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Direct speech, subjectivity and speaker positioning in London English and Paris French

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This paper examines functional similarities and differences in the use of pragmatic features – in particular quotatives and general extenders – on the right and left periphery of direct quotations. This comparative study, based on the analysis of a contemporary corpus of London English and Paris French (MLE – MPF)[1], finds that the form and frequency of these particles tend to vary not only with respect to social factors such as speakers' age and gender, but also with respect to the different pragmatic functions they come to perform in different interactional settings. The contemporary data is analysed both qualitatively and quantitatively to show how different variants position the speaker in relation to: i) the content of the quote, ii) the interlocutors, iii) the presumed author of the quote. The paper aims to contribute to a better understanding of pragmatic universals and variability in the use of direct speech.

KEYWORDS: Direct speech, quotatives, general extenders, language variation and change

1.   Introduction

Direct speech, a universal and ubiquitous feature of spoken language, has been the subject of linguistic inquiry for many decades. More recently, the analytical focus has begun to shift from traditional approaches based on written models to approaches oriented towards the pragmatic goals and social meaning of direct speech in spoken language. Direct quoting, with its many different forms, has also been identified as a favourable site for variation and change. It has therefore been a major subject in variationist research, whose primary focus has been centred on recognising emerging forms and analysing their linguistic patterns and social conditioning.

Inquiries into spoken forms of direct speech have been the most prolific in the Anglo-Saxon linguistic tradition. While research on metropolitan French has been scarcer and predominantly limited to theoretical or literary studies (Rosier 2008, Marnette 2005, Genette 1983), the emergence of authentic spoken corpora in recent years begins to offer great promise to the field. A wealth of recent research has been dedicated specifically to informal vernaculars where innovative forms of direct speech begin to emerge, especially among young generations typically considered as "linguistic innovators" (Cheshire et al. 2011). Data containing direct quotations are, however, notoriously difficult to come by, which constitutes a methodological

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challenge commonly recognised in studies of informal vernacular phenomena generally. Below are two examples of such informal forms from the present corpus (a comprehensive list of all quotative forms can be found in Appendix [1]):

1)   après **on était là** "mais arrêtez d'être jaloux et tout (.) il est beau il est beau !"
       [then we were like "stop being jealous and everything (.) he's handsome so he's handsome!"]

2)   **we were like** "you're very bad you know (.) second time you done this" like.[2]

This article aims to fill the gap in research by comparing innovative trends in the use of direct speech in London English and Paris French, and by investigating the pragmatic functions of emerging forms in relation to speaker positioning and subjectivity. In particular, we seek to understand how these innovative particles help speakers index their subjective stances and modulate the identities and subjectivities in relation to different parameters such as context and pragmatic function in informal interactions. It is hoped that the comparison will reveal functional similarities in the two systems, the motivations that may explain the emergence of new informal forms and the driving forces of their development. I will begin this study by reviewing existing literature on spoken forms of direct speech, before turning more specifically to the development of innovative variants. This will be followed by a detailed comparative discussion of the functions of direct speech in relation to speaker positioning and a general conclusion.

2.   Characteristics of direct speech in spoken language

Before setting out to examine the emerging forms of direct speech, we should briefly elaborate on the general characteristics of quotation in spontaneous speech, as these will become important for our discussion later. Reported speech is generally divided into direct and indirect speech. While indirect speech uses grammatical subordination by quoting in a paraphrased manner, in direct speech the quote is presented in its putatively original, literal form, with more or less explicit elements indicating that the quoted sequence occurs in a different time and place. Direct quotes have also been shown to be more frequent in informal speech and more rare in writing (Morel 1996), which could be attributed to the general tendency of spontaneous speech to favour parataxis over subordination (Andersen, 2002). While quotations in writing are quite straightforwardly delineated with symbols such as quotation marks, their realisation in speech is more complex, and is often based on a combination of linguistic and extra-linguistic devices such as the use of specific vocabulary, changes of tone or grammatical person, mimicry, gestures or postures. Direct quoting is usually characteristic of informal situations, and generally occurs in narratives of personal experience. With its potential to create an effect of reality and immediacy, direct speech has been described as a crucial feature of a "performed narrative" (Wolfson 1978), reproducing a "lived experience" (Clark & Gerrig 1990: 793).

Direct quotations in spontaneous speech typically co-occur with some common markers on their right and left periphery. On the left, they tend to be introduced by

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[2] As we will discuss in the following sections, the boundaries of direct quotation are difficult to delimit, and we cannot establish with exactitude whether the quote in example (2) ends before or after the *like*.

quotative expressions such as verbs (e.g *say, tell, ask*), discourse markers (e.g. *like*) or even the so-called "zero" quotative (where no quotative expression is used), as in the following examples:

3)   *ah non mais c'est insupport- ouais ça drague "oui t'aurais pas un numéro?"*
      [oh no it's unbearab- yeah they're always on the pull "oh do you have a phone number?"]

