Armenian Speech Reports: Blurring the Quotative Line

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Abstract

Modern Eastern Armenian has two complementizers, vor and te. When used to introduce speech reports, those complementizers differ as to the discourse status of the speech event they introduce; most notably, te possesses an evidential meaning that vor lacks. Using the model of discourse update suggested in Portner (2006), I provide an analysis of te that explains its evidential properties. I also provide evidence that MEA thwarts the traditional dichotomy assumed in the literature between direct and indirect speech by allowing a form of loose quotation.

Armenian Speech Reports: Blurring the Quotative Line

David Blunier[*]

1 Introduction

Modern Eastern Armenian (Indo-European/isolate; Armenia, Yerevan region, henceforth MEA) makes use of two different complementizers in order to introduce finite complement clauses, *voɾ* and *te*. Both can be used to introduce reported speech, in a situation where speaker A conveys to an addressee B a proposition *p* previously uttered by C, as in (1)[1]:

(1) Naɾɛk-ə   Anna-in   asɛl-a   **voɾ / te** iran   sirum-a
     Narek-NOM.DEF Anna-DAT say-PRS.3SG COMP   3SG.F.DAT love.PTCP-be.PST.3SG
     'Narek$_i$ said to Anna$_j$ that he$_i$ loves her$_j$'

Interestingly, Armenian reported speech blurs the line hypothesized between canonical indirect speech and direct speech/quotation; both complementizers can embed a clause in which the agent of the original utterance and his addressee are realized as a first and second person indexicals, respectively:

(2) a. Naɾɛk-ə   Anna-in   asɛl-a   **voɾ / te** jɛs   kɛz
         Narek-NOM.DEF Anna-DAT say-PRS.3SG COMP   1SG.NOM 2SG.DAT
         sirum-ɛm
         love.PTCP.PRS-be.PRS.1SG
     b. 'Narek$_i$ said to Anna$_j$ that he$_i$ loves her$_j$' (indirect speech)
     c. 'Narek$_i$ said to Anna$_j$: 'I$_i$ love you$_j$' (direct speech / quotation)
     d. Narek said to Anna that I$_{Spk}$ love you$_{Add}$ (indexical reading)

Note that, although the two complementizers can be used to convey any of the three meanings listed above, there is a tendency to use *te* to convey direct reported speech (2c); In a similar fashion, *voɾ* will be favored to convey an indexical reading (2d).

An additional feature of *voɾ* and *te* in speech reports is that, while their distribution seems at first glance to overlap, the complements they introduce come with different semantic flavours. Most notably, *te* seems to convey an evidential meaning that its counterpart *voɾ* lacks: when using *te*, the speaker conveys that she has doubts regarding the truth of the reported proposition *p* (Giorgi and Haroutyunian 2019), or that the responsibility of the truth of *p* bears on the agent of the reported speech event, Narek, rather than the speaker (Donabedian 2018):

(3) a. Naɾɛk-ə   Anna-in   asɛl-a   **voɾ** kɛz
         Narek.NOM-DEF Anna-DAT say-PRS.3SG COMP 2SG.DAT
         sirum-ɛm
         love.PTCP.PRS-be.PRS.1SG
         'Narek said to Anna that he loves her...'
         [#]...But I don't believe it / That's not true.

[1] This document follows the Leipzig glossing system and uses the following abbreviations: 1, 2, 3: first, second and third person; SG: singular; PL(ural); M(asculine); F(eminine); NOM(inative); DAT(ive); GEN(itive); LOC(ative); ABL(ative); INS(trumental); AOR(ist); AUX(iliary); COMP(lementizer); EVID(ential particle); DEF(inite); FUT(ure tense); HOR(tative) INF(initive); OBL(ique); PST: Past tense; PFV: Perfective; PRF: Perfect; POSS(essive); PRS: Present tense; PTCP: Participle; S: single argument of canonical intransitive verb.

b. Narɛk-ə   Anna-in   asɛl-a   **te**   kɛz
Narek.NOM-DEF Anna-DAT say-PRS.3SG COMP 2SG.DAT

sirum-ɛm
love.PTCP.PRS-be.PRS.1SG

'Narek said to Anna that he loves her...'
...But I don't believe it / That's not true.

