

## Enunciative approaches to drafts

### English Version

#### Version courte

In this presentation, we are going to develop an enunciative approach to the drafts of educative reports. In other words, we are going to focus on the modifications that affect enunciation and try to evaluate their pragmatic effects. To do so, we will adopt an approach to the enunciation based on the work of Benveniste. We are going to observe the linguistic marks that refer back to the speaker's presence<sup>1</sup> within the utterance (such as shifters, modalities, reported speech, etc).

We have seen as an introduction how educative reports are written at the crossroads of various constraints, which results in the creation of a complex enunciative system, including all of the following:

- A multiple speaker:

Many members of the team participate in the writing of the text, which is then revised by the section head who then writes the conclusion

- A double addressee: the reports are destined to be read by a judge but can also be viewed by the family.

- (given the explicit, pragmatic aim of the evaluation and recommendation of a decision) the complex position of the writer between the risk of stigmatizing an individual, establishing distance from the situation, and his obligation to describe «what is wrong» (see Emilie's work).

- The existence of clear, editorial directions (such as writing guides, orally diffused obligations, writing norms provided by judges); these directions insist on the importance of facts and the importance of respect for the child's say in the matter. In other words, they demand neutrality and objectivity. However, many differences exist depending on the services.

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<sup>1</sup> Nous suivons la terminologie de Benveniste qui emploie les termes « énonciation » et « locuteur » : « il faut prendre garde à la condition spécifique de l'énonciation : c'est l'acte même de produire un énoncé et non le texte de l'énoncé qui est notre objet. Cet acte est le fait du locuteur qui mobilise la langue pour son compte. La relation du locuteur à la langue détermine les caractères linguistiques de l'énonciation » (« l'appareil formel de l'énonciation », in *Problèmes de linguistique générale*, p. 80).

- finally, texts taken within a complex interdiscourse that incorporates various elements from law and the media but also psychology and psychoanalysis

The speaker who produces these highly constrained writings is therefore considered a professional of educative action and disposes of an expertise of educative situation analysis. It is also his responsibility to recommend an educative measure. By reviewing drafts, modifications affecting the enunciative marks (such as additions, deletions, displacements, and replacements) can allow for a better understanding of the way by which the speaker manages these diverse, sometimes paradoxical, constraints. These modifications also can make evident the pragmatic effects related to the presence and/or absence of these marks. Taking into consideration what we already know about genre and from the analyses led on a corpus in its final stages, we may ask ourselves the following questions:

- How is the speaker, who observes, interprets, and evaluates, inscribed in the text?
- Do the corrections have a tendency to remove the speaker from the text in accordance with the neutrality principle often invoked in writing guides? Is such a principle compatible with the report's evaluative aim?
- Can we detect a tendency to distinctly separate the discourse of the speaker (L) from the discourse of the child and the family represented in the text?
- Can we establish correlations between the operations that affect the enunciative marks and certain textual factors (such as context and type of sequence)?

To answer these questions, we will study the following marks:

--> marks of person

--> modalities

--> reported speech (and the positioning of the utterer with regard to the discourse of the others)

We are going to present to you today the provisional results obtained from a first state of corpus. They will serve as the main idea for the exploration of the corpus collected in real time. Due to a

limited amount of time, we will, unfortunately, not be able confront the question of subjective vocabulary.

Some of the remarks to follow may echo the presentation on argumentative approach (*argumentation*). The management of marks refers back to the speaker whose “position” is clearly in relation with the pragmatic and, thus, argumentative aim of the text (to return to in the conclusion)

### 1. The indications of person

For many years (see introduction), we have analyzed a corpus of reports in their final stages that were produced by different services. Our work has allowed us to conclude that the usage of *nous* (or, in English, *we*) depends on the service in question. Certain services issue reports that are characterized by a complete absence of *nous*, in the place of which lies frequent usage of passive or pronominal forms. For the services who do indeed employ the *nous*, the context of the personal pronoun allows for the identification of the different functions or activities of the writer, which include establishing contact with the family, conducting the interview, analyzing and interpreting, and making recommendations (see for example FPS in carnets 10). In this way, the pronoun may either refer to the social worker intervening within the family or to the institution issuing the educative measure.