4)   I wanted to wear an outfit that just (.) "yeah this girl's a working girl you know with the shoes and the smart hair. "

In addition to explicit markers such as quotative verbs, the separation of quoted and non-quoted material can be facilitated by other devices emulating the original situation, such as sound effects, interjections or discourse markers, serving to add an authentic touch to the quoted stretches of speech. In the data presented in this paper, some informal markers are often automatically placed at the beginning or end of the quoted sequence regardless of its content. In cases such as (5) and (6), particles like French *ouais* ('yeah') and English *yeah* are used to mark the beginning of the quote, and can sometimes be the sole quoted material, as in (7).

5) *au début de l'année moi je l'aimais pas parce que genre elle disait trop **"euh ouais** arrêtez de bavarder" **et tout***.
[at the beginning of the year I didn't like her 'cos like she was always saying "um yeah stop talking" and everything.]

6) and then I said **"so yeah"** like "I would like to go to a club" **kind of thing** I was sixteen at the time.

7) du coup après j'ai mis juste les chansons du Roi Lion ma sœur et moi on était là **"ouais"** et tout.
[so then I put on the songs from Lion King my sister and I we were like **"yeah"** and everything]

8) 'cos she was asking about me coming round hers tonight (.) I was like **"yeah** whatever".

As seen in previous examples, quoted speech often co-occurs with general extenders such as *and stuff, and that, nanana or blah blah,* or even a combination of these:

9) *ils disent "monsieur vous vous prenez pour qui" **et tout nanana** .*
[they're saying "sir who do you think you are" **and everything blah blah**]

10) I've gone home whatever said something's wrong with him so I'm like "no" **whatever blah blah** I was like "I didn't touch him blud!"

The above extracts highlight the fact that in informal interactions, the actual use of direct speech and its form take precedence over its content. That is, the sole fact that speakers quote themselves or someone else without being able to reproduce the wording with complete accuracy, shows that quoting must serve functions other than

information exchange. For instance, it may be used for purely expressive and rhetorical purposes, such as embellishing or emphasising various relevant points in a narrative. The markers used around direct speech concomitantly support this strategy, by fulfilling functions similar to those of discourse markers. On the left, they serve to mark new segments of speech and allow the narrator to gain more time for reflection. On the right, they may indicate that the speaker does not wish to provide a more extensive account of what has already been said, while at the same time creating rapport with the interlocutor and appealing to a degree of (presumed) common knowledge (see also Secova 2014).

One empirical difficulty involved in studying direct speech in spoken language is the impossibility of establishing exactly where it starts and stops. Many authentic examples illustrate that, despite prosodic and grammatical cues, the anchoring stretch of discourse can easily be confused with the stretch of quoted speech, and their boundaries are not always easily distinguished (for discussion, see Gadet and Guérin 2012). The presence of discourse markers on its peripheries complicates this task because they can fulfil many functions simultaneously, and may express both the epistemic stance of the narrator as well the original content of the quote. Consider *ouais* in example [5] above, which may be employed in two ways. It can be used to mark the start of a new statement allowing the speaker to "buy time" before inserting the original quote. Yet it can just as well be used to animate the quoted sequence and thus be attributed to its original content. Similarly, *whatever* in example (8) can be used as an extender used by the narrator to condense details in the account of her experience, but it can also be attributed to her original quote (meaning "whatever, it's all the same to me"). Indeed, the presence of pragmatic particles in the immediate vicinity of direct speech has been noted elsewhere. Co-occurrence patterns have been found, for example, for interjections (*ah, oh, bah*) but also connectors and modal adverbs (*oui, non, bon, ben*, see Morel 1996). Both left- and right-peripheral discourse particles significantly contribute to speaker stance and positioning in interaction, by serving a variety of different pragmatic functions that will be examined in the following sections of this paper.

3. The evolving functions of direct speech: a diachronic perspective

Direct speech has been described as a discourse site prone to linguistic change, often accompanied by *grammaticalisation*, a process whereby "particular items become more grammatical through time" (Hopper & Traugott 2003: 2). We will briefly review this process here, as it will become important for the discussion of the functions of direct speech in relation to speaker identity and positioning. The process of change has, again, been explored mainly in the Anglo-Saxon context, in quantitative studies examining the distribution of forms, their social conditioning, the cross-varietal differences as well the diachronic evolution of variants (see, for example, Buchstaller 2001, Tagliamonte & D'Arcy 2009, Fox 2012, among many others). Such studies have identified several signs of grammaticalisation and its converging processes. One of them is *decategorisation*, which in the case of quotative expressions can be characterised by a change from major verbs with a referential function (e.g. *say*) to discourse markers and other minor grammatical particles (e.g. English *like* / French *genre*). This process can be accompanied by a loss of some morphosyntactic characteristics; for instance, a loss of conjugation and variability

when a full verb is replaced by an invariant particle *(e.g. après il dit "quote" vs. après c'est genre "quote").* Such a change can be accompanied by phonetic reduction, a loss of syntactic flexibility or even fixation (e.g. *c'est genre* - "it's like" - used as a quotative collocation). On one hand, the grammaticalising expressions lose their propositional content, but on the other they acquire and strengthen their pragmatic functions. They are thus increasingly linked to the speaker's personal attitude (subjectivity), as well as their attitude towards the interlocutor/s (intra-subjectivity) and towards the discourse flow and content (metadiscursivity). Such a development towards epistemic functions is commonly referred to as 'subjectification' (Hopper & Traugott 2003: 92). Lastly, the grammaticalising forms often co-coexist with older forms, or remain polysemic (they are used with traditional meanings as well as those developed later).