This piece will discuss the value of the evidential complementizer *te* in light of the behavior of person indexicals in speech reports. I will argue that the two phenomena at stake, i.e., the interpretation of person indexicals in speech reports and their evidential value, are closely connected: the availability of a hybrid quotation mode of speech reporting in Armenian directly connects to the evidential value of *te* by allowing the speaker to both use and mention the utterance she is reporting in the same discourse move, that is, both *asserting* and *presenting* the embedded proposition - something that has been argued for elsewhere for other types of reportative evidentials (Faller 2002, Portner 2006, Murray 2010, AnderBois 2014). After arguing that reported speech in MEA cannot be analyzed using the traditional binary direct / indirect distinction for reported speech, I will lay out an analysis of Armenian *te* reports as a form of reportative mode conveying a lesser degree of commitment from the speaker than standard indirect speech headed by *vor*. Under that view, the liberal form of quotation that *te* serves to introduce is viewed as a direct consequence of its evidential semantics, triggering a pragmatic perspective change enforced by shifting the interpretation of indexicals towards the reported context. All in all, the present proposal sheds new light on the rather understudied dependencies between evidentiality and speech reports.

2 The challenge of *te* reports

Speech reports come in a variety of guises, with different effects on the dynamics of conversation. It is argued that direct discourse/quotation in English, for instance, comes with a *verbatim* requirement of faithfulness to the original form of the report that indirect discourse lacks. As a consequence, quotation has long been analyzed as a form of reporting that merely involves the *mention* of an expression, rather than its *use* (Tarksi 1933, Quine 1940). A consequence of that view is that quotation, being a semantic objects that refers to the form of an expression rather than to its meaning, obeys the following principle:

(4)   GRAMMATICAL OPACITY   (Anand 2006: 81)
       Quotations form a closed domain with respect to syntactic and semantic operators.

The above principle has both syntactic and semantic consequences, some of which having been used to determine whether embedded clauses referring to a speech event would fall under the *quotation / direct speech* category or the *indirect speech* category. Syntactically, it is assumed that quotations cannot be extracted out of, as in (5); semantically, referring DPs within quotations cannot be read *de re*, as in Quine's (1956) 'double vision' cases (6):

(5)   *Who$_i$ did Hesen say, 't_i kissed me'?   (Anand 2006: (232))

(6)   *Context: Ralph sees a strange man with a hat on the beach. Unbeknownst to him, that man is the guy he met the night before at the bar named Ortcutt.*
     [#]Ralph said 'I saw Ortcutt on the beach'

The 'direct version' of Armenian *te* reports, however, argue against such a clear-cut distinction between indirect and direct speech: *te* reports, for instance, can be extracted out of, as illustrated in (7).

(7)   *Context: Anna and Mariam go shopping. Anna stops in front of a shop window and says: 'I want to buy a shirt'. Later the same day, Mariam meets with Narek and*

reports what Anna said. Because of the traffic, Narek couldn't hear properly and asks:

Annan	asɛts	te	intʃ	əm	uzum	arnel?
Anna.DEF	say.AOR.3SG	COMP	what	be.1SG	want.PTCP.PRS	buy.FUT

'What did Anna$_i$ say that she$_i$ wanted to buy?'
(lit. 'What did Anna$_i$ say that I$_i$ want to buy?')

An important point to be made regarding this example is the fact that the *wh*-element takes wide scope over both the matrix and the embedded sentence; (7) is interpreted as a genuine question, and not as an assertion about a question that was previously asked (i.e., of the form *Anna said 'What do I want to buy?'*). Additionally, note that the same sentence with *vor* with a direct speech interpretation for indexical elements, i.e. where *I* is anaphoric to *Anna*, is degraded (the indirect speech interpretation, in which *I* refers to the speaker, is fine):

(8) | Anna-n | asɛts | vor | intʃ | ɛm | uzum | arnel? |
     |--------|-------|-----|------|-----|------|--------|
     | Anna-DEF | say.AOR.3SG | COMP | what | be.1SG | want.PTCP.PRS | buy.FUT |

$^{??}$'What did Anna$_i$ say that she$_i$ wants to buy?'
(lit. 'What did Anna$_i$ say that I$_i$ want to buy?')
✓ 'What did Anna say that I$_{Spk}$ want to buy?'

