Perspectivisation by evidential markers and quotation

Quotation is the presentation of a speech act, whose content can be integrated in the discourse in different ways: it can be reported by literal reproduction in a direct (verbatim) quotation, cf. (1a), it can be reported via (free) indirect discourse, or it can be reported by just conveying the general meaning of what was said.

(1a) John said “Doing linguistics is easy.”

Evidentiality, on the other hand, is commonly known as the encoding of an utterance by the indication of the “source of the information” contained in the proposition (cf. Aikhenvald 2004:3). The subtype of indirect – or reportative – evidentiality can be further classified into second-hand knowledge, where the provider of the reported information is known, third-hand knowledge, with no indication of the exact source of information, and folklore or generic knowledge (cf. Willett 1988 and Palmer 2001). Some languages have evidential grammatical markers proper (e.g. Quechua), whereas others encode this function by (mostly lexical) “evidential strategies” (cf. Aikhenvald 2004) like the adverb reportedly in (1b).

(1b) Reportedly doing linguistics is easy.

Although reportative evidentiality and quotative marking must be clearly kept distinct (as e.g. Extepare 2010 shows), they have things in common: both can involve lexical expressions of saying and reporting (GUVs – General Utterance Verbs, cf. Jäger 2010); both concern more than one speech act, cf. also Jakobson (1957) and his definition of evidential as “a tentative label for the verbal category which takes into account three events – a narrated event, a speech event, and a narrated speech event (Ens), namely the alleged source of information about the narrated event”; and both put into perspective the content of an assertion, either by making its source explicit or by indicating that it is different from the current speaker. In fact, there are areas where evidential and quotative strategies overlap (similar to the blurred boundaries between epistemic modality and inferential evidentiality), cf. (2) from Latin American Spanish, where the same lexical element dizque (< dice que 'says that') is used as an evidential (2a) and quotative marker (2b):

(2a) LASp. Juan dizque estaba enfermo.
’Allegedly [=SAYS THAT], John was ill.’

(2b) LASp. Se supo che un de grupo realizadores venezolanos […] rechazo la participación de Fanny Mickey en el papel protagónico dizque “porque no era prenda de garantía.”
’It came out that a group of directors from Venezuela […] refused the participation of Fanny Mickey in the role of the protagonist SAYS THAT “because she was not a warranty card’.” (CREA – El Tiempo, Colombia, 1987)

Parallel to the SAYS THAT marker, in many Romance varieties, there is also a SAYS marker, i.e. an adverb without integrated complementiser, which can encode varying types of reported evidentiality. For colloquial Italian, for example (but this is probably not the case in Spanish), Cruschina (2011:106f) claims that a distinction can be made between dice che for indirect
speech and hearsay and (invariable) *dice*, used for direct quotation, cf. (3) (where the first person pronoun is an indicator of quoted discourse):

(6) It. *Dice* … c’ era una ragazza m’ ha detto *dice* guarda io…
   *SAYS* there was a girl *me* she-has said *SAYS* look *I* ‘*SAYS*, there was a girl she said to me, *SAYS* look I…’  
   (Lorenzetti 2002:211)

Furthermore, there are cases, not rare in the languages of the world (cf. Klamer 2000), where the complementize that introduces the complement of a verb of saying can be used as a stand-alone quotative marker, cf. (4):

(4) Sp. *Si viene mi madre, que el tabaco es tuyo*. (Etxepare 2010)
   *if comes my mother THAT the tobacco is yours*
   'If my mother comes (tell her) that the tobacco is yours.'

Evidential and quotative markers of the type SAYSTHAT, SAYS and THAT thus represent a good piece of evidence for the necessity to distinguish between different types of perspectivised narration. The polyfunctionality of these elements renders them an ideal empirical touch-stone to observe the interaction of semantics and pragmatics at the interface.

The aim of my talk is to show how the syntax and semantics of several quotative and reportative evidential strategies can be described with the help of data stemming mainly, but not only, from Romance. I will offer a fine-grained taxonomy concerning their semantic and pragmatic features, in order to come to a better understanding of how quotation and evidential marking (and hybrid manifestations of both) are integrated into discourse giving rise to perspectivisation phenomena. One of my claims will be that the elements at issue introduce a model of reported speech (cf. Quer 1998) with a variable as an individual anchor (this is the semantic part). In contrast to canonical GUVs, where a subject is part of the thematic frame and thus the variable is satisfied syntactically, with the elements discussed here the instantiation of the variable depends on the context (this is the pragmatic part). The different degrees of perspectivisation arising from the interplay of grammar and discourse thus depend on grammatical means, semantic structures and, when the latter are underspecified, pragmatic contextualisation.

References


