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Reasoning with Quotation. The Information Structure of Metalinguistic Discourse

PhD Dissertation

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February 2012

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SUMMARY

The dissertation investigates quotational phenomena that occur in natural language. It undertakes the paramount goal of characterizing the properties which enable and secure the deductive and, more generally, interpretive potential of sentences affected by such phenomena. These properties are addressed with the customary methods and concepts of formal approaches to language.

Other than the preliminary chapter, designed as an introduction to semantics and the problems quotation raises for compositionality, the dissertation comprises three chapters.

Chapter 2 is a review of extant literature on the topic of quotation, whose purpose is not historical, but analytical. It charts the domain of quotation studies by inspecting the tenets of various theories proposed so far, reports on the dialogue of arguments and counterarguments formulated and explicates those that are left implicit in the literature. It serves both as context for the proposals of the present work, and as in-depth medium for the comprehension of the topic. The chapter closes on the account deemed most suitable to integrate quotation into the general project of formal semantics (Shan 2010).

Chapter 3 aims to produce an inventory of inferential patterns licensed in quotative environments and to model the felicity of a metalinguistic utterance in a discourse that is not, at the moment the utterance is contributed, about language. Since inference is essentially a cognitive instrument that manipulates true information, and since the interplay of given / presupposed and upgrade information is an interface phenomenon joining syntax and discourse, a considerable part of the chapter is devoted to syntactic aspects. The part in question is not meant as a contribution to syntactic theory, but as a probe for semantic insights that can be read off the syntactic structures.

Chapter 4 is, like the one preceding it, exploratory. It monitors quotative devices in actual (albeit relatively formal) speech and adopts, to that end, the

methods of discourse and prosodic analysis (the Geneva modular approach). The result is a case study that, on one hand, verifies hypotheses already accessible from prior research or earlier sections of the dissertation and, on the other hand, helps to amend them and formulate more fine-grained solutions.

The challenge quotational phenomena pose for compositionality ensues from the sort of semantic insulation illustrated in (1). While (1b) is obviously a part of (1a), the meaning of (1a) does not seem to be a function of the meaning of (1b).

(1) a. 'Fry is brilliant' is printed on two separate lines.b. Fry is brilliant.

Even when narrowed down, the problem remains baffling. Assuming that (1b) is a part of the complex expression that acts as subject phrase in (1a), compositionality predicts that the meaning of this subject phrase is a function of the meaning of (1b). However, (1b) is about a man and his intellectual or expressive abilities, while (1a) is about a sequence of words (granted, a sentence). Unless there is a model in which expressions used to refer to specific individuals are among the properties of these individuals, it is difficult to see how the derivation proceeds. This, briefly, is the malfunction addressed by philosophers when they ask whether quotation is really a functional expression.

The dissertation uses the received typology in quotation studies, as set up by Cappelen & Lepore (1997). They take into consideration three genuine varieties: direct, pure and mixed, and the one spurious type of 'scare quotes', illustrated in (2a), (2b), (3) and (4) respectively.

(2) a. Eliot writes, 'This is the way the world ends / Not with a bang but with a whimper.'

b. 'This is the way the world ends / Not with a bang but with a whimper' is probably the most quoted passage of all of Eliot's poetry.

- (3) a. Eliot wrote / thinks that worlds always end 'not with a bang but with a whimper.
 - b. So I will conclude my talk 'not with a bang but with a whimper'.
- (4) a. This sentence is either false or 'gappy.'
 - b. Discourse referents have LIFESPANS quote unquote of various lengths.

Chapter 2 presents the state-of-the-art theories of quotation. The group of referential accounts is discussed first, whose origin is in the founding logical literature, revisionist in most cases with respect to natural languages. The section features the minimal theory, as Cappelen & Lepore (2007) chose to label their proposal, recognizably due to Alfred Tarski (1956), and the demonstrative theory, originally proposed by Davidson (1979), extended and implemented by Cappelen & Lepore (1997) and Washington & Biro (2001).

Pragmatic theories (sometimes referred to as 'use theories') follow, which focus on pre-semantic choice of language and on the performative virtues of quotative utterances. Identity accounts, rooted in the medieval theory of *suppositio*, are developed by Christensen (1967), Washington (1992), and Saka (1998). Clark & Gerrig (1990) put forth a theory with behavioural highlights, whereby quotation is a member of the broader class of demonstrations; their model in presented together with the application due to Recanati (2001).