Let us look at some common examples of grammaticalisation in quotative forms, focusing more closely on a relatively recent form, English BE+LIKE, whose use has increased exponentially since the 1980s when it was first reported, and is now emblematic of younger generations (Ferrara & Bell 1995; Buchstaller 2001, Tagliamonte & D'Arcy 2004, 2007). Over time, the grammaticalised form has developed new pragmatic functions, but has also evolved into a fixed form which was, until relatively recently, never used as a quotative. Studies have shown that BE+LIKE was initially used mainly in the first person: a grammatical context that was later extended to all persons. The first-person occurrence may be linked to the fact that the variant was initially used mainly in contexts of inner monologue, that is, when speaker expressed their personal thoughts, attitudes and views (Ferrara & Bell 1995: 270). According to Fox (2012: 241), the fact that BE+LIKE has spread to third-person contexts might be indicative of its extension into actual direct speech, while at the same time keeping its original function of inner monologue. She further shows that non-lexicalised sounds and gestures are the most favourable context of occurrence of BE+LIKE, which is in line with the observed grammaticalisation continuum ranging from sounds, gestures and inner monologue to actual direct speech (Ferrara & Bell: 1995).

Another study by Tagliamonte & D'Arcy (2007: 211) shows that the proportion of reported speech expressing inner monologue appears to have increased significantly in recent decades. While this context represented only 8% of total quotative occurrences in octogenarians, its number has more than tripled among young adults (aged 30). The study further shows that the change has accelerated among the new generation (the first users are now 40-49 years old) and is at its most pronounced around the age of 30. The authors explain that this development may be reflective of a change in the ways in which speakers construct and retell stories. In particular, the stylistic option of expressing inner monologue in narratives of personal experience may have increased before BE+LIKE entered the system, thus paving the way for a new development and creating a niche for a new quotative expression. Due to its semantic properties, BE+LIKE was a prime contender, later grammaticalising into a full-fledged quotative (Tagliamonte & D'Arcy, 2007). Thus it would seem that the linguistic trends in the quotative system go hand in hand with the pragmatic and cognitive changes in society, and may reflect more or less universal motivations (comparable especially in culturally similar societies with similar types of informal interactions). Although the use of BE+LIKE is still correlated with young people and many resist the change due to prescriptive pressures of the linguistic marketplace

(Buchstaller 2015), this variant has now become well entrenched in the quotative system.

The popularity of BE+LIKE nevertheless allows other innovative forms to develop alongside. Recent studies have uncovered another new form in English, THIS IS + SPEAKER, a deictic quotative expression found among young Londoners (Cheshire *et al.* 2011, Fox 2012):

11) **this is my mum** "what are you doing? I was in the queue before you" (Cheshire et al. 2011: 172).

This variant in the initial phase of grammaticalisation allows for interesting observations regarding the environment in which such constructions arise and the ways in which they develop. Cheshire et al. (2011) note that THIS IS + SPEAKER is used in both quotative and non-quotative contexts, and its frequency peaks among speakers aged 8-9 who often used this form to describe their "states, feelings, actions, gestures and expressions" (2011: 174). While being considerably less frequent than BE+LIKE (3% against 45% among speakers aged 16-19), it offers interesting parallels. Similarly to BE+LIKE, this innovative form may have entered the system as a description marker, before developing into a full-fledged quotative.

Like quotatives, general extenders have been shown to be subject to grammaticalisation. In this case, the process is usually characterised by a set of changes, most notably decategorisation, semantic-pragmatic change and sometimes morphological and/or phonetic reduction (Cheshire 2007, Tagliamonte & Denis 2010, Pichler & Levey 2011, Secova 2014 and 2017). Decategorisation tends to result in a loss of the original morphosyntactic characteristics and an extension to new grammatical contexts, which can be observed in examples (5)-(7), where the extender is not appended to a set of inanimate nouns (its putatively original grammatical context) but to direct speech. Another characteristic of grammaticalisation is semantic-pragmatic change, whereby some forms progressively develop new pragmatic functions, while their 'set-marking' function progressively subsides. The pragmatic functions can be characterised as intersubjective (e.g. hedging, indexing solidarity, appealing to common ground between the speakers) or textual (e.g. structuring discourse, punctuating discourse units). It is, however, important to remember that most grammaticalising extenders remain multifunctional and retain set-marking/referential meanings in certain contexts (Pichler & Levey 2011: 452). Finally, it has been suggested that some short forms (e.g. *and stuff*) might have developed from longer forms (e.g. *and stuff like that*), and that some short forms are phonologically reduced in certain contexts (e.g. *and that*, often reduced to monosyllabic /ənæ/; see Cheshire 2007). While evidence is inconclusive in this respect and several studies point to the fact that short forms appear among the earliest extender attestations (Pichler & Levey, 2011), it is interesting to note that in both datasets examined, short forms are preferred (see Appendix [2]). This again shows the extent to which discourse-pragmatic features in English and French share functional similarities within comparable contexts of occurrence, as well as a propensity to acquire new subjective, inter-subjective and textual discourse functions.

