

A MODEL FOR THE STUDY OF REPORTED SPEECH IN AFRICAN LANGUAGES

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The way quotations are made varies from language to language, not only because of sociological factors but also because of linguistic ones. All reported speech comprises three parts - the actual speech act, the introduction to the quote, and the quotation itself. Following these parameters, four types of reported speech can be distinguished - identified, unidentified, embedded and implicit. Varied forms of participant reference give rise to four speech styles - direct, semi-direct, indirect and implicit. All these distinctions have implications for verb form, quote introducers and the function of the various styles.

La manière de citer les paroles de quelqu'un d'autre varie d'une langue à l'autre non seulement selon des facteurs sociologiques, mais aussi selon des possibilités linguistiques différentes d'une langue à l'autre. Tout discours rapporté comporte trois parties, l'acte de langage, l'introduction à la citation et le contenu de la citation. Selon ces paramètres, on peut distinguer quatre types de discours rapporté: le discours lié, le discours libre, le discours enchâssé et le discours implicite. A propos de chaque discours rapporté, il convient de noter en outre les participants au discours et la forme grammaticale utilisée dans chacune des parties pour y faire référence. Ceci amène à distinguer entre styles direct, semi-directs, indirect et implicite. Outre ces critères qui permettent d'établir ces distinctions, il faut observer les éventuelles variations dans les formes verbales selon les styles, la façon d'introduire les divers types de discours rapportés ainsi que les fonctions des divers styles.

1. INTRODUCTION

Quoting someone (or one's self) in an acceptable manner is a delicate matter in any society. There are sociological constraints on who is to be quoted and how. In Europe the direct speech style is preferred as it permits the author to let the original author speak for himself -- he may or may not add his own comment. The indirect style transforms what the original speaker said, and is often used to summarize or paraphrase his thoughts.

Quoting others is, however, not solely a question of social etiquette. Many Amerindian languages do not have as part of their linguistic system an indirect speech style but stick to direct quotes for all purposes. In addition one such speech community (Jamamadi, Brazil) is reported to treat the repeating of anyone's words as taboo -- this must change the rules of social interchange drastically! In Africa, on the other hand, many languages not only allow **direct** and **indirect** speech, but have in addition what has been named **semi-direct** (also described as 'combined', Hedinger 1984 or 'mixed', Noss 1988) style. From the French we have learned to distinguish between **lié** or **identified** and **libre** or **unidentified** at least in written literature.

In the indirect style there are also various degrees of integration of the quote content into the matrix clause. There is a marked difference of integration between such indirect speeches as:

- 1) Mary said that he should come another day.
Mary preferred him to come another day.
Mary would rather he came another day.

Here again not all languages allow the same degree of integration, in fact, some African languages don't seem to make much use of such integrated phrases. One might speak of **implicit** speech for anything integrated beyond the clearly identified indirect speech.

Other restrictions can be observed in the use of quotes embedded within quotes and the use of speech styles allowed in such complicated constructions. Or the degree of embedding might be limited.

Some languages have developed a special system of pronominal reference to keep participants straight in the indirect style. It has become known as **logophoric** reference and consists of some special marker, often a pronoun, used in the quote content to indicate coreference with the original speaker whose speech is reported.

Looking from the translation point of view, the use of these various speech styles has subtle and not so subtle overtones. At what point can direct speech be translated as such or has to be transformed into indirect and vice versa? In the Amerindian languages without indirect speech the question is simple: all reported speech, including most of the implied references to speech acts, have to be transformed into direct speech. This gives rise to such expressions as:

- 2) saying: Is it really true? means 'to doubt'
saying: I will do it. means 'to decide'

This paper¹ presents a systematic framework to help in researching the form of the speech styles allowed in a language as a basis for studying the uses of each identified form. The examples will be drawn from English, though in the articles cited in the bibliography corresponding examples from African languages can be found.

2. THE PARTS OF REPORTED SPEECH

Any reported speech can be viewed as being composed of three parts, A, B and C.

2.1 **Part A** represents the actual speech act in which the quote is being cited. The speaker will be symbolized by I, hearer by II and those absent from (or inactive in) the speech act as III. Part A is always present but usually not overtly signaled. It plays an important role in the distinction of styles, however.

2.2 **Part B** is the introduction to the quote content with its identification of the original speaker and hearer whose speech act is being reported. The speaker will be referred to as X, the hearer as Y and the spoken about (but absent or inactive) as Z.