In the corpus of drafts that we are going to analyze today, the modifications are two-fold: the addition or removal of *nous* OR the substitution of *nous* with *l'équipe / the team* or vice versa.

We can see that the *nous* form can be added or deleted with the same predicate (*paraît*), as the following two examples will demonstrate:

(1) La mise en œuvre d'un projet spécifique ou individuel avec un contrat "jeune" nous paraîtrait la plus judicieuse pour Manon (doc pour la synthèse, Manon Dorey, conclusion)

Commentaire [e1]: Would seem

(2) il paraît nous paraît également important de relever que toute cette énergie et ce temps passé à s'occuper des autres lui permet de ne pas réfléchir à sa propre situation et surtout de ne pas avoir à affronter une réalité certainement difficile à vivre. (Pamela, doc manuscrit 1)

Commentaire [e2]: It seems to us

To understand this apparent contradiction, it seems essential to take into account the previous context, the sequence in which the utterance is situated, and the semantics of the predicate that follows *paraître*.

In the all of the extracts collected, we can see that the removal of the 1st person pronoun intervenes:

-in the recommendation's formulation, as shown in the first example. The deletion of *nous* in this extract must be taken in relation with the privileged usage of the nominal syntagm *l'équipe* throughout the entire report. (which refers us back to the collective speaker).

-in the reasoning for a change that will affect the life of the child such as a change of foster family as seen in example (3):

(3) Nous avons fait le choix d'un changement de famille d'accueil de Bertrand suite à un relais prolongé de ce dernier chez Mme MARQUET pour les raisons suivantes :→ Le maintien de Bertrand chez son Assistante Familiale n'était plus possible pour les raisons suivantes : (Roux, rapport d'échéance)

Commentaire [e3]: We chose...  
It was no longer possible for Bertrand...

--> There is, at the same time, the removal of *nous* and the passage from a personal predicate (*faire le choix*) to an impersonal predicate (*ne plus être possible*). The switching of foster families is presented here as an absolute necessity and not as a «choice», or rather, as more or less an arbitrary decision of the educative team.

The addition of *nous* or the replacement of *l'équipe* by *nous* intervenes on the other hand in the utterances that contain an interpretation:

(4) = (6) il paraît nous paraît également important de relever que toute cette énergie et ce temps passé à s'occuper des autres lui permet de ne pas réfléchir à sa propre situation et surtout de ne pas avoir à affronter une réalité certainement difficile à vivre. (Pamela, doc manuscrit 1)

Commentaire [e4]: It seems/It seems to us

This interpretive kind of utterance follows from a paragraph dedicated to the interpretation of the child's behavior (with edits that affect the modalization).

(5) Cette relation peut alors poser question au sein de l'équipe ... → Cette relation complexe nous interroge car au-delà de leur camaraderie leur problématique XXX (à savoir

addiction au tabac et consommation de produits illicites) peut s'avérer délétère. (Manon Dore, Manon sur le groupe de l'Orangerie)

Commentaire [e5]: Asks us

→ This modification is not easy to interpret. Was the first formulation indeed ambiguous, for it can be interpreted as a manifestation of a disagreement that may have taken place among members of the team? In the second formulation, we notice that *nous* is clearly in the evaluator's position.

(6) Elle a eu un discours très similaire à son père à propos de son malaise et sur le fait que peut être son état de santé était très préoccupant. → Nous avons observé des similitudes dans le discours d'Evelyne, sur sa santé, et le discours habituel de Monsieur ROUX, qui se veut inquiétant pour ses enfants (Roux, rapport d'échéance)

Commentaire [e6]: She had a very similar discourse to.../We observed similarities

→ The modifications serve to place the utterer in the observer's position who is able to "decipher" the discourses of both the little girl and her father.

(7) l'équipe peut percevoir chez Manon toute une ambiguïté mais surtout entendre angoisse à se poser dans une sérénité pour avancer  
→ nous constatons là toute l'ambiguïté de Manon mais aussi son angoisse importante à tenir dans un cadre même choisi (correction crayon sur texte tapé)  
(Manon, rapport d'échéance, II Manon sur le groupe de l'Orangerie)

Commentaire [e7]: The team can see/We can see here

In this last example, the modification, which does indeed affect other elements of the sentence, draws a conclusion deduced from previous elements of the "asement" (the usage of *là*, and the definite determinant with *ambiguïté*). The wide span of *nous* could include the invited listener to share the same kind of reasoning, which would then attribute significant argumentative weight to the modification.