In the same fashion, *te* reports support *de re* substitution *salva veritate*, as (9) shows:

(9) *Context: Anna and Mariam are back to school and are classmates. When in class, Anna sees the teacher for the first time and falls in love, but since she wasn't paying attention, she hasn't heard his name. She says to Mariam: "I am in love with the teacher". Mariam, however, does know the teacher's name. Later that day, she reports what Anna said to a friend:*

Anna-n	asɛl-a	**te**	Narek-in	siɾum-ɛm
Anna.NOM-DEF	say-PRS.3SG	COMP	Narek-DAT	love.PTCP.PRS-be.PRS.1SG

'Anna$_i$ said that she$_i$ loves Narek'
(lit. 'Anna$_i$ said that I$_i$ love Narek')

Note that the same report in English, for instance, would be infelicitous, since in Anna's belief worlds, Narek and the teacher are distinct individuals, and therefore cannot be substituted with one another in quoted environments. In (9), however, no such problem arises: while indexical elements retain their original semantic value and refer to the participants of the reported speech act, the DP *Narek* can be read *de re* and thus evaluated from the perspective of the matrix speaker, Mariam.

In other words, *te* reports truly behave as a blend of indirect and direct discourse, challenging the long-standing binary distinction between direct and indirect discourse. While space precludes a full-fledged discussion of the boundary between direct and indirect speech and its consequences for linguistic theory, it is important to add that, while it seems that quotation is not as rigid as previously thought (see the discussion and examples related to the phenomenon of so-called *mixed quotation* in Maier 2007, 2014), the same holds for indirect discourse. While it is generally admitted that no *verbatim* requirement holds for indirect discourse, Brasoveanu and Farkas (2014) noted that such as view might be overly simple:

(10) *Context: John and Mary are the TA's for Semantics 1 and, as soon as the first class on presupposition is over, John says to Mary: 'Everybody in the class understood the notion of presupposition'. Its is common ground among the assistants that Susan is a student in Semantics 1. Later, Mary reports what John has said:*

   a.   John believes that Susan understood the notion of presupposition.

   b. $^{\#}$John said yesterday that Susan understood the notion of presupposition.

(Brasoveanu and Farkas 2014: (20))

While reporting what John said using the verb *believe* is fine, it is very much less so with the verb *say*, indicating that, even in their indirect guise, *say* reports in languages like English very

likely involve some 'faithfulness to meaning dimensions', as Brasoveanu and Farkas (2014) put it.

2.1 Interlude: do *te* reports involve indexical shift?

The aforementioned phenomena are reminiscent of *indexical shift* (henceforth: IS), which describes analogous behavior from first and second person indexicals in speech reports. IS is exemplified in (11) and (12), in which pronouns and agreement markers are ambiguous between an indexical reading (referring to the actual speech event participants) or a shifted reading (referring to the reported speech event participants):

(11) jon   jəgna nə-ññ   yɨl-all
      John   hero   be.PFV-S   3SG-M.say-AUX.3SG-M
      John$_i$ says that he$_{i,Spk}$ is a hero   (Amharic: Schlenker 1999)

(12) Hɛsen-i   mɨ-ra va   kɛ   ɛz dɛwletia
      Hesen-OBL I-OBL say COMP I   rich.be-PRS
      Hesen$_i$ tells me$_{Spk}$ that he$_{i,Spk}$ is rich   (Zazaki: Anand and Nevins 2004)

Importantly, note that person indexicals in such examples can receive an 'indexical' interpretation (referring to the overall speaker), as well as a 'shifted' interpretation (anaphoric to the matrix subject); both interpretations are available, depending on the context - just like our MEA examples.