2.3 **Part C** is the quote content itself. The coreference of the participants of the quote content with A and B being important, these will be symbolized as 1 for first, 2 for second and 3 for third person.

2.4 These three parts enter into various **relationships**. Whereas A is always understood and rarely alluded to, B may be present, absent, or repeated. C, on the other hand, is always present, but it may be a separate clause or merged with B into one clause. The following formulas show the possibilities:

- a) (A) +B +C **identified** speech (lié)
possible styles: direct, indirect, implicit
- b) (A) -B +C **unidentified** speech (libre)
possible styles: direct as drama
indirect as reveries, musings
- c) (A) +B_{1-n} +C **embedded** speech
possible styles: direct, indirect, implicit

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- d) (A) + BC **implicit speech: B and C integrated,
merged into one clause**

These can now be exemplified:

- a) identified speech:
3) Mary declared: 'come another day!'
Mary asked that he should come another day.
Mary asked to be excused.
- b) unidentified speech:
4) 'Come another day!' -- 'No, we have to do it now.'
Could he not come another day? Did it have to be now?
- c) embedded speech
5) Mary told him: 'father said to do it now !'
Mary told him that her father had said: 'do it now!'
Mary told him that her father had said to do it now.
Mary told him that her father wanted it done now.
Mary indicated her father's desire to see it done now.
- d) implicit speech:
6) She told him to do it right away.
She wanted it done right away.

3. PARTICIPANT CO-REFERENCE BETWEEN A, B, C

The identity between the participants in the three parts make for intricate relationships between the reported speeches.

3.1 In the **direct** speech style the speech act participants of A are not important; they can be I/II/III indiscriminately. It is the relationship between B and C which marks this style:

- a) (A:I/II/III) B:X=C:1 and B:Y=C:2 direct style

Example: a) X=1 Y=2

- 7) I said to him: 'I will do it for you.'
You said to him: 'I will do it for you.'
Mary said to me: 'I will do it for you.'

where **I/we** in the speech content always refers to the original speaker(s) and **you** to the original hearer(s), independent of whether these are present or absent in the actual speech act A. First person reference in B of course implies speaker in A; second person reference in B implies hearer in A.

3.2 In some African languages a variation of this has been reported, which might best be called **semi-direct** style. It is similar to the direct style in that the participants of the actual speech act are not important. Coreference of participants is encoded differently than in a), however. Two different situations have been reported:

- b) (A:I/II/III) B:X=C:3 and B:Y=C:2
c) (A:I/II/III) B:X=C:1 and B:Y=C:3

Examples: b) X=3 Y=2, c) X=1 Y=3

- 8) he_i told her_j; he_i will accept help if you_j will help him_i
9) he_i told her_j; I_i will accept help if she_j will help me_i

This speech style may actually be direct reporting of the use of third person to refer to first or second person as a manner of speaking, such as:

10) 'Somebody is hungry around here' meaning 'I am hungry' 'Somebody has not finished his work' meaning 'you didn't finish'.

As such it would not be a separate style of reported speech at all but rather reflect a manner of speaking current in conversation.

3.3 The **indirect** style is marked by a different relationship. Here the relevant parts are A and C; the participants of B are unimportant. The relevant coreferences can be diagrammed in the following formula:

d) (B:X/Y/Z) A:I=C:1 and A:II=C:2 and A:III=C:3

Example: d) I=1 II=2 III=3

11) I told him that you did not see it
 you told him that I did not see it
 Mary told you that she did not see it

where first person reference in the speech content always refers to the speaker of the actual speech act A independent of the speaker/hearer/spoken about function in B; second person reference refers to the actual hearer and third person reference to those not present (or inactive) in the actual speech act.

3.4 The same relationship can be diagrammed for the **implicit** speech style, which makes it a kind of indirect style with the particularity of the quote content being integrated with the introductory part into one clause. There may be various degrees of this fusion, and one could, in fact, look at the direct and implicit styles as the end points of a continuum of such integration.

12) I thought about telling you that
 You wish to see me
 She asked you to come

3.5 Another relevant relationship exists between the participants of A and B and their possible overlapping identity, whereas the participants of C are unimportant. The relationship is:

A:I/II = B:X/Y (C:1/2/3)

that is, the actual speaker and/or hearer is/are identical to the original speaker and/or hearer. In that case the reported speech has an **eye witness**; if not, it is **hearsay**. Unless of course I or II was physically present but inactive in the original speech act, which would have to be treated as a special case. Quotations of written material have to be interpreted as

A:I = B:Y if I read (or is reading) the quotation.