The minimal, the demonstrative, and the identity theories are, in a sense, equally referential, inasmuch as they address the question of how autonymous reference is secured. Is metalinguistic mention an independent type of reference whose *genus proximum* is shared with reference by definite description, by proper name, or by direct ostension? The minimal and demonstrative theorists answer positively here. Or does it involve fundamentally different devices? The identity theorists will chose this latter option.

Explanations range from ascribing semantic pertinence to the quotation marks alone, whose referential role is fulfilled demonstratively or by means of a specific intension, to allowing the enclosed expression to describe or depict (iconically) the object referred to. The controversy over these answers arises from the implications they have on the scope of pragmatic enrichment, as some render quotative expressions context-sensitive, while others posit a constant semantic value of the quotation, irrespective of the context in which it occurs.

In the third part of the chapter, the properly formal accounts are presented. They concentrate on mixed quotation and provide explicit methods of derivation so as to capture the twofold contribution of the quotative phrases. The insights picked up from this third set of theories will prove extremely useful in the following, engineering and application-oriented chapter. Potts (2007) suggests a two-dimensional semantics, whereby quotations are directly compositional, in the Montagovian tradition: one dimension for the semantic value of the expression as if it were unquoted, the other for the utterance of the expression and whatever is predicated of it. Geurts & Maier (2003) propose a unary semantics recovered presuppositionally, along the lines of 'what the (presupposed) speaker meant to express by using the phrases in quotation marks, on the occasion of the specific (presupposed) speech event'; their elaboration rests on the framework of dynamic semantics (Discourse Representation Theory). Finally, Shan (2010) argues that quotations are semantically underspecified with regard to the circumstances of evaluation and the context parameter, and that they thereby denote the character of the quoted expression. This denotation is taken to contribute compositionally (i.e. predictably and recursively) to the meaning of the host sentence.

Characters are higher-order senses, responsible for the assignment of values to indexical expressions; Kaplan (1989) defines them as functions whose range is the domain of intensions. On Shan's (2010) highly formalized account, quotation acts as a monstrous operator that meddles with an invisible, but strong indexical: the language a sentence is expressed in.

Traditionally, the formal apparatus of semantics uses the interpretation function [.] to individuate its object language. The result is that, while the object language can change, just as speakers can change and the language they use can change, the actual movement from one language to another cannot be represented as output of the interpretation function. This is why capturing code-switching and quotation by means of a compositional semantics presents so great a challenge. Such a semantic project would be forced to work with (at least) two different interpretation functions and, moreover, one of them would have to be in the range of the other. Kaplan points out that the task of deciding what language is used is *presemantic* – a precondition to any semantic operation.

The existence of an essential connection between quotation and character appears evident. It would seem that, just as prefixing 'that' to a main clause denoting a truth value yields a direct expression of that sentence's sense (an expression denoting the corresponding function from circumstances to truth values), enclosing it between quotation marks yields a direct expression of that sentence's character (an expression denoting the corresponding function from contexts to senses). Across the batches of referential and formal accounts, two major alternatives for the compositional proceedings of quotation can be discerned. Quotation fundamentally involves either (i) quantification over utterances or (ii) quantification over contexts of utterance. The denotation of a quotational expression is, accordingly, either a set of sets of utterances (i.e. a set of utterance properties, just as a quantifier over the domain of individuals denotes a set of properties of individuals) or a set of properties pertaining to contexts of use.

The two options correspond, roughly, to treating a quotative expression as a reified object (and thereby out of linguistic order) or, respectively, as a malleable instrument still able to perform linguistic (syntactic and semantic) tasks. It remains to be seen whether an absolute choice is desirable or whether the theory should encompass both options and allow quotations to alternate their contribution depending on specific features of the context they occur in.

It may be advantageous to store them both and further index them by differentiae issued from pragmatic accounts, e.g. by the depictive vs. accessory aspects of the demonstration performed. Quantification over utterances would pair with depictive shape and accessory character, whereas quantification over contexts of use would pair with accessory shape and depictive character.

Chapter 3 explores uncharted territories of quotation, viz. phenomena that arise from its interaction with Information Structure (IS). Generally, there are two ways of understanding IS, which correspond to the two overarching parts of this chapter.