One could of course argue that (11) and (12) simply involve quotation. However, inspired by a proposal by Schlenker (1999) and assuming the principle mentioned in (4) above, Anand (2006) rules out the possibility of analyzing such examples as involving direct speech, on the basis of data such as (13):

(13) Piyaa-o$_i$ [kɛ   Rojda va   kɛ   mɨ t_i paci kerdɛ] Ali biyo
      Person   COMP Rojda say.PST COMP I.OBL t kiss did   Ali be.PST
      'Ali was the person that Rojda$_i$ said I$_{i,Spk}$ kissed'.

                                                                (Anand and Nevins 2004: (12))

Anand's diagnostic was widely accepted, and tests such as that in (13) are commonly used in order to tell apart indexical-shifting languages from non-IS ones[2]. However, in light of the Armenian data, one could question the theoretical foundations of postulates such as (4), and consequently, the methodological relevance of tests such as *wh*-extraction, NPI licensing, and *de re* construals altogether: after all, what the Armenian data precisely shows is that the boundary between direct and indirect speech in some languages is not as clear-cut as it purportedly is in languages like English. Inversely, the Armenian data dealt with here could be analyzed as involving indexical shift.

Another reason to be skeptical about principles such as (4) and its corollaries is that, while the common properties of indexical shift reports and indirect speech ones have regularly been put forth in the literature, this is very much less so the case with other, less studied properties that pattern more closely with direct speech. An example is the fact that most IS reports across languages have embedded root properties, as rightfully noted by Sundaresan (2018); another is that some IS languages exhibit matrix indexical shift, where embedding seems not to be needed at all: this is for instance the case in Georgian, where a dedicated phrase-final marker *o* triggers agreement between a first-person marked verb form and the reported addressee, distinct from the utterance speaker:

(14) *Context: Nino and Dato have been dating for a significant period of time, and Nino*
      tells Gio she loves Dato. If I overhear their conversation, I can tell you:

      Nino-m   m-i-txr-a-o   (rom) Dato   m-i-qvar-s-o
      Nino.ERG   1-APPL-say-3SG.AOR-o   COMP   Dato.NOM 1-APPL-love-3SG.PRS-o
      'Nino$_i$ told me$_{Gio \neq Speaker}$ that I$_i$ love Dato'   (Georgian, Thivierge 2019: (6))

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[2] See also Deal (2020) and references therein.

Note that there is no matrix verb used to license the shift, making (15) resemble a form of direct quote with no embedding syntax.

An analogous phenomenon is observed in Kurmanji (Indo-Iranian), in which indexical shift is licensed across sentences:

(15)   *Context: You talked to Ehmet last night and he complained that he is ill. Later you say:*

a.   Mɪn   dhuni   Ehmet ra   şor   kɪr-ɪn
     I.ERG yesterday Ehmet with word do.PST-PL

     'Yesterday I talked to Ehmet'

b.   Ez   e   nexoş-ɪm
     I.NOM COP ill-1SG

     'I*Ehmet* am ill'   (Kurmanji, Koev 2013: (46))

Interestingly, we find that *te* reports in Armenian can also head matrix sentences and trigger a shifted interpretation for indexicals, especially in narrative contexts such as (16), taken from a popular tale called *The Master and the Servant*:

(16)   Inkə   galis-e   tsarayin tanum   te   ari
       He.3SG   come.PRS-3SG servant   take away.PTCP.PRS COMP come.IMP.2SG

       gnank   antarə vorsi
       go.1PL.HOR forest   hunt

       'He comes to get the servant and says to him: let's go and hunt in the woods'
                                                       (MEA, Marina Petrosyan p.c.)

Taken together, these facts suggest that, *contra* the widely accepted view that IS involves indirect speech, the opposite might in fact be true: IS could be a form of liberal direct speech, or loose quotation (Maier 2007). A full comparison of the shifting uses of indexicals under *te* with prominent examples of the indexical shifting literature is beyond the scope of this contribution, and has to be left for further research; I will then stick to my initial take on the phenomenon for the rest of this article, and treat *te* reports as involving a form of direct speech.