At this stage we can then formulate a first hypothesis to be verified against a much wider corpus: Is there a correlation between the presence of the speaker's personal marks and the type of activities described in the utterance? In other words, can we link the presence of 1<sup>st</sup> person marks to the presence of an "interpretive" speaker who attempts to decipher a behavior or a given discourse? On the contrary, would the absence of these marks characterize the speaker's position as the "decider?" Are two distinct, enunciative "positions" distinguishable through the presence/absence of marks explicitly referring back to the speaker?

→ the link with the ethos of the speaker in the line of argument (two positions?)

This would be an interesting hypothesis to explore in a much larger corpus.

## 2. The modalities

In this second part of the presentation, we will focus on the modalities of the utterance which, according to *la grammaire méthodique du français'* definition marks "the attitude of the utterer vis-à-vis the content of the utterance" and expresses "the manner according to which the utterer assesses the content of the utterance". It is rare that the modification intentionally produces the irruption of the utter's subjectivity. And yet it is what we can observe in example (10) where the period's replacement by an exclamation point "adds a subjective hue to the utterance" (Riegel, p. 387).

(8) 41 Le discours actuel est que tout va bien au domicile. → 41 Le discours actuel est que tout va bien au domicile !

The exclamation delineates the negative judgment that the speaker attributes to the child's discourse, the denunciation of the discourse "everything is fine" constitutes even more so a "topos" of the educative reports.

The observed modifications essentially bear on two types of modalities. First, there is the epistemic modality that evaluates the degree of predicate's probability, and, secondly, the autonymic (autonymique) modalization that corresponds to a meta-enunciative commentary of the utterer on his own word. The deontic modality, important in these texts which happen to have a prescriptive aim did not give rise to any modifications in the analyzed corpus.

Insofar as epistemic modalities are concerned, we expect a tendency to add marks that indicate some kind of "precaution" of the speaker vis-à-vis the truth of the facts presented and the behaviors reported. It is effectively what we can see in example (11):

(9) Cela a interrogé les travailleurs sociaux sur un abus sexuel que S a aurait dénoncé (jeune oncle) à propos duquel il n'y eut aurait eu aucune suite (Samuel, rapport d'échéance)

Commentaire [e8]: Would have denounced

The indicative *a* is replaced by the conditional *aurait*, which limits the value of factual truths presented. Inversely, the suppression of modalities also surfaces, as examples (12) and (13) show:

(10) il semblerait qu'elle ait/ressente réellement le désir de s'activer et de s'investir dans ce rôle afin d'être suffisamment informée de telle sorte qu'elle puisse diriger ... → le fait qu'elle s'active et s'investisse dans ce rôle lui permet sûrement de diriger et .... (Pamela, document **manuscrit**)

**Commentaire [e9]:** It would seem that she/really feels the desire to be active/the fact that she is active

(11) Et une mère peu fiable dans ses liens (cXXX et exercice du droit de visite irrégulières), se présentant c fragile et (Pamela, document manuscrit)

This produces a passage from less to more certain.

As for modifications surrounding autonymic modalization, they essentially correspond to the addition and/or removal of quotation marks.

In our chosen examples, it seems as though the addition of quotation marks bears more so on terms relevant to a psychological or psychoanalytical discourse (see examples 14 and 15). Their deletion seems to hint at problems of adequacy between the word and the thing (which you will notice in examples 16 and 17) (for more on these distinctions, see Authier 1995):

(12) Aujourd'hui, nous estimons, bien que l'encoprésie soit encore présente, être moins envahis et pouvoir travailler avec le jeune un travail autour de son développement personnel → « envahis » (Antony, préparation **synthèse**)

**Commentaire [e10]:** To be less invaded

(13) De la même façon, il n'y a pas eu de conflit fort avec les adultes car Anthony ne le supporte pas. → De la même façon, il n'y a pas eu de conflit « fort » avec les adultes car Anthony ne se l'autorise pas. (Antony, préparation **synthèse**)