13) Tom told me that ...
 Did you tell Tom that ...

3.6 The **logophoric** reference reported for a number of African languages constitutes a fourth person in C which is obligatorily coreferent with B:X, whereas the third person identification refers to any participant other than the speaker of the original speech act. Maybe the 'special use' of the logophoric forms in intentional or purpose clauses is actually a manifestation of implicit speech, a style not much used in many African languages.

4. OTHER COREFERENCES BETWEEN A, B, C

The mode, time, location and direction references also show coreference restrictions according to the speech styles. There is a close relationship between parts B and C in any non-direct style, which is absent in the direct styles.

4.1 In many languages the verb forms are different in direct and non-direct quote styles. In English, for example, the tense of the verb in the quote content must fit in with the speech introducing verb if the indirect style is used; this restriction is not found in the direct style. Any imperative in direct style must be expressed by the help of a modal verb in non-direct style; a question must be transformed, often using a combination of the introductory verb with the introducing particles plus a change in the verb form. In many African languages, on the other hand, the verb forms remain the same in direct and non-direct quotes.

- 14) Come! -- that you should come
 -- you to come
 Did he come? -- if he came
 -- whether he came
 When did he come? -- when he came

4.2 The same goes for **adverbs** of time, location and, maybe more importantly, direction. The use of **demonstratives** might be indicative of style. Li (in Coulmas, 1986) cites the following example:

- 15) John told Paul, 'Come here and take care of this mess.'
 John told Paul to go there and take care of that mess.

Noss (1988) has shown the importance of the use of deictics for identifying discourse styles in Gbaya.

5. QUOTE INTRODUCERS

There are two kinds of quote introducers: verbs and particles. In English the particles indicate indirect (but not implicit) quotes; in Greek and in African languages any kind of quote (except the unidentified?) is introduced by such a particle. And in all styles either the verb or the particle may be deleted, giving the following possibilities:

English identified:	+ Verb	+ Content	direct style
	+ Verb + Part	+ Content	indirect style
	+ Verb	+ Content	implicit style
Kom identified:	+ (\pm Verb \pm Part)	+ Content	direct/indirect

- 16) He said: 'I must go.' direct
 He said that he must go. indirect
 He decided to go. implicit

5.1 In most languages **the verbs of saying, thinking and feeling** are a distinct subclass within the class of verbs. Not all of them can necessarily be used for introducing all the quote styles the language has. Or it may be that the same saying verb, introducing different quote styles, has by that fact a different meaning -- the difference may be between a spoken and a (presumed) thought but not actually pronounced quote. In English most of the verbs can be used to introduce either style, which is not true in Kom, for example.

- 17) He said: 'Go!' -- He said that he should go.

'Should I go?' he wondered -- He wondered if he should go.

5.2 The language might have a series of quote introducing **particles** like 'that', 'whether', 'if', or they may have only one particle used for all quotes.

- 18) He said that ...
 He will ask if ...
 He wonders whether ...

6. EXCLAMATION WORDS AND VOCATIVES

Exclamation words and vocatives are widely used in conversation and found in direct quotes.

- 19) 'Bother, it didn't work out right!' he exclaimed.
 'Bill, would you help me?' she pleaded.

According to Noss (1988) both can also be found in indirect speech in Gbaya, denoting the kind of immediacy associated with direct speech.

7. THE FUNCTION OF THE DIFFERENT STYLES

It is commonly held that the difference between direct and indirect speech has to do with the prominence given to the original speaker over against the narrator. The more integrated the speech into the report, the less prominence is accorded to the original speaker who becomes backgrounded. The difficulty lies in trying to determine exactly what that means in an African language, when, for example, the indirect style is used for normal reporting and the direct style for very special purposes only -- exactly what purposes? What is the relationship between the style used, the importance of the speaker quoted, the climactic structure of the text? See Glock, (1986) Gakinabay (1986) and Noss (1988) for some new insightful suggestions on these questions. Noss shows how the different styles may be cleverly woven together, switching from one into another within sentences or even clauses, as the narrative develops.

At what point should a style be changed in the translation process in order to maintain the same level of prominence intended in the original? Chia (1986) has some ideas on this subject.

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