In the next sections, I will attempt to demonstrate that change in innovative discourse-pragmatic particles such as quotatives and general extenders in English and French

follows a similar path and tends to occur in specific pragmatic and morphosyntactic contexts. The new uses are often closely linked to the core semantic properties of the original expressions, but lead to more nuanced meanings that, altogether, contribute to the rich repertoire of functions related to speaker subjectivity and positioning in interaction.

4.   Data

The analysis presented here is based on the corpus collected as part of the 'Multicultural London English - Multicultural Paris French' project[3]. The French sample consists of 34 informal recordings carried out in self-selected peer groups of 2-5 people usually lasting over an hour. There are 77 speakers aged 10 to 19: 41 women and 36 men, all from or living in the Paris metropolitan area. The English sample selected for comparison is slightly larger, consisting of 100 Londoners aged 10 to 19 (44 women and 56 men)[4]. The two corpora contain several self-recordings carried out without the presence of the investigator.

In both locations, the recordings were carried out using sociolinguistic fieldwork methods in such a way as to obtain informal, vernacular speech data. In order to mitigate 'the observer's paradox' (Labov 1972: 61), investigators strove at all times to put speakers at ease, create a relaxed conversation environment and encourage them to speak freely. Informal methods are particularly relevant for the analysis of discourse phenomena such as direct speech, as these are usually found only in highly intimate conversations, especially those that contain narratives of personal experience with strong emotional involvement (Buchstaller 2015).

The data collected in both locations contain a large variety of vernacular features such as informal discourse markers, non-standard grammar, slang and swearwords, which suggests that the sociolinguistic methods were applied successfully. Using a convergent methodology, the MLE-MPF corpus thus offers a unique possibility of comparing two sets of data and contexts which, at least for French, have been rarely investigated.

5.   Pragmatic functions and speaker positioning

5.1   *Hedging and approximation*

There is a large pool of new quotative expressions with cross-linguistic similarities, based on the core semantics of approximation and similarity. We can cite the example of French *genre* and English *like*, but there are others. In French, the word *genre* frequently occurs as a lexical item with a determiner (e.g. *les choses de ce genre, ce genre de choses*), which needs to be distinguished from its use as a bare form (e.g. *elle a genre vingt ans, "she's like twenty years old"*). While innovative uses of the bare form have been examined in various sources (e.g. Yaguello 1998, Rosier 2002), the quotative function is discussed more sporadically (with the exception of Fleischman & Yaguello 2004). This may not be surprising given the grammaticalisation path of discourse markers, initially adopting general discourse functions (mitigation, exemplification) before spreading to more specific contexts

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[3] ESRC RES 062330006: 'Multicultural London English – Multicultural Paris French' (www.mle-mpf.bbk.ac.uk).

[4] Linguistic Innovators: The English of Adolescents in London, RES-000-23-0680.

such as reported speech. Consider some examples below, illustrating discourse marker and quotative uses:

12a)　A: *il dit des mots **genre** en français soutenu.*
　　　　 [he says words like in formal French]
12b)　M: *nobody knew how to dance **like** proper salsa yeah.*
13a)　B: *il fait son footing et tout **genre** "pf pf pf" <imitation/gestures>*
　　　　 les petits abdos et tout.
　　　　 [he does his jogging and that like "pf pf pf" <imitation/gestures>
　　　　 little sit-ups and everything.]
13b)　G: *she just threatened to tell my dad **I was like** "go and say whatever*
　　　　 you want I really don't care".

The comparative semantic core of words such as *genre* and *like* is likely to be the root of the current functions that these words have developed over time. Particles with similative meanings allow speakers to "acknowledge, and even highlight the approximative value of the quotation and thereby shield themselves from potential criticism regarding the inexact nature of the reproduction" (Buchstaller & Van Alphen 2012: XV). While it is unlikely that the primary motivation for quotative choice is the avoidance of criticism, the epistemic hedging function seems especially useful for the reporting of material that may have never been explicitly verbalised, such as thoughts, attitudes, stances, points of view etc. (Buchstaller & Van Alphen 2012: XV). This function allows the speakers to position themselves vis-à-vis the inexact content of the quote, while at the same time exploiting the stylistic option of enhancing their narratives using direct speech.

In terms of grammaticalisation, the term *genre* appears to have followed some of the mechanisms described above, already attested for English *like*. If we assume that the bare form *genre* has developed from longer nominal phrases (e.g. *ce genre de, de ce genre, du genre..*), we can observe the effect of morphosyntactic and phonetic reduction. The process of pragmatic extension has been accompanied by sematic bleaching, i.e. the loss of some of the more exact meanings that nominal *genre* had. On the other hand, though, the innovative forms of *genre* have adopted more subjective functions, including epistemic hedging, mitigation and approximation (for a comparison of other similar particles, see Mihatsch 2010).

