solely to parliamentary inquiries where prime ministers were asked to provide oral evidence. Logically, speakers who are under oath will most

<sup>3</sup> Results of the one-tailed t-test were as follows: FC ( $t = 0.770$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ), MHC ( $t = -0.419$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ), LC ( $t = -0.370$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ), SE ( $t = 3.310$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), SI ( $t = 1.264$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ), ISE ( $t = -2.196$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), ISI ( $t = -2.042$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ).

likely pay close attention to how they justify their claims, and therefore use more epistemic stance resources. However, in an inaugural or state of the nation address this is potentially not as necessary. Another explanation of the low total frequency could be that this investigation only considers expressions that are “immediate to the ground”, such as *I know*, and excludes all non-immediate expressions, such as *I knew* (Marín Arrese, 2015: 11). This is especially significant regarding this corpus because CFK dedicates much of these discourses to the narration of past events, whose expressions are beyond the scope of this study. Finally, as Marín Arrese notes, Spanish speakers in various types of discourse tend to rely less on epistemic expressions than their English counterparts, potentially explaining CFK’s relatively infrequent use (Marín Arrese, 2015: 12).

**3.1. Epistemic legitimization in CFK’s presidential discourse.** Table 1 shows the results for commitment in the transcripts of the entire corpus and offers insights into CFK’s preferred mode of legitimizing assertions.

Degrees of commitment	CFK Presidential Discourse 147,324 words		
	N	%	R
Epistemic Stance			
FC	531	56.9	3.604
MHC	351	37.6	2.383
LC	51	5.5	.346
<b>Total Epistemic Stance</b>	933	100	6.333
MEP	24	2.5	.163
<b>Total</b>	957	100	6.495

Tabla 3 - Commitment, epistemic stance and marked enunciational position in CFK’s discourse (raw frequency and normalized frequency per thousand words).

CFK clearly prefers the use of full commitment stance resources, most of those being cognitive factive predicates (515 tokens) instead of impersonal factive predicates (16 tokens). Among these, the expression *creo* (I think/believe) appeared 215 times in the transcripts, the highest incidence of any individual marker.

- (10) *También alcanzamos un máximo nivel de acceso, mucha más gente pudo realizar sus primeras vacaciones, eso debió también a paritarias, a poder adquisitivo de los salarios, a cobertura, ingreso social, a inclusión jubilatoria, que vamos a detallar más adelante. Y de repente entonces -esta es mi sensación, mi percepción- ¿qué fue lo que pasó? **Creo** <EP, CFV, SE> que mucha gente durante todo el año 2014 vivió asustada por lo que escuchaba, porque encendía la televisión y tenía que tomar Rivotril; porque escuchaba a los economistas, que nunca condujeron nada, y cada vez que lo condujeron lo volcaron al país, pronosticar que todo se iba al demonio, que el dólar iba a estar a 25 pesos, que nos quedábamos con 10.000 millones de reservas, que los buitres literalmente nos iban a despedazar, que iban a perder el empleo. Y **obviamente** <EP, IIE, ISI> cuando la gente tiene miedo no gasta, se retrae.*
- We also reached a maximum level of access, many more people could take their first vacations, this is due to the parity, the acquisitive poder of salaries, to coverage, social investment, to the inclusion of retired persons, which we will detail further on. And then suddenly, -this is my feeling, my perception- what happened? I believe that many people during all of 2014 lived fearful because of what they heard, because they turned on the television and they had to take Klonopin; because they listened to the economists, who never managed anything, and every time that they did so they upended the country, prognosticating that everything would go to hell, that the dollar would be at 25 pesos, that we were left with 10 billion in reserves, that the vulture funds were literally about to tear us apart, that jobs would be lost. And **obviously** when people have fear they don’t spend, they withdraw.