On one sense, it is an internal affair of utterances, responsible for their partition into zones of shared content and zones of novel information. This separation is usually effected by dislocating the expression that encodes old information to the left of the utterance; intuitively, if you obey the European cultural code, whereby left comes first and right comes second: first you say what is known by everyone, and then you give your own comments. Also high to the left, so that they can scope over everything that is uttered, indices must be present relative to the identity or location of the speaker. This amounts to a syntactic representation of the speaker's indexical coordinates in the actual phrase structure of a sentence. Since quotation has, at least superficially, to do with manipulating the indexical coordinates, all these syntactic properties are worth investigating (section 3.1), as they might (or should) support interesting semantic features.

If a wider view is endorsed, it quickly becomes evident that IS is a discourseregulating mechanism. Certain patterns must obtain for a discourse or conversation to flow coherently. What is at issue or under discussion at the moment when an utterance is contributed is expected to match what, internal to the utterance, is marked as shared information zone. This wider understanding of IS is the background for section 3.2, which explores how a metalinguistic claim can be accommodated into an object-language discourse, and how speakers and hearers exploit this accommodation in inferences the premise of which is quotational.

Cases of fronted quotation, e.g. (5) below, are addressed on account of their intuitively rich IS. The logical form assigned to such an example, worked out on the model put forth by Partee (1991), is given in (6). According to Partee, focalization induces a quantificational structure whose restrictor will accommodate the presupposition (or focus-frame), with focused material introduced in the nuclear scope of the quantifier.

- (5) 'We only know the things that we tame,' said the fox.
- (6) $\exists x (_{RESTRICTOR 1} \exists y (_{RESTRICTOR 2} x \text{ said } y) (_{NS 2} x \text{ said 'We only know the things that we tame'}) (_{NS 1} the fox said 'We only know the things that we tame')$

It is now be easier to explain why sentences like (5), despite commanding prominence of the quotation and flatness of the reporting clause (as expected from a focus + background structure), are equally legible as topic + comment configurations. This is only possible with a twofold-quantified sentence, as illustrated in (6), because the four concepts pair up oppositely in syntax and semantics: syntactically, topic is analogous to focus and comment to presupposition / background; semantically, topics are akin to presupposition / background and foci to comments. With respect to the mapping directions drawn by Partee, the representation in (6), resumed here with clarifying annotation, is satisfactory:

(7) $\exists x (_{TOPIC} \exists y (_{PRESUPPOSITION} x said y) (_{INSERT FOCUS} x said 'We only know the things that we tame')) (_{INSERT COMMENT} the fox said 'We only know the things that we tame')$

Syntax-wise, two different representations have been proposed to account for sentences with fronted direct quotation, both defendable with plausible semantic reasons. On one hand, Collins & Branigan (1997, but also Suñer (2000) for Romance) claim that the quotation is an adjunct to the reporting clause and hence that the main point of the utterance resides in the reporting clause. The construction is treated as a report, so that indexicals inside the quotation are prohibited from taking wide-scope and no undesired truth-conditions ensue for the quoted clause. This further correlates with acceptable discourse congruence on behalf of the speaker uttering the report.

On the other hand, Hansen (2000) and Giorgi (2010) indirectly argue that the quotation, and not the introducing phrase ('said x'), is main point material. What was formerly treated as a reporting clause is now treated as a parenthetical and claimed to realize an evidential head in the left periphery of the quotation. This latter option is dismissed by an argument showing that it requires that the speaker commit himself to false propositions (should the preposed clause express falsehood). It follows that, in contradistinction from as-said parentheticals, the reporting content is asserted, and the most suitable syntactic representation is the one whereby the quotation acts as adjunct or is scoped over by an operator recruited in the matrix.

Evidence is provided to the effect that, generally, fronting a constituent, coupled with the sort of inversion documented by Collins & Branigan (1997), triggers a quotative or demonstrative effect on the dislocated constituent. It appears that the left periphery of reporting clauses preferentially accommodates quotational constituents. Since the most obvious option for the interpretation of a left-dislocated phrase is a topic reading thereof, the chapter proceeds to investigating the potential grounds that underlie this option.

It is shown that, when they enrolled as subjects, pure quotations also display detachment properties that are specific of topicalised constituents, more precisely of contrastive topics. This position, marked as a focus-within-topic, is argued to explain the metalinguistic shift with pure quotation, while at the same time leaving some extensional bridges unburned. The felicity rule for contrastive topics (cf. Kadmon 2001) states that the topic semantic value of an utterance must coincide with the focus semantic value of the last question under discussion (QUD). In other words, the last QUD (a set of propositions) must be a member of the topic semantic value of

the current utterance, which consists of a set of sets of propositions (i.e. a set of questions). With respect to quotation, the prospective task is to represent the information structure in a way that it makes an utterance which ushers in a metalinguistic topic discursively felicitous. What should the topic semantic value of this utterance be in order to admit of a non-quotational (and non-metalinguistic) QUD as member?