The use of quotatives with mitigatory and hedging meanings seems widespread. Similar grammaticalisation cases have been noted even in typologically distinct languages, where the quotative system often recruits expressions whose core semantics is based on resemblance and comparison (Buchstaller 2012, Beeching 2007). Examples include *van* in Dutch (Coppen & Foolen, 2012), *bare* and *liksom* in Norwegian (Hasund et al., 2012), *ke'ilu* in Hebrew (Maschler 2002) or *tipa* in Russian (Wiemer 2009). Studies have shown an adolescent peak in quotative expressions with mitigatory meanings, such as *be like* (Tagliamonte and D'Arcy 2004, 2007). Others have claimed that expressions with approximative meanings in general are more popular among younger speakers, who are more likely to lack conversational confidence and may therefore be in greater need of support from expressions with discourse-marking functions (Rodriguez 2002).

Regardless of speaker's level of confidence[5], approximation and vagueness seem very useful in allowing speakers to position themselves in relation to both the interlocutor and the content of the quote. Particles such as *like* and *genre* allow them not only to report someone else's words, but also to reproduce their attitude, if only in an approximative way. This strategy is especially useful when speakers quote themselves, and thus become able to legitimise what they think and feel, or express their general train of consciousness. In French, there are several expressions with similative meanings able to fulfil this function; consider the example of *genre* and other informal variants such as *en mode,* comparable to English *like*:

14) A: *je l'ai regardé comme ça* (.) **genre en mode** *"tu veux quoi" et tout.*
     [I looked at him like that (.) like "what do you want " and stuff.]

15) G: those girls that- all just love him **like** "Kevin oh please Kevin come and hug me"

Examples (14) and (15) bring out particularly clearly the fact that speakers take the liberty to use direct speech even if the quoted words have never been explicitly verbalised or uttered by the presumed author. Again for Tannen (1986: 311), every attempt to quote someone else may be considered as 'constructed dialogue'. In this way, speakers attribute discourses to others not necessarily based on what they actually said, but rather based on the impression they gave. When we quote, our primary goal may not be to provide a literal reproduction of the words as they were uttered, but perhaps only to give a general idea of the original author's attitude and to add vividness to an account.

Much of the previous work on the subject considered verbatim reproduction as a prerequisite for the use of direct speech (Genette 1980), which has since been called into question. Clark and Gerrig (1990: 795), for instance, note that the narrators usually choose to reveal only limited aspects of someone else's discourse, and only those they wish to communicate to their audience. Reported speech is thus a strategic choice serving various rhetorical and argumentative purposes, in that it allows speakers to project *themselves* in a certain light and position *themselves* with regard to their argument and to their interlocutor(s).

The selective nature of quoting is evidenced by the fact that speakers only use instances that can fulfil certain argumentative needs, that is, the instances that can support their reasoning or their account of a given experience. The following extract illustrates the extent to which the narrator's argument is highlighted by the sequence of direct speech, in the attempt to condemn, with obvious irony, the behaviour of posh Parisian girls who change their attitude as soon as they find out that someone comes from an estate:

16) A: *genre il y a quelqu'un de la cité nanana direct elles sont là à prendre de grands airs* **genre** *"ah tu viens de la cité ah d'accord" <imitation>.*

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[5] In fact, our data show that the most prolific users of innovative quotatives with hedging and mitigating functions seem to be the most confident and extroverted speakers.

[like when someone comes from an estate blah blah directly they are there with their noses up like *"oh you come from an estate oh alright"* *<imitation>*]

Similarly, in extract (17), the narrator justifies her argument that, despite what her classmates might think, dermatology is not an easy degree course:

17) L: *ils arrivent en dermatologie et ils **font style** "oh la la c'est trop simple ils ont des massages des masques et tout".*
[they come into dermatology and they're like *"oh it's too simple they have massages masks and everything"*]

And in (18), the speaker condemns the indifference of his teachers, expressing his surprise in a sequence of direct speech and thus justifying his decision to leave the classroom:

18) R: *sometimes we didn't even have a teacher* (.) **we were just like** *"oh where's the teacher?"* (.) *and we just went.*

Perhaps to a much greater extent than *like,* the discourse marker *genre* contains an element of irony and/or incredulity, which has had an important part to play in its development as a quotative. Many of its uses encode a degree of sarcasm and disbelief. Interestingly, the word is still used in this way as part of a fixed intransitive construction *faire genre* (and other similar ones, such as *faire style* or *faire krari*[6]), meaning "to show off" or "to pretend". The data reveal many such instances where speakers criticise someone's hypocrisy or false appearances:

19) A : *il traîne pas avec les gars qui **font genre.***
[he doesn't hang out with the boys who just pretend <to be cool>]

20) N: *y en trop elles font **krari** des fois* [.] *genre elles te connaissent pas elles veulent pas parler et tout ça.*
[there's many girls who just play games sometimes (.) like they don't know you they don't want to talk and all that].

The word *genre,* and other similar expressions, appear to have fulfilled a functional niche that originated in ironic explanations and justifications, before expanding into the realm of direct speech. Within the quotative system, they are still occasionally used to ironic effect, but are now largely desemanticised as fixed quotative constructions (e.g. *faire genre*). From a pragmatic perspective, the range of functions they fulfil has also expanded to include different possibilities and levels of commitment to the truth conditions of the quote. These possibilities can be presented as a continuum between hypothetical thoughts, attitudes and impressions on one end, and actual explicit direct speech on the other. The extended functional range allows speakers to better position themselves not only towards the content of the quote, but also towards the person(s) to whom they attribute it. While the quotation might never have been

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[6] *Faire krari/crari*: to pretend that something is true / to be pretentious

explicitly uttered, mitigatory words like *genre* still allow speakers the possibility to quote directly, if only to give an approximative impression of the quote's author (or indeed of themselves in self-reports). This dissociative, face-saving strategy is strengthened by the use of general extenders whose functions, despite their different syntactic position, are very similar to left-peripheral *like*. As shown in examples (5) to (10), extenders can be considered as hedges and approximation markers, routinely used to bypass assertiveness, avoid literal interpretation of the quote and show a reduced commitment to its actual occurrence.