In this fragment, CFK comments on the increase in domestic tourism during 2014. However, this increase has apparently dropped or slowed, something not explicitly mentioned by CFK but implied by her subsequent critique. She blames this unexplained change on people being too afraid to spend their money due to “the economists” negative predictions. This explanation is justified by the use of *creo*, which in the discursive context of CFK implies her utmost confidence in the statement. For, CFK’s self-representation as extremely credible implicates that assuming personal responsibility for her claims is the ultimate method of justifying them; if CFK knows all, then citing herself validates the assertion. Therefore, while she never provides any statistics regarding this decrease in tourism nor identifies who these “economists” are, she succeeds in making a polarizing claim that reinforces her credibility through the disparagement of her adversaries. Additionally, CFK ends this fragment with a logical evidential expression, that *obviously* people do not spend money when they fear a poor economy. However, given the unsupported claim above, this could be interpreted as a manipulation of presupposition.

Similarly, *sé* (I know) was used frequently (37 tokens) and exemplifies the same strategy; CFK’s knowledge/opinion is equivalent to a justified factual assertion. For example:

- (11) *El tema de lograr una representación legítima, una Justicia legítima, una democratización de la Justicia. Yo sé <EP, CFV, SE> que actué como un gran disparador, un gran catalizador para el debate. Es un debate que nos debemos los argentinos, porque el Poder Ejecutivo... Hay tres poderes del Estado. Néstor hizo una revolución dentro del Poder Ejecutivo. Por primera vez, el presidente es el presidente, es el que toma las decisiones que le corresponden por la Constitución en la Casa Rosada. Rescató para la política la decisión de las cuestiones de Estado.*

The topic of achieving a legitimate representation, a legitimate Judiciary, a democratization of the Judicial Branch. **I know** that I acted as a great trigger, a great catalyst for the debate. It is a debate that we owe Argentines, because the Executive Branch... there are three branches of the State. Néstor made a revolution within the Executive Branch. For the first time, the president was the president, he who makes the decisions that correspond to him via the Constitution in the Casa Rosada. He rescued for politics the decision of questions of the State.

Here, CFK declares her support for reforming the Argentine Council of Magistrates and asserts her influential role in the debate. She justifies this claim simply because she *knows* it, and in the middle of perhaps explaining herself, begins to narrate how Néstor apparently reformed the executive branch to give more power to the president. Not only does this fragment demonstrate CFK justifying an assertion using only her opinion, but it also shows her legitimizing herself through the tangentially related actions of her husband.

Although at a lower frequency, CFK also relies on the use of medium commitment stance resources (37.6%). The results show a slight difference between the use of epistemic modals (175 tokens) and evidential expressions (158 tokens), but not significantly so. The modal *tal vez* (perhaps) appeared most frequently among MHC expressions (63 tokens) and was often used in conjunction with other higher commitment expressions.

- (12) *Y digo coraje, porque se debió enfrentar un formidable, tal vez <EP, EMV, SI>, el más formidable aparato mediático en épocas, donde todos los sabemos <EP, CFV, ISE>, si no aparecés en la televisión o en el diario, no existís. Y tomar una decisión de levantar la mano frente a esas amenazas, bien vale que esta Presidenta reconozca, a propios y ajenos, el esfuerzo de esos legisladores que no se fueron, aunque estaban sometidos a presiones, y votaron con convicción. Me refiero, por supuesto <EP, EMV, SI>, a los que tenían incluido en su plataforma eso. Porque claro <EP, IIE, ISI>, el que, por ejemplo... –Suenan el timbre en el recinto.*

And I say courage, because they had to confront a formidable, **perhaps**, the most formidable media apparatus in ages, where **we all know**, if you do not appear on television or in the newspaper, you do not exist. And to make a decision to raise a hand facing these threats, it is well worth that this President recognizes, to those familiar and unfamiliar, the effort of those legislators who did not go, even though they were subject to pressure, and voted with conviction. I refer to, **of course**, to those who had that included in their platforms. Because **clearly**, that, for example... –The bell rings in the chamber.