3   *te* as an evidential

The fact that the reporting constraints examined above systematically occur with the complementizer *te*, with its evidential properties, calls for an explanation: why is it that *te* systematically seems to favor a quotational reading of the clause it introduces? In what follows, I will suggest that the quotational and the evidential properties of *te* are strongly related. More precisely, I would like to argue that *te* is a form of reportative evidential (Faller 2002, Portner 2006, Murray 2010, AnderBois 2014, a.m.o.) that changes the force of the sentence it embeds. When a speaker uses *te* in order to report a proposition p, she actually makes a weaker commitment than she would be doing in reporting p with *vor*; by uttering *te p*, the speaker does not commit herself to the truth of p, as would be the case with a full-fledged assertion. Rather, she commits to the truth of p_{evid}, the weaker proposition resulting from the addition of the evidential meaning of *te*: the speaker has some evidence that some individual x said p, in a situation where $x \neq$ *speaker*. In doing so, the speaker induces a shift of perspective in which person indexicals are resolved towards the reported speaker and addressee, resulting in a 'semi-direct speech' effect, in which the embedded clause reports the perspective of the *origo* (the original speaker). At the same time, *te* reports can be used to introduce propositions that are at-issue and consequently, can be felicitously used by the utterance speaker to answer implicit or explicit questions brought about by the conversation (Roberts 1996/2012).

3.1   Evidentiality as a form of discourse update

As previously mentioned, while it syntactically looks as a run-of-the-mill complementizer, *t'e* actually carries further information about the informational status of the embedded clause it introduces. As reported by my informants, *te* conveys that the reporting speaker has doubts

regarding the truth of the proposition she is reporting, or that the truth of *p* is simply not assumed by the speaker[3]. I would like to argue that *te* has to be analyzed as an evidential complementizer: it introduces a proposition that is not asserted, but put forth as an assertion previously made from a third party.

I follow Portner (2006) in taking *presenting* as a primitive discourse move that adds *p* to the *presented set*, as superset of Stalnaker's 1974 *common ground*, which encompasses the set of all propositions that the discourse participants assume as being true for the purposes of the conversation (Figure 1a). Crucially, the presented set *ps* differs from the *cg* in that it does not require from the participants that they take the propositions it contains as true, merely that they are aware of it (Portner 2006: 8). A a consequence, the common ground (or *cg*) is a subset of *ps* (Figure 1b). Whenever a speaker utters *p*, he puts forth *p* (this is modelled in Portner's 2006 framework by the PUT function); in the standard assertive case, putting forth equals updating the common ground with *p* and, consequently, updating the presented set with it (Figure 1c.i). The important thing is that, while *put(ps)* as a move *can* update the *cg* (and generally does), *it need not be*; there could be languages that have means of putting forth a proposition (i.e., update the *ps* with it) *without* in the same move updating the *cg* with it (Figure 1c.ii)[4].
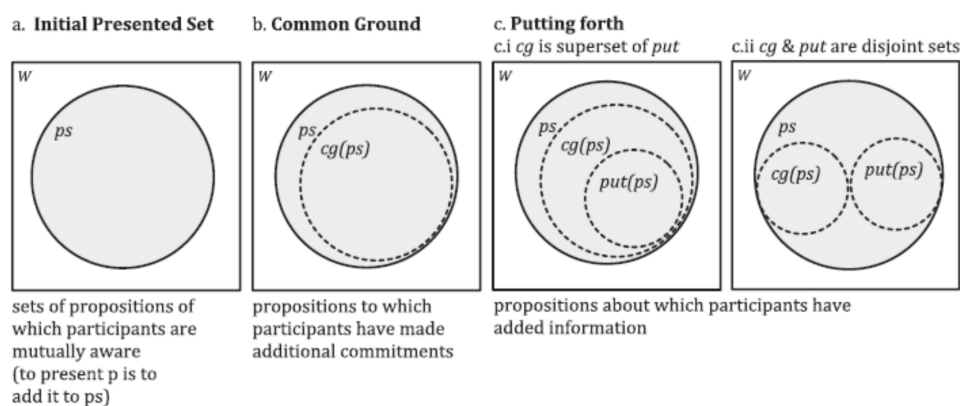