As a tentative answer, a distinction may be envisaged between properties that individuals have with respect to the possible worlds apparatus and properties that individuals have with respect to the context-of-utterance apparatus. In relation to a possible world, a property is truthfully ascribed to an individual if s/he is a member of the set if entities denoted by that property. In relation to a context of utterance, a property is truthfully ascribed to an individual if the speaker of that context actually ascribes the property in question, by means of a referential or predicative act, to the individual (e.g. to say, "Harold is intelligent" meaning that Harold is intelligent is equivalent to saying about Harold that he is, contextually, Harold and intelligent). The QUD is about Harold's mundane (or metaphysical) properties, the metalinguistic statement is about Harold's contextual properties, and the missing link between the two, the topic semantic value of the metalinguistic statement – about Harold's properties in general, abstracting over the mundane (or metaphysical) and contextual specifications.

The batches of inferences discussed support the call for accessible structure assigned to quotations. The following empirical arguments may also be thought of as circumstantial evidence interpreters rely on when deducing, for instance, the truth of a indirect report from the corresponding direct quotation. First, verbatim reports are exceptional rather than normative (for obvious reasons, but see also experimental evidence reported in Clark & Gerrig 1990: 797), and substitution or transformation are as legitimate as translation is. In actual practice, failure of extensionality (or hyper-intensionality) only affects specific words or phrases in the quoted sentence, words or phrases that are relevant, unrepeatable, or meaningless *from the point of view of the reporter*.

Second, direct reports of potential utterances prove that quotations are generated by the reporter using a grammar (and a lexicon) s/he deems reasonable to ascribe to the virtual speaker. Third, people are interested in quoting (and uttering) items that can count as language, viz. items that are presumed meaningful and endowed with structure. And fourth there is linguistic evidence that a quoted clause contributes more than just its surface structure to the 'semantically significant syntax' of the embedding sentence; there are semantic phenomena (mostly of anaphoric nature) whose correct resolution depends on the deep structure of the quotation (cf. Partee 1973, Maier 2008).

Negated direct reports confirm the kinship between the presumed quotative operator, a point of view operator indexed for the reporter, and focus. Speakers tend to falsify utterance-wise true speech reports, if the cut falls outside the range of their own, reporting focus:

(8) Bolinger never said 'Accent is predictable'; he said 'Accent is predictable – if you're a mind-reader.' (from Pullum (1991: 71))

The emergent hypothesis here is that to account for the truth of the negative sentence, an adequate theory will restrict the scope of quotation to whatever anchors the point that the speaker wishes to make when quoting. Only then will the quotation be felicitous.

An interesting result of the discussion of scare quotes inferences is that metalinguistic negation appears to select the scare quotes variety – not the mixed variety of quotation; the former blocks, while the latter admits of disquotation:

- (9) a. We saw the 'hippopotami'.
 - ... b. We saw the hippopotami. (mixed quotation)
- (10) a. We saw the 'hippopotami'.

 \therefore b We saw the entities dubbed 'hippopotami' which aren't really hippopotami. \equiv We didn't see the hippopotami. (*scare quotation*)

(11) a. We didn't see the 'hippopotami'.

: b. We didn't see the hippopotami. (mixed quotation)

(12) a. We didn't see the 'hippopotami'.

 \therefore b. We didn't see the entities dubbed 'hippopotami' which aren't really hippopotami. \supseteq We saw the hippopotami. (*scare quotation*)

The kind of taxiing between quoted material and disquotational content documented by the sets of inferences presented in Chapter 3 must be supported by a supple theoretical account. For the needs of the inferential system, what is required is an account which restricts as much as possible the scope of quotation, in order to retrieve as much meaning as possible from it. With respect to the inference patterns licensed by quotation, the more transparency a theory allows for, the better it is. On the other hand, some mechanism will have to be envisaged, which can manage the en-quotational phenomena (valid inferences to a conclusion which introduces quotation marks, which usually exploit the quotative features on the left-peripheral position).