In this fragment, CFK criticizes the supposed power of the “formidable media apparatus” and praises the recent passing of the Audiovisual Communication Services Law by her fellow legislators. She qualifies her claim that this media apparatus is the most formidable in decades using the modal *tal vez* (perhaps), but then, in the same sentence, uses the full commitment expression *sabemos* (we know) to imply that this formidability is common knowledge. In this case, a clear example of presupposition manipulation, CFK not only places the burden of proof on her audience but legitimizes the claim by including herself in the collective. Additionally, utilizing the evidential expression *por supuesto* (of course), she clarifies which legislators she wishes to congratulate, that is, her supporters. This fragment demonstrates how CFK creates a polarized environment between her and the media, and then exacerbates that conflict using an evidential expression which creates a division between supporting and opposing legislators. Interestingly, she begins to explain herself, using yet another evidential marker *claro* (clearly), but is interrupted by the bell ringing in the chamber; she never returns to her argument.

Regarding evidential expressions in general, they appeared most frequently in fragments where CFK was positively representing herself or where she was discrediting others.

- (13) *Bueno, cuando le pregunté un poco la tasa, porque yo, obviamente <EP, IIE, ISI>, como buena administradora o más o menos o regular o mala, como ustedes quieran, le pregunté a qué tasa. Bueno, me habló que podíamos hablar de los derechos de exportación, me pareció que 35 por ciento a dólar era un poquito cara así que lo dejé en la agenda.*

Well, when I asked him what the rate was, because I, obviously, as a good administrator or more or less or regular or bad, whichever you all would want, I asked him what the rate was. So, he told me that we could talk about the exportation rights, 35 percent per dollar seemed to me to be a bit expensive so I left it in the agenda.

Here, CFK references a visit to an association of agricultural producers that she made with her then Minister of Agriculture, Julián Domínguez. During this meeting, she *obviamente* (obviously) asked him about the related economic data seeing as she is a “good administrator”. Consistent with her ethos of credibility, CFK presents herself as an expert and legitimizes this representation through the use of an evidential expression which presupposes that this is shared knowledge. It should be noted that this utterance could be interpreted as ironic, especially given the gradation from “good” to “bad” to, flippantly, “whichever you all would want”. However, considering the manipulative potential of other fragments in this analysis, I believe this example is useful in further characterizing how CFK utilizes evidential markers to positively represent herself.

Unsurprisingly, low commitment stance resources appeared very infrequently, comprising only 5.5% of the total epistemic stance expressions identified. This infrequency can be attributed CFK’s speaking style as well as the communicative situation. As discussed above, CFK’s *ethos* of credibility would be contradicted by an absence of knowledge about a topic. Similarly, expressing ignorance would be unlikely in an address where the sole purpose is to provide information about country’s current state. CFK did utilize some aponic stance expressions, such as *no sé* (I don’t know), but almost always in a rhetorical form.

- (14) *Quiero también, en estos tiempos que vienen, en los que hablamos de sintonía fina, que cuando me tocó dar el mensaje ante la Unión Industrial Argentina, en la cual vamos a tener y para ello les he recomendado... “Recomendación” es un eufemismo en realidad, le he ordenado, eso para que mañana no digan que soy autoritaria, porque parece ser que los que dan órdenes a los ministros, son autoritarios, es una cosa muy extraña, yo no sé <EP, APH, SE> si quieren un presidente que le den órdenes los ministros a él o...no sé <EP, APH, SE>. Pero bueno, yo siempre viví en un país donde los presidentes elegidos por el voto popular daban orden a los ministros y los ministros que no estaban de acuerdo, por supuesto <EP, EMV, SI>, tenían siempre la opción de la renuncia, como todo el mundo.*

I want to as well, in these times that are coming, in these that we talk about fine tuning, that when it was my turn to give the message before the Argentine Industrial Union, in which we are going to have and for it I recommended them... “Recommendation” is a euphemism in reality, I ordered them, [I say] that so that tomorrow they don’t say that I am authoritarian, because it seems to be that those who give orders to

their ministers, are authoritarian, it is a very strange thing, **I do not know** if they want a president whose ministers give orders to him or... **I do not know**. But so, I always lived in a country where the presidents elected by the popular vote gave orders to the ministers and the ministers who did not agree, **of course**, always had the option of resignation, as in the rest of the world.