Figure 1: Déchaine et al.'s 2017 representation of the *presented set* and *common ground* as defined in Portner (2006)

Languages, however, make use of various elements that can modify the standard PUT function, corresponding with various kind of discourse updates. Evidentials are such elements. Portner (2006) models his proposal after Faller 2002's own account of evidentials in Cuzco Quechua (Quechuan; Cuzco Region, Peru). Cuzco Quechua possesses a range of evidential markers in the form of verbal affixes, including a reportative morpheme *si* that can be used when the speaker does not want to commit to the truth of the proposition reported:

(17) Pay-kuna=s   qulqi-ta   saqiy-wa-n   Mana=má, ni   un   sol-ta
      3SG-PL=REP   money-ACC   leave-1OBJ-3   NEG=IMP   not   one   Sol-ACC
      saqi-sha-wa-n=chu
      leave-PROG-1OBJ-3=NEG.
      'They left me money (I was told). (But) no, they didn't leave me one sol.'
                                                                        (Faller 2002: (191)

According to Faller, the reportative morpheme *s* has two key components: it signals an *absence of commitment* from the speaker towards *p* (which goes against it being used in an

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[3] These two judgments are not equivalent: analyzing *te p* as presupposing that the speakers doubts *p* is much stronger than the analysis offered here, where *te p* simply signals absence of commitment from the speaker. While I cannot develop it here, my take on this is that the stronger entailment is actually the result of an implicature, generated by the use of *te* over its evidentially-neutral counterpart *vor*.

[4] See Déchaine et al. (2017) for a discussion and analysis of such languages.

assertion), but in the same time, asserting *p-s* can be used to address the QUD - in other words, propose *p* as a candidate to update the *cg*.

In Portner's 2006 model, Quechuan *si* corresponds to the PUT_{report} function, which does the same as PUT, except that it comes with the following restriction: *p* has been previously uttered by a third party *x*, and the speaker has evidence for it. More formally:

(18) $PUT_{report} = \{\{w : \exists x[Say(x,p,w)]\} : p \in report(ps)\} \subset cg(ps)$

(Portner 2006: (7b))

As a consequence, the proposition augmented with its evidential component p_{evid} is added to the common ground, corresponding to Figure 1c.i[5]. This captures Faller's insight that reported propositions containing *si* are asserted (i.e. used to augment the common ground) without the speaker publicly committing to the truth of *p* itself.

Back to our MEA cases, I argue that an analogous update function is at play in Armenian, with a slight difference: in *te* reports, the overall speaker and the reported speaker must be distinct individuals. This can be achieved using the following function:

(19) PUT_{report} (MEA) $= \{\{w : \exists x[Say(x,p,w)] \wedge x \neq sp(c)\} : p \in report(ps)\} \subset cg(ps)$

Defined as above, the Armenian PUT function achieves the same discourse effect as its Quechuan counterpart, with an additional restriction on co-reference.

3.2 *te* as communicating first-person perspective

However, we saw that in its reporting use, *te* seems to *feed* a quotational reading of the elements contained in the embedded clause, most notably first and second person indexicals. I would like to propose that this is due to the *de se* properties of *te* reports. That the evidential and quotational components of *te* overlap in speech reports is by no means accidental: in fact, some previous studies have highlighted the possible connection between the two domains, most notably regarding indexical shift (Korotkova 2015, 2016). In fact, when reporting what someone has said, the speaker does not only assess the truth of some proposition *p*, she also uses the report to convey an array of both linguistic and meta-linguistic cues about that precise report. Linguistic cues involve expressives (*really*), appositives (non-restrictive relative clauses, parentheticals) and epithets (*the bastard*), as discussed in Harris and Potts 2009; meta-linguistic cues encompass demonstrations of all sorts, such as changes of facial expressions (Davidson 2015) and co-speech gestures (Ebert and Ebert 2014). First person reports, I argue, should be taken as belonging to the first group, and should be analyzed as expressions carrying a demonstrative component of the linguistic type. Remember that our canonical example (2) is crucially ambiguous between a quotational reading (2c) and an indexical reading (2d). Since Armenian does not morphosyntactically signal difference between direct and indirect speech, the hearer must rely on contextual cues in order to resolve the semantic value of a number of elements, including first and second person pronouns. The use of *te* over its non evidential counterpart *vor* is such a cue: it pragmatically signals a perspective shift from the perspective of the speaker towards that of the reported agent, through which a 'shifted' reading of the indexicals obtains. The availability of another perspectival agent (the subject of the matrix clause, Narek) is crucial here: this explains why that kind of shift is rather restricted to attitude complements, which readily provide some distinct cognitive agent than the actual speaker to 'anchor' the embedded proposition[6].