The characterial account presented at the end of the previous chapter comes equipped with such a mechanism and is deflationist enough to be inferentially useful. The mechanism for deriving an indirect report from a direct one is, aptly called, *unquotation*. Originally, it consists of a rather low-frequency procedure whereby the reporter adapts or substitutes an expression of the quoted sentence in order to make it better comprehensible in his reporting context. Expanding unquotation to the minimization of opacity or obscurity appears to be the solution for making direct reports transparent. Further required would be a functional treatment of quotation (provided, as indicated, by Shan (2010)) and a rule to constrain the application of the unquotational mechanism. We hypothesize that unquotation applies by default to all background material and is prohibited on focused constituents. In other words, constituents of a quotation are always unquoted unless ostensively marked as prominent, i.e. unless focused.

Chapter 4 investigates the range of auditory equivalents for quotation marks in French speech. It is conceived as a case study of 16 relevant excerpts comprising approximately 5 minutes, drawn from a corpus of 10 lectures on the topic of 16th and 17th century French literature (a rough total of 900 minutes). The lectures were delivered at (and recorded by) the University of Geneva during the autumn semester of 2009.

The aims undertaken in this final chapter are to: (i) describe the phonetic realization of quotational boundaries (in French); (ii) explore the presence and mission of demonstrative pronouns and of the choices for prosodic prominence in quotative contexts; (iii) examine the correlations of these choices to the partitioning of quotations into depictive and accessory aspects (on the model of Clark & Gerrig 1990); (iv) prospect the interaction of quotational phenomena with the information structure of sentences uttered or text acts contributed.

With respect to the global level of discourse-structuring, the modular approach developed by researchers in Geneva is employed (cf. Roulet et al. 2001; Simon 2004). Of the multiple levels of the model, reference is be made to (1) the hierarchical module, responsible for what may be called the macro-syntax of discourses, usually implemented in the same pass with the relational organization, which assigns semantic contents to relations between various units of the hierarchy; (2) to the polyphonic organization, whereby the interpreter identifies enunciative sources, layers the actual and represented speech situations, and conjectures on the reason of their convocation; and, finally, (3) to the elementary phono-prosodic organization, whose features are usually poly-functional and make most use of the heterarchical architecture of the model, whereby every dimension or organization level is allowed to communicate and interact with every other one (in contradistinction from classical Fodorian modularity).

Investigations of speech prosody focus, as usual, on the behaviour of the intensity and fundamental frequency curves, as well as on temporal aspects (duration of syllables, speech rate, punctuation by pauses). The physical parameters are exploited by speakers in three directions, in observance of three 'biological codes' (cf. Gussenhoven 2002): the frequency code, the effort code and the production code. All analyses proposed follow the four-tier model proposed by Piet Mertens (2008) for French intonation, whereby syllables are perceived as low (marked B for *bas*), high (marked H for *haut*), *infra*-low (marked B-), or *super*-high (marked H+) targets, relative to the speaker's frequency range and to neighbouring syllables. Other than transcriptions, prosograms are available for each excerpt – visual models of the strings analyzed, most useful for their stylized representation of the pitch curve and the rendition of intensity. Prosograms are the output of a script that is also due to Mertens (2004), written for P. Boersma's and D. Weenink's *Praat* (2010); annotation, phonetization, and alignment of phonemes to sound were done using J.-P. Goldman's *EasyAlign* (2010).

The main contributions this chapter makes might be summarized as follows. A methodologically sound description of salience strategies used in quotational speech contexts is provided. Second-pass reference by a demonstrative pronoun is taken to be empirical evidence in support of Davidson's demonstrative theory of quotation (and its construal as proposing the equation of quotation marks to a topicalisation device). A fresh view of scare-quotes as intensional operators emerges, as the variety is the only one to collocate with mention of the quotation marks ('entre guillemets'). Just because the phrase 'entre guillemets' does not designate a property of individuals, it doesn't mean it cannot be directly compositional. It could be assimilated to the class of intensional adjectives, such as 'former', 'alleged' or 'putative', whose designatum is a property of a property, or it could be member of a parallel class – that of contextual adjectives, whose designatum is a property.