5.2 *Imitation, focus and emphasis*
The data reveal a large of proportion of quotative expressions containing a deictic element, and whose main function seems to be to attract the attention of the audience to the quote or to its author. This type of quotative is not new, and has been attested in many previous studies and languages (Buchstaller & Van Alphen, 2012, Cheshire et al. 2011, Fox 2012). They usually contain an adverb, as previously exemplified in *être là* in (1), or a demonstrative pronoun, as illustrated in *this is + SPEAKER* in (11) and *comme ça* and *like that* in the following examples:

21) L : *t'as l'impression que t'as des araignées sur la tête quoi c'est horrible et **j'étais comme ça** "aaah"* <imitation, shouting>.
[it feels like you have spiders on your head it's horrible and I was like that "aaah" <imitation, shouting>].

22) W: *they go "oh he's turning eighteen soon" they think "what we gonna do we can't say anything to him now" you're **like that** "I've got so much freedom!"*.

Unlike traditional quotatives and even some widespread recent ones (e.g. *be like*), deictic quotatives usually occur only in narratives with a high degree of emotional involvement. Being the chief preserve for expressions with emphatic functions, such narratives allow speakers to recreate the original event in an authentic fashion, by adopting the voice, accent, intonation and even gestures and postures of the author of the quote. The narrative thus becomes something of a dynamic and expressive performance, where narrators position themselves as main actors of a central event. Direct speech has an important role to play in this process, in focusing the attention directly to important elements in the story. According to Fox (2012), the new London quotative *this is + SPEAKER*, for example, tends to occur at a salient point in a narrative, at moments of "high drama". Examples such as (21) show that deictic quotatives may contain an important mimetic element with or without actual speech. While there may be methodological difficulties involved in identifying "quotative" instances without direct speech, examples of gestures and sound effects are crucial in explaining the arguably universal development of certain performative quotatives on a continuum from *showing* to *quoting*. This has again been noted in previous studies (e.g. Cheshire at al. 2011, Fox 2012), where a deictic form has been shown to occur in both quotative and non-quotative contexts. In non-quotative contexts, the variant was recruited mainly for descriptions of the protagonists' "states, feelings, actions, gestures and expressions" (Cheshire et al. 2011: 174):

23) **this is the boy** falling asleep he went "<sound effect>"

Examples such as the above suggest that direct speech plays a major role in the retelling and re-enactment of past events. In French, the variant *être là* fulfils similar functions, occurring in descriptive (24) as well as quotative contexts (25):

24) *et moi **je suis là** je comprends rien donc (.) "ok c'est gentil merci"* <rire> [and me I'm there I don't understand so "ok nice thanks a lot" <laughs>]

25) L: ***il était là** "mais quoi mais j'ai rien fait!"*
[he was there "what? but I haven't done anything!"]

Many quantitative studies have shown that the type of content speakers use in a quote is a significant predictor affecting quotative choice and influencing the way in which speakers will position themselves vis-à-vis the arguments they are making. Importantly, the use of mimicry and gestures in examples like (24) and (25) validates speakers' justifications and contributes to their credibility and authenticity. The 'content' factor has also been shown to play a major part in the grammaticalisation of innovative quotatives. For example, when BE+LIKE began to be used, it was often associated with non-lexicalised sounds and gestures (Tagliamonte & D'Arcy 2004), while THIS IS+SPEAKER in London was shown to be linked to highly performative direct speech (Fox 2012). The non-quotative occurrences are also interesting to observe, since they tend to occur very close to, if not immediately before, the quotative occurrences. Extracts (23) and (24) show that both *être là* and *this is* precede quotations by a single clause. This suggests that there are cross-linguistic similarities in the trajectory of grammaticalisation from descriptions to direct speech.

The importance of mimesis and sound effects in the way speaker project themselves and others is well illustrated in the following extract. It features an animated exchange in which speakers use different variants strategically to perform subjective functions such as dramatic enactment, justification of one's own actions and the communication of subjective feelings and points of view:

26) O: *dès qu'on détourne la tête de la feuille du cours je sais pas on-*
  A: *+< ouais on regarde la fenêtre et tout il dit-*
  O: *il **crie** "ouah ouah ouah"* <imitation>.
  C: *ou sinon il **fait** "à ton tour de lire !" **t'es là** "ah euh".*
  A: *après après **on est là** "<gestes>" (.) après il **fait** "bon ok Chloé lis !" (..) euh t'es- (..) le temps de réaliser et tout .*
  C: *que- quand il parle allemand **il est là** "ah ha ha oui oui" (.) c'est pour ça que toujours tu dois viser ta feuille même si tu penses à autre chose (il) faut regarder la feuille !*

