

FRENCH FINAL TUNES AND ATTITUDE ATTRIBUTION

It is well-known that belief attribution can be made by the way either of semantics (choice of some specific lexical items which trigger presupposition such as *to imagine* vs *to believe*), or of syntactic constructions (as the use of specific verbal form as *conditionnel* in French). In this paper, we want to show that intonation also can convey information concerning Speaker's vision of her own belief and Addressee's beliefs and more specifically concerning the compatibility of these two sets of belief : does Speaker and Addressee share the same vision of the world, or two visions that are compatible, or two vision that are conflicting ?

Our aim is to provide an analysis of the meaning of final tunes associated to turns in French dialogues and to show that the contrast between L% in the one hand vs H% and HL% in the other hand is related to Speaker's attitude towards the local context of her utterance: the choice between a falling or a non falling tune depends on whether Speaker sees the context as a defective context or a nondefective one (Stalnacker 1978).

Our proposal is based on the analysis of turns' tunes in various corpora of spontaneous speech (telephone calls, radio interviews, TV shows, interviews) and of some examples studied in the French literature. We propose to modelize the impact of a turn concerning the attitude attribution in a framework inspired from Ginzburg.

1. Background. It is usually considered that tunes code speech acts, more specifically that final L% are associated with assertions and final H% with questions or requests. However such a view is not empirically correct.

- There is no 1-1 relationship between tunes and syntactic types: interrogatives and declaratives are associated with the different tunes in French and in English (Gunlogson (2001), Bartels (1997), Mertens (1987)). See example (1) and (2).
- There is no 1-1 relationship between the denotations and tunes: contrary to questions marked by inversion, questions marked by intonation provide an environment incompatible with negative polarity items like *ever* (Huddleston (1994)). See example (3) in English. Same data are verified in French..
- Finally, there is no 1-1 relationship between tunes and the dialogical contrast "asserting/questioning": in particular, there are some rising declarative which are associated with asserting force. See example (4). (4) features a rising declarative that carry Speaker's commitment to p. This is a serious counter-example to the two main proposals that link tunes and commitment: contrary to what is predicted by Bartels (for English though), a rising declarative may be associated with public commitment to a proposition. Contrary to what is predicted by Gunlogson (for English), a rising declarative may be associated with Speaker's commitment: in the case of (4), it is clear that Speaker is committed to the fact that he cannot receive his children whereas the Addressee seems to doubt the fact.

So what is then the meaning of final tunes and how does it interact with attitude attribution ?

2. Our claim is the following:

- (5) By using a final L%, the speaker is signalling that she sees the context of her move as a nondefective context: she assumes that the hearer agrees on the current activity and/or their presuppositions.
- (6) By using a final tune other than L%, the speaker is signalling that she is aware that the hearer does or may disagree on the current activity and/or their presuppositions.

The effect of (5) is that L% is so to speak transparent for illocutionary forces: the illocutionary value of the utterance is that which is associated with its syntactic type (see Ginzburg & Sag (2000) for the association syntactic type / illocutionary content / denotation, for root sentences). Hence, a declarative sentence with final L% carries an assertion whereas an interrogative sentence with L% carries a question.

On the other hand, (6) explains the value taken by assertions or questions with a tune other than L%. With a such tune, Speaker signals Hearer and herself have or may have belief that are not compatible. In the case of an assertion, the disagreement is about a commitment : Speaker believes P and believes that Addressee doesn't share this belief. In the case of a question, the disagreement is about the relevance of the question, or about the set of possible answers to the question.

3. Framework and analysis

We account for these data in a framework inspired from Ginzburg. Dialogues are analysed and modelled from the discourse participants (DP) perspectives, from their information state while producing the dialogue. Each information state is partitioned into two: a publicized part that describes the public moves of the DP and a private part that describes her private belief. The main component of this private part is the BKGROUND: the unpublicized belief store of the DP. In such a store, we make a distinction between (i) what the Speaker knows/believes and (ii) what the speaker assumes that the addressee knows/believes (see 7). We admit that the current issue selects among the elements of BKGROUND those that are ABOUT, relevant for the issue. They are selected in SP(eaker) and ADD(ressee) (see 8).

An utterance has two impacts : an impact on Speaker's gameboard (by asserting, the Speaker makes public that she increments her public representation of the joint commitments shared in the current dialogue ; and by questioning, Speaker makes public that she increments her public representation of the set of Questions under debate in the current dialogue) and a impact on the Addressee (it calls for a public uptake by the Addressee or it doesn't).

Final tunes signals whether Speaker sees the local context of her move as defective or nondefective. The context is non defective when what Speaker believes about a given issue is, or may be, compatible with what she assumes Addressee knows/believes about the same issue. A context is defective when what Speaker believes about a given issue is not, or may be not, compatible with what Speaker assumes that Addressee believes about the same issue.

There is a clear divide between falling tunes on the one hand and non falling on the other.

- (9) a. By using a falling tune, Speaker signals that she assumes a non defective context for her move.
b. By using a non falling tunes (*ie.* rising or a rising-falling tune), Speaker signals that she assumes a defective context for her move.

Conclusion. The analysis of the meaning associated to final tunes crucially involves the Speaker's assumption about whether (s)he shares the same world with the Hearer. We have argued that final tunes of French are not associated with the illocutionary meaning of the utterances (either its update impact or its dialogical impact) or the Speaker's or Addressee's commitment. They are associated with differences in the Speaker's vision of the local context of her turn. The local context is defined as the elements of belief that are relevant in her private mental state. These elements are drawn either from her own belief or from what she assumes the Addressee's believes. This last distinction explains the choice, between non falling tunes, of a rising one or a rising-falling one.

We have illustrated our claim with declaratives, but it directly carries over to interrogatives. By using a falling interrogatives, Speaker signals that she assume that the answer to her question is compatible with what she or her addressee knows/believes, *i.e.* will not bring about any revision of the belief about the current issue. By using a nonfalling interrogatives, Speaker signals that she assume that the answer to her question may not be, or will not be, compatible with what she or her addressee knows/believes about the issue raised by the question, *i.e.* may or will bring a revision of the knowledge/belief about the current issue.

Hence, it calls for a dialogical modelization instead of the more monological ones that are often assumed in formal pragmatics frameworks.

Examples

- (1) Rising declarative sentence (interpreted as a question)

Marie est invitée H% Mary is invited

- (2) Falling interrogative sentence (interpreted as a question)

A quelle heure part le train pour Preston L% At what time is the train for Preston.

- (3) a. *Have you ever considered emigrating ?*
b. ** You have ever considered emigrating ?H%*

- (4) *[Nous, on est dans des centres d'hébergement. Bon, moi personnellement, j'ai trois enfants,] mais je ne peux pas recevoir mes enfants H%*

[We live in a social centre. Well, personally I have three kids,] but I can't have them visit me here.

- (7) UNPUB $\left[\begin{array}{c} \text{GOAL} \\ \text{BKGROUND} \left[\begin{array}{c} \text{SP} \\ \text{ADD} \end{array} \right] \end{array} \right]$

SP describes the Speaker's belief and ADD describes the Addressee's belief as viewed by the Speaker

- (8) $\text{Thems}_{\text{Speaker}} = \{s \in \text{SP}, \text{About}(q, s)\}$
 $\text{Thems}_{\text{Addressee}} = \{s \in \text{ADD}, \text{About}(q, s)\}$

Selected references

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