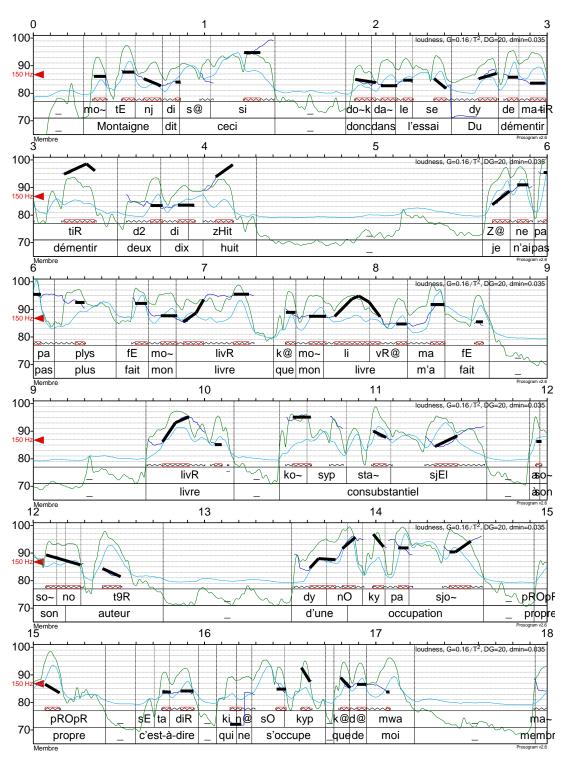
The chapter draws some conjectures to be further tested regarding the scope of focalization strategies and tonal boundaries borne by reporting verbs in relation to their macro-syntactic position. Finally, it contributes an improved model of the prosody / polyphony interface, whereby non-focused segments of a direct quotation may be treated as non-quotational when they are not depictive of the relevant cultural type, but merely supportive of that depiction (or of the demonstration proper).

This all-focus vs. narrow-focus distinction is illustrated below on the direct variety. In (13), punctuation by breaks is substantiated by initial emphatic accents (see transcription), articulatory effort is remarkable, and the intensity curve is globally ampler. These features are all indicative of broad focal scope.

a. Montaigne dit ceci, donc dans l'essai *Du Démentir* (II, 18) : « Je
 n'ai pas plus fait mon livre que mon livre m'ai fait ; livre consubstantiel à son auteur ; d'une occupation propre (c'est-à-dire qui ne s'occupe que de moi) ; membre de ma vie. »

b. Montaigne dit^{BB} ceci^{H/H} # donc dans l'essai Du démentir^{H/H} deux dix huit^{B/H} # je n'ai pas plus: fait mon livre^{BH} que mon livre ^{/B}m'a fait^{B-B-} # livre # ^Hconsubstantiel # à son auteur^{B-B-} # d'une ^{\H}occupation # propre^{B-B-} # c'est-à-dire^{BB} # qui ne s'occupe que de moi^{B-B-} # ^{\H}mem:bre de ma vie^{B-B-}

In (14), the words between quotation marks come from Pierre Corneille's belated response to the controversy stirred by his tragicomedy *Le Cid*. Their utterance is frugally punctuated, but breaks occur at crucial moments, so as to set off as focused the sequence 'si la même raison qui les a fait parler' (and everything else as supportive aspects of the quotation).



Picture 1. Prosogram of excerpt (13)

The focus is ushered in by a sudden rise in loudness on 'peine', which the highlighted material will take over; a break of 0.30 seconds; an astonishingly long onset on 'si': the consonant's duration is 0.25 seconds (cf. Astésano et al. 2002, 'the Onset / Rime ratio for an emphatic accent is twice as large than for non-emphatic AI' [initial accent]); and an initial (pitch) accent on 'même'.

(14) a. Et il rappelle que tout cela s'est opéré sous une contrainte politique. Lorsqu'il dit « et que peut-être je l'aurais justifié sans beaucoup de peine, si la même raison qui les a fait parler (c'est-à-dire la demande de Richelieu) ne m'avait obligé à me taire », c'est à ce contexte de l'intervention du politique dans le champ de la littérature qu'il fait allusion.