  [O: *as soon as we look away from the textbook, I don't know, if-*
  A: *+< yeah we look at the window and stuff he goes-*
  O: ***he shouts** "ouah ouah ouah"* <imitation>.
  C: *otherwise **he goes** "your turn to read!" **you're like** "ah oh".*
  A: *and then **we're like** "<gestures>" (.) then he **goes** "alright Chloé you read!" (..) ahem you're- (..) before you realise and all.*

C: *when he speaks German **he's like** "ah ha yes yes"* (.) *that's why you always have to keep your eyes on the worksheet even if you're thinking about something else you need to look at the sheet!*

In this lively, stylised narrative, quoting is accompanied by various prosodic and extra-linguistic features such as a change in voice quality, intonation, sound effects and gestures, all contributing to an expressive and authentic rendering of the performed event. Many previous studies have noted that adolescents often adopt this type of stylisation in order to replicate the voice, attitude or behaviour of others or of themselves in performed narratives (e.g. Rampton 2009, Trimaille 2007, among others). Whether or not speakers succeed in creating the effect of authenticity very much depends on the linguistic devices they use. These devices, often selected from a pool of features with similar functions (in the sense of 'feature pool' introduced by Mufwene 2001), enhance speakers' expressive style and verbal dexterity, and ultimately contribute to their credibility and even their popularity with the audience. Adolescent linguistic socialisation is thus inherently linked to a speaker's capacity to forge an identity through verbal content but also, and crucially, through the linguistic means they use to articulate it. Expressivity and authenticity play an important role in adolescent interactions, and speakers seek out linguistic resources that allow them to exploit them as fully as possible. Direct speech is a prime example of expressive content, and the above example illustrates the varying degrees of expressivity that different forms can convey. A number of studies have highlighted the fact that the presence of sound effects, typical of mimetic re-enactments of past events, is particularly common in the initial stages of grammaticalisation where quoting closely resembles imitation (Buchstaller 2001: 3). Therefore, direct speech and imitation are useful resources that speakers draw upon directly to render their tales more expressive, dramatic or simply amusing, and indirectly to support the arguments they are making. Importantly, these resources are also effective in self-presentation, as speakers use them selectively to mark their affiliation or affirm their difference, and ultimately to position themselves in relation to the content of the message and to their interlocutor(s).

5.3   *Inner monologue*

One of the common functions of direct speech is to express inner thoughts, feelings and attitudes. It allows speakers to verbalise a stream of consciousness, creating an effect of immediacy and authenticity. Expressing inner monologue through direct speech constitutes another discursive strategy that has been identified as one of the most important predictors in the development of innovative variants. Here again, mimesis and sound effects are often recruited as essential supporting elements (Buchstaller 2001). Consider the following extracts, in which speakers re-enact their inner feelings in this way in reaction to particular stimuli:

27) K: ***j'étais là*** *"pitié pitié pitié"* <voix> *j'étais en train de prier dans le tram et tout.*
         [I was like "please please have mercy" <voice> I was praying in the tram and everything]

28) M: ***j'étais là*** *"nooon c'est pas possible !"* <voix grave>
         [I was like "no way!" <serious voice>]

Examine a comparable example in English:

29)   S: they would give you money and **you'll be like** "oh" <surprise>.

The use of quotations to express inner thoughts has, once again, an important rhetorical and self-presentation function, rather than that of reporting something that has been said before. In fact, it is probable that quotes of this type have never been explicitly uttered. The grammatical characteristics of some quotatives, as illustrated, for example, in (29), show the imaginary character of direct speech. The quoted segment, uttered in the second grammatical person and future tense, cannot have been previously verbalised and is thus purely hypothetical.

Rather than presenting verbatim quotations, innovative forms with inner monologue are used strategically to portray the author in a certain light and to illustrate or justify their attitude. The co-occurrence of these variants and expressions such as *"oh", "oh my god", "wow",* as well as exclamations and insults, is indicative of the usefulness of this technique in the construction of a performed narrative. A relevant question arises here whether the development of new quotatives, and innovation in the use of direct speech in general, is linked to new ways of representing inner states of mind, consciousness and thought. This question has indeed been raised by Tagliamonte and D'Arcy (2007) who analysed the functional niche of BE+LIKE, and noted that the highest the proportion of inner monologue in the occurrence of direct speech was among young adults, who were, incidentally, the first users of this variant. The authors wondered: is it only the quotative variants that are changing, or has there been a change in the way people recount past events? And if so, is inner speech an evolving universal necessity in informal interaction? At a time when people disclose more and more of their private life on social media and other sources where information is readily available, we can speculate that spoken language generally might be undergoing a change whereby it is becoming more subjective and informal, and speakers are making greater use of linguistic features allowing them to express inner thoughts more directly, instantaneously and openly. As we saw in many previous examples, the narrators use inner monologue strategically to position themselves with regard to their argument, often resorting to minimal though highly expressive content. Particles that accompany inner speech, such as interjections, contribute to accomplishing this strategy. Together with these particles, the innovative quotative forms are useful in conveying nuanced subjective stances, with different degrees of expressivity and commitment to the content. They are thus a prime example of a stance-taking and self-positioning pragmatic feature.