Here, CFK references a speech she gave to the Argentine Industrial Union, utilizing the opportunity to share her opinions on presidents giving orders to their ministers. She admits her preference to the verb “order” rather than “recommend”, immediately anticipating that tomorrow she will be labeled authoritarian –supposedly by the press. Then, she utilizes the aphonic *no sé* rhetorically to suggest that she does not “know” whether her audience would prefer cabinet members giving orders to a president, with her tone indicating that she believes the opposite. This creative use of an aphonic stance expression, which are supposed to indicate a speaker distancing themselves from an assertion, supports CFK’s attempt to positively represent herself. She proceeds to justify the use of presidential orders by arguing that she has always lived in a country where this was the norm, and that *por supuesto* (of course), the ministers always had the option to resign. By anticipating an opposing viewpoint, the use of this evidential expression serves to background the assertion that she is authoritarian by highlighting the right of government ministers to refuse presidential orders and resign. However, CFK makes no reference to if these orders were ever refused and does not make explicit her opinion to the potential refusal of her orders. In this way, she maintains the image of herself as a competent president following in the tradition of her predecessors without having to confront whether or not she is authoritarian.

Expressions of marked enunciative position were also uncommon, only 2.5% of the total number of epistemic stance expressions, which can be attributed to the non-collaborative nature of these discourses. In all the analyzed transcripts, CFK was the only speaker addressing a large audience of legislators and public spectators. She was also the only person with a microphone, meaning that there was no possibility of anyone participating in the discourse.

(15) *Les digo* <EP, MEP, SE> *que no me mueve ningún afán estatistas, no, al contrario. Nosotros le estamos pagando y acá vienen los números, porque yo me guío por los números, sí, en estas cosas me guío por los números.*

**I tell you all** that I am not moved by any statist ambition, no, on the contrary. We are paying him and here come the numbers, because I guide myself by the number, yes, in these things I guide myself by the numbers.

However, as seen in the above fragment, CFK does use the marked enunciational mode to emphasize that she is not a statist, and her support for the renationalization of the country’s trains is purely based in statistics. In this way, she accentuates her capability while backgrounding the perception that her actions are overreaching or authoritarian.

**3.2. Inter/subjectivity in CFK’s presidential discourse.** Table 2 presents the results for the categories of inter/subjectivity in the ten discourses. In general terms, the results coincide with Table 1 and the existing analyses of CFK’s discourse.

Inter/subjectivity	CFK Presidential Discourse 147,324 words		
	N	%	R
SE	393	41.1	2.668
SI	175	18.3	1.188
ISE	220	22.9	1.493
ISI	169	17.7	1.147
<b>Total</b>	957	100	6.496

Table 4 - Subjectivity and intersubjectivity in CFK's discourse (raw frequency and normalized frequency per thousand words).

She exhibits a clear preference for explicit subjective expressions, where the speaker assumes personal responsibility for their assertions, and explicit intersubjective expressions, where responsibility is assigned collectively or to the addressee. Regarding the high frequency explicit subjective expressions, CFK assumes personal responsibility as a method of justifying her assertions. One of these expressions, *recuerdo* (I remember) appeared often in this category (38 tokens):