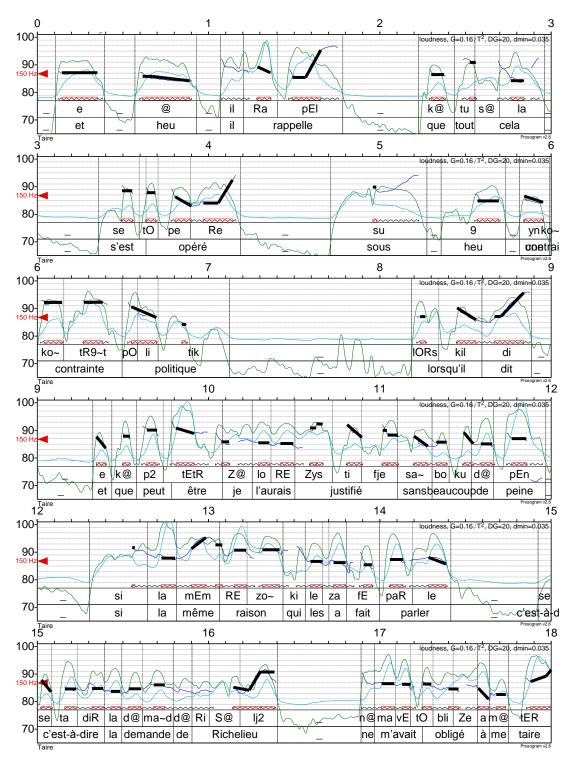
b. et heu il rappelle^{B/H} # que tout cela # s'est opéré # sous heu une ^{\H}contrainte politique^{B-B-} # lorsqu'il dit^{B/H} # et que peut-être je l'aurais ^{\H}justifié sans beaucoup de peine^{BB} # si la ^Hmême raison qui les a fait parler^{BB} # c'est-à-dire^{BB} la demande de Richelieu^{\HB} # ne m'avait obligé à me taire^{BH} # mh c'est à ce contexte d'intervention du politique^{BB} # dans le champ de la littérature^{\HH} # qu'il fait heu ^{/B}allusion^{B-B-}

Equally symptomatic in (14) is the glissando on 'Richelieu': \HB is a – light, but nevertheless – realization of the canonical focus expression (cf. Gussenhoven 2002, Mertens 2008). What is distinctive about it is that it affects unquoted material, with no comparable intonational feature inside the quotation. This is accounted for by parameterisation on the referential target: the imported sentence (constituent) is treated as formally open, which is why focus on the restatement becomes acceptable.

The capital conclusion of this dissertation is that a compositional semantics for quotation is within reach, provided that (i) expressions are permitted to denote character, i.e. to be underspecified with respect to the context argument when they enter the semantic module, and (ii) that enough padding from information structure is adjoined. The first proviso is already present in the literature on quotation and, after minimal acquaintance with the notion of character, quite intuitive. The second proviso constitutes original contribution of the research reported on here.

Insight of the interlock of the two requirements, while unprecedented in quotation studies, is a household tenet in state of the art syntactic theory: the untruncated left periphery of main clauses is argued to host both (a) speaker-related projections, fixing his indexical coordinates and (b) projections pertaining to IS. This amounts to syntactically representing discourse features that, traditionally, are relegated to pre- or post-semantic pragmatics. Inasmuch as the meaning of a complex expression is a function of the meaning of its parts and the syntactic relations among them, these discourse features will also make their way into the semantics.

With respect to quotation, the interlock of the two provisos is substantiated into the following conjecture. The reporting speaker is indexed in a direct report not only to the left of the matrix, but also by the choice of focus on the quoted clause. Again, this is intuitive (think of how quoters add their own emphasis to a quoted passage, to anchor the points they wish to prove), but has never been stated formally.



Picture 2. Prosogram of excerpt (14)

Moreover, the constraint from IS to minimize focus material is inherited by direct quotation as a constraint to minimize quoted material. This is understandable, since quotation marks indicate obscurity of expression and a speaker will ideally do his best to avoid such obscurity. A direct report will then be interpreted as minimally mixed, with only focused constituents kept opaque and background zones processed by unquotation (essentially, a principle that regulates truth-preserving substitution into a quotation).

The minimization of quoted material is supported by data presented in the case study: if the lecturer had already made his point about the sequence he was quoting, hence it would no longer count as opaque for his audience, he would realize a narrow focus on the direct report. When his explications followed the quotation, he would use an all-focus strategy (excessive punctuation and prominences). In relation to this parameter, it was even possible to predict where in an intervention the direct report would occur: narrow focus would mean later on the temporal axis but higher in the hierarchy, since the utterance would presumably reformulate a previous point; all-focus would mean earlier in the progression (and lower in the hierarchy).

To conclude, quotation is a semantic phenomenon whose logical properties and inferential effects are indeed peculiar, but not peculiar enough to set it out as something altogether different from other pervasive and ordinary uses of language; nor are they peculiar enough to escape the reach of run-of-the-mill instruments of semantic analysis.

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