6.   Conclusion

As we have seen, direct speech actively contributes to the construction of speaker stance and persona. In this article, I have explored the functions of innovations in direct speech, such as new quotatives and general extenders. The main focus was on their pragmatic functions that serve to index speaker identity, subjectivity and positioning vis-à-vis different actors in the communicative space. I also addressed the question of how these particles developed, what pragmatic motivations drove this development, what contribution they made to the interaction, and what similarities one could draw from two relatively distinct languages, English and French.

Innovative quotatives in both languages tend to be associated with indexical stances and attitudes such as youth, coolness and casualness. They usually display higher frequencies among young people that progressively decrease with advancing age as speakers enter adulthood and adopt a more standard language (Buchstaller 2015). In both languages examined here, the innovative variants display many functional similarities but also slight language-specific differences. For instance, *this is* + SPEAKER in London is only used in moments of high drama and introduces actual direct speech (Cheshire et al. 2011, Fox 2012), while *être là* in Paris seems to collocate with inner monologue and to index a non-committal stance. Similative and type-noun quotatives such as *genre* and *like* are similar in reducing speaker commitment to the truth conditions of the utterance while strengthening the subjective and argumentative functions. Overall, innovative forms make a significant contribution to speaker positioning and stance, as they mark different degrees of expressivity, subjectivity and commitment to the content of the quotation.

General extenders, such as *and stuff* in London and *et tout* in Paris, are frequently used on the right periphery of direct speech to mark its boundary, but also to perform similar pragmatic functions such as hedging, marking solidarity and appealing to common knowledge between the speaker and the interlocutor(s). Extenders in both languages are also similar in grammaticalising from referential expressions to particles with predominantly pragmatic functions (Cheshire 2007, Secova 2014).

The evolution of new variants raises questions about the complex representation and reporting of speech and thought. The immediacy of spontaneous speech and the lack of planning are among the many factors that influence the choice of direct over indirect speech, but also the choice of specific particles introducing and framing quotations. The question then is: what are the reasons for emerging forms being more frequent in certain contexts? While often stigmatised, can these variants actually enrich speakers' linguistic repertoire? This paper has attempted to show that innovative variants tend to offer a much wider range of pragmatic functions than traditional ones. Canonical quotatives are often pragmatically restrictive and cannot always adequately express the full spectrum of discourse functions connected with reported speech and thought. Emerging variants, on the other hand, offer the possibility to enhance expressivity, emotion and authenticity even in the most banal utterances that may never have been uttered. At the same time, these variants seem more efficient in expressing speaker's epistemic stance and mitigating the impact of verbatim interpretation. As a result, they lend themselves very well to the representation of thoughts, attitudes, value judgments and justifications – and of the full range of mental phenomena ranging from intimate thoughts to explicit words. The evolution of emerging variants does not necessarily constitute language simplification characterized by a loss of precise and appropriate expressions, but rather, and more importantly, leads to pragmatic enrichment giving rise to a more nuanced and varied repertoire.

APPENDIX (1): QUOTATIVE FORMS IN LONDON ENGLISH AND PARIS FRENCH

FRENCH			*ENGLISH*[7]		
Variant	**N**	**%**	**Variant**	**N**	**%**
dire	426	39.3	*say*	679	29.1
faire	307	28.3	*be + like*	532	22.8
zero form	128	11.8	*go*	429	18.4
être là	29	2.7	zero form	322	13.8
genre	17	1.6	*think*	228	9.8
être comme ça	15	1.4	*this is* + speaker	61	2.6
c'est	15	1.4	*tell*	24	1.0
dire/faire genre	8	0.8	other	59	2.5
en mode	6	0.6			
other	87	8.4			
TOTAL	1036	100	TOTAL	2334	100

APPENDIX (2): GENERAL EXTENDER FORMS IN LONDON ENGLISH AND PARIS FRENCH[8]

FRENCH			*ENGLISH*		
Variant	**N**	**%**	**Variant**	**N**	**%**
et tout	263	62.92%	*and that*	155	20.92%
tout ça	44	10.53%	*and all that*	104	14.04%
nanana	31	7.42%	*and stuff*	102	13.77%
etcetera	28	6.70%	*or something*	94	12.69%
(les/des) trucs comme ça	13	3.11%	*and everything*	60	8.10%
et tout ça	12	2.87%	*or something like that*	26	3.51%
ou quoi	6	1.44%	*whatever*	25	3.37%
ni rien	5	1.20%	*and stuff like that*	21	2.83%
ou un truc comme ça	4	0.96%	*and all*	19	2.56%
un truc comme ça	4	0.96%	*and shit*	13	1.75%
(les/des) choses comme ça	2	0.48%	*or whatever*	13	1.75%
machin	2	0.48%	*kind of thing*	12	1.62%
ou quoi que ce soit	1	0.24%	*something like that*	10	1.35%
Other	3	0.72%	*and what not*	10	1.35%
TOTAL	**418**		*and things like that*	9	1.21%
			and things	7	0.94%
			that sort of stuff	6	0.81%
			or anything like that	5	0.67%
			or anything	4	0.54%
			Other	46	6.21%
			TOTAL	**741**	

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