- (16) *Y en materia de cultura creo <EP, CFV, SE> que hemos dado el salto más importante en la verdadera cultura que en la construcción de la historia, y el año pasado, el año del Bicentenario, en esas jornadas memorables donde millones y millones de argentinos se volcaron a la calle, para desmentir con su presencia y su activa participación el retrato que querían vendernos de nosotros mismos, yo la verdad que si de algo me voy a sentir orgullosa toda mi vida fue de haber participado y ayudado a organizar esa magnífica auto conmemoración que se dio el pueblo argentino en sus 200 años de historia. Todavía recuerdo <EP, CFV, SE> a título de anécdota una publicación que hizo una politóloga o filósofa, no sé <EP, APH SE>, un día 19 de abril, unos días antes del Bicentenario diciendo que no iba a pasar nada porque no se había organizado nada, o un conocido noticiero diciendo no vayan al centro que hay mucha concentración. Vemos entonces que realmente tenemos en nosotros mismos la fuerza necesaria para seguir adelante.*

And in terms of cultura **I believe** that we have made the most important jump in true culture than in the construction of history, and last year, the year of the Bicentennial, in those memorable days where millions and millions of Argentines poured into the streets, to disprove with their presence the active participation the portrait that they wanted to sell us of ourselves, I truthfully if I'm going to feel proud of anything in my life it is having participated and helped organize that magnificent self-commemoration that the Argentine people gave themselves in their 200 years of history. I still **remember** the title of an anecdote in a publication from a political scientist or philosopher, **I don't know**, on 19th of April, a few days before the Bicentennial saying that nothing would happen because nothing was organized, or a well-known news channel saying to not go to the center because there was a large gathering. We see then that we really have in ourselves the force necessary to move forward.

In this fragment, CFK discusses the celebration of Argentina's Bicentennial, arguing that it was the most important cultural achievement ever to be made in the country. She also discredits those who criticized the celebration, citing that she remembers an article which doubted that this celebration was going to happen. Specifically, she even remembers the title of this publication, although she never shares that information. Arguably, much like in the above fragments, CFK does not feel it is necessary to share such details, because for her the simple endorsement of a claim is enough for its legitimization.

Another, perhaps clearer, example of speaker mystification can be seen in CFK's use of explicit intersubjective expressions. CFK utilizes these phrases to place the burden of responsibility on a shared collective or entirely on her audience. By doing so, she obfuscates her role as the conceptualizer of the assertion, presenting the information as already known by the audience. One

such expression is *saben* (you all know), which was the second most frequent marker in the entire corpus (121 tokens).

- (17) *Yo creo en serio en la división de poderes, no me lleno la boca hablando de la república y de la división de los poderes y veo luego a legisladores que como no logran tener los votos que necesitan aquí adentro, van y encuentran jueces..., encuentran los jueces que según la Argentina mediática manejamos nosotros que les dan la razón y se introducen en cuestiones que son estrictamente políticas y a resolver entre el Poder Ejecutivo y ustedes que son el otro poder político de la República, el que representa a las provincias y al pueblo. Y en esta Constitución del '94, hay decretos de necesidad y urgencia. No los puse yo, les aclaro que comparto la figura de los instrumentos de decretos de necesidad y urgencia, si no estuviera de acuerdo no los utilizaría, pero también quiero recordarles que de todos los presidentes argentinos, de todos, fui la que menos decretos de necesidad y urgencia utilizó. Pero están allí, en la Constitución, son una atribución del Poder Ejecutivo que es el que administra el país en general. Y también me tocó cuando fui legisladora impulsar la sanción que reglamentara el ejercicio de ese derecho por parte del Poder Ejecutivo para que pudiera haber control de ustedes, el Parlamento. Desde 1994, donde antes inclusive de que estuviera en la Constitución se dictaban decretos de necesidad y urgencia, desde 1994 hasta el 2006, se dictaron cientos de decretos de necesidad y urgencia que ustedes nunca controlaron, nunca. Si hoy pueden controlarlos es porque yo presenté un proyecto como legisladora y obtuve los votos de la mayoría para poder sancionarlo. Por eso **creo** <EP, CFV, SE> que hablo desde un lugar no fácil, pero sí real y concreto y **saben** <EP, CFV, ISE> que estoy hablando con la verdad. Podré caer no simpática, pero **saben** <EP, CFV, ISE> que estoy hablando con la verdad.*