So, if direct speech contributes to evidentiality in that sense, how should it be captured? In a very naive sense, direct speech reports are of a somewhat different type than 'standard', third-person reports such as (1); more precisely, direct speech reports are used to express propositions

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[5] This achieves the same result as the analysis of reportative evidentials in AnderBois (2014), which uses a slightly different model of discourse update

[6] In fact, as previously noted in the literature, that kind of shift is more accurately described as being restricted to *say* reports only (Maier 2007, Sundaresan 2018 a.m.o.). The same goes for evidential markers, which are mostly licensed under *say* across languages (Korotkova 2015). The fact that shifting is mostly licensed under speech reports (rather than under, say, belief reports) also speaks in favor of a quotation analysis of the phenomenon, where reference to a previous utterance has to be established in order for the shifting to occur.

from a first-person perspective, i.e., *de se* propositions. Indexicals, in their standard use, have *de se* semantic values by definition: a speaker cannot felicitously use *I* to refer to himself if he hasn't previously come to believe that he is referring to himself and not, say, his reflection in a mirror that he wrongly assumed to be someone else (Perry 1979). As a communicative act, conveying a *de se* proposition about someone is more informative than its non-*de se*, i.e. third person, counterpart; it not only conveys propositional content, but also the *perspective* with which the reported content was initially proferred, a first-person one.

Again, this connects to evidentiality in a straightforward way: when a speaker A uses *te p* in the conversation, she intends to defer the responsibility of her claim to the reported speaker C. This can only be done properly if the proposition headed by *te* is a first-person one, for what kind of responsibility could be endorsed by C if she did not express a statement about herself in a first-personal way? If asserting *p* is to publicly commit to the truth of *p* (cf. Alston 2000, Geurts 2019), then, rather intuitively, a *de se* first-person assertion makes a very different kind of commitment than its non-*de se*, third person counterpart: when using the first person, C commits to the truth of the proposition she asserts, as well as to the fact that she recognizes herself as the entity responsible for that assertion.

This can readily be illustrated with so-called 'mistaken identity' scenarios, where the speaker does not recognizes herself and performs a third-person, *de re* assertion. As expected under the current analysis, such reports cannot be introduced by *te*:

(20)   *Context: Anna is suffering from amnesia. Together with her friend Mariam, they watch old video footage of their holidays at the seaside. In the video, Anna can be seen diving and swimming rather skillfully. Without recognizing herself, Anna points to her image on the screen and says: 'Now, that girl is a really good swimmer!'. Later on, Mariam tells her husband what Anna said. She says:*

Karin-ə   asets   te   lav-em   loʁanum
Karin-DEF say.3SG.AOR COMP good-be.1SG.PRS swim.PTCP.PRS
✗ 'Karin$_i$ said that she$_i$ was a good swimmer'
✓ 'Karin said that I$_{Spk}$ was a good swimmer'

4 Conclusion

In this paper, I tried to advocate for two things: i) MEA reported speech does not pattern according to the traditional dichotomy between indirect and direct speech. Rather, it seems to call for a more fine-grained way to think about the similarities and the differences of between these two modes cross-linguistically (typologically as well as theoretically, cf. Evans 2013). This could lead us to revise a number of facts previously analyzed as pertaining to indirect discourse in indexical shift phenomena; ii) the evidential and quotational properties of Armenian complementizer *te* are not distinct features, but rather, two complementary semantic attributes conspiring to achieve the kind of perspective shift conveyed in direct speech reports.

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