I believe seriously in the separation of powers, I don't fill my mouth talking about the republic and the separation of powers and later I see legislators that since they don't achieve the votes they need here, they go and find judges..., they find the judges that according to the mediatic Argentina we manipulate and they give them reasoning and then they introduce themselves in questions that are strictly political to be resolved between the Executive Branch and you all who are the other political power of the Republic, the one that represents the provinces and the people. And in this Constitution of '94, there are decrees of necessity and urgency. I did not put them, I clarify that by sharing the figure of the decrees of necessity and urgency, if I did not agree, I would not use them, but I also want to remind you that of all the Argentine presidents, of all, I was the one who utilized the least necessity and urgency decrees. But they are there, in the Constitution, they are an attribution of the Executive Branch that is the one that administers the country in general. And it also was required of me when I was a legislator to push the sanction that would regulate the exercise of that right by the Executive Branch so that it could control you, Parliament. Since 1994, where decrees of necessity and urgency were dictated even before the Constitution was in force, from 1994 to 2006, hundreds of decrees of necessity and urgency were issued that you never controlled, never. If today they can control them it is because I presented a project as a legislator and obtained the votes of the majority in order to sanction it. That is why **I believe** that I speak from a place that is not easy, but that is real and concrete and **you all know** that I am speaking truthfully. It may seem unkind, but **you all know** that I am speaking truthfully.

Here, CFK discusses the history of Necessity and Urgency Decrees, Argentine executive orders that have the force of law. Until 2006, these decrees had no legislative control, and CFK highlights that as a legislator she was responsible for giving Congress this oversight. She then notes twice that while her comments may seem unkind, the legislators *saben* (know) that she is speaking the truth. The use of this stance resource not only mystifies CFK as the conceptualizer responsible for this claim, but also manipulates presuppositions by implying that her truthfulness is common knowledge.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

In this paper, I have presented a case study on the use of epistemic legitimization strategies and inter/subjective positioning by former Argentine president Cristina Fernández de Kirchner. The results of this investigation show that CFK demonstrates a clear preference for the use of full and medium to high commitment stance resources, those that indicate a speaker's degrees of commitment of the speaker towards the communicated information. The findings also indicate that CFK prefers the use of explicit subjective and intersubjective positioning, signifying that she explicitly assumes personal or shared responsibility for her claims. These data reflect the previous research into CFK's discourse (Vitale and Maizels, 2011; Bitonte, 2010; Maizels, 2014; Pérez,

2014; Raiter, 2009; Raiter, 2014), namely that she utilizes these strategies to discursively construct her *ethos* of credibility and to potentially manipulate the presuppositions of her audience.

These findings have various implications for the investigation of CFK's discourse and for the study of epistemic legitimization and inter/subjective positioning. With respect to the former, this project, in addition to Pedrazzini *et al.* (2012), represents one of the first quantitative analysis of CFK's discourse and therefore serves to support the qualitative conclusions reached by other authors. Additionally, this is the first project to apply Marín Arrese's methodology outside of Europe, and I hope it serves not only as a complement to her and her colleagues work but also as a reminder of the importance of studying languages in the Americas. Similarly, while this methodology has been applied to presidential discourse, this is the first attempt to analyze a presidential address, broadening the scope of its use.

In accordance with current trends in pragmatics and critical discourse analysis, the epistemic stance resources analyzed in this study should be examined using a corpus of Rioplatense Spanish to further identify how these linguistic devices are used in this context and perhaps clarify CFK's use of them. More generally, critical discourse analysts and pragmaticists should continue to explore the manipulative uses of epistemic stance resources in political discourse, as well as other pragmatic phenomena. As I have intended to demonstrate in this study, epistemic stance resources can be used manipulatively by political figures to overcome the epistemic safeguards of their audience and mystify their responsibility for their words. A quantitative investigation of epistemic stance resources can inform other critical discourse analyses in ways that provide a more nuanced approach to understanding manipulation, a methodology useful in analyzing orators such as CFK.

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