**Commentaire [e11]:** There was no strong conflict with the adults

(14) Ce traumatisme est encore très présent dans l'esprit de Bertrand notamment lors des périodes « d'anniversaire » de son décès. → Ce traumatisme est encore très présent dans l'esprit de Bertrand notamment lors des périodes correspondant aux anniversaires de son décès (Roux, rapport **d'échéance**)

**Commentaire [e12]:** During anniversary periods/ corresponding the anniversary of

(15) Ces débordements ont pu être recadrés. Ensuite, un rendez-vous de médiation au eu lieu entre Manon, ses parents et ses éducateurs au sujet d'une soirée d'anniversaire au domicile des parents qui a "débordé" → Puis lors d'un rendez-vous de médiation entre Manon, ses parents et ses éducateurs au sujet d'une soirée d'anniversaire au domicile des parents qui a dégénéré (Manon, rapport **d'échéance**)

**Commentaire [e13]:** Went overboard

In the two last examples, additional modifications appear: a more detailed account of the determination in (14) and a change of lexeme in (15).

There, again, this regularity formulated under the name of a hypothesis should have given rise to a verification. The modifications bearing on the term “psy” hint at a complex relationship of the writer with “psy” discourses, discourses in which they are not legitimate speakers but are quite close (in other words, heavily influenced), by their training (personal and/or professional) and the intervention of the psychologists in the services.

### 3. Forms of Reported Speech

As the final part in our presentation, we will examine the modifications that affect the representation of the discourse of the “other”. This is a rather sensitive sector in educative reporting for three reasons. Firstly, interviews with the child or the family are considered a privileged activity for social workers as they are one of the principal techniques for observation and evaluation of a child’s situation or behavior. Secondly, allowing for the child or the family to speak, especially insofar as their problems are concerned, is highly valued. And lastly, writing guides (that we were able to consult – ref) provide precise editorial norms that properly frame the representation of the child’s discourse.

We can indeed observe that a substantial number of modifications have for effect the passage of one overtly unmarked form to a marked form, particularly when a “speech verb” is added:

(16) Manon peut trouver un travail non déclaré → Manon dit pouvoir trouver un travail non déclaré (Manon, rapport d'échéance)

Commentaire [e14]: Can find/says to be able to find

(17) S est née avec une fente vélo-palatine d'origine héréditaire, ce qui a entraîné l'hospitalisation de S durant six mois après sa naissance. Mme O aurait décelé cette malformation à la maternité : elle se situe comme le souvenir (version papier : sauveur) de son enfant → Mme dit avoir sauvé son enfant. (Sandra, rapport d'échéance)

(18) Son père est peu présent, également, dans son discours → Samuel évoque peu son père (Samuel, rapport d'échéance)

(19) Par ailleurs, Bertrand a une image négative de lui-même il ne se trouve pas beau, et ne prête pas beaucoup d'importance à ses choix vestimentaires et à son apparence générale → Par ailleurs, Bertrand a une image négative de lui-même et a tendance à s'auto-dénigrer, il ne prête pas beaucoup d'importance à ses choix vestimentaires et à son apparence en général. (Roux, rapport d'échéance)



→ In this last example there is a passage from a thought verb, comparable in this context to a speech verb, to the clear representation of a speech event (auto-disintegration).

But it may also arise on some occasions that the speech verb illuminating the RDA is deleted:

(20) Ainsi, il ne refuse pas son accompagnement au CMPEA de Saint-PETITOT. → Ainsi, il continue son accompagnement au CMPEA de Saint-PETITOT. (Antony, synthèse)

→The modification allows for a passage from a negative formulation to a positive one that is probably more congruence with the line of argument already employed in the sequence.

(21) Par ailleurs, Justin a pu exprimer que les adultes n'accordaient peu d'importance à son travail. → Quant à Justin, il estime que les adultes accordent peu d'intérêt à son travail.

**Commentaire [F15]:** + mise à distance du contenu (vs avec « a pu exprimer », structure liée à l'événement discursif)

In example (21) we pass from the representation of one or many speech occurrences to the representation of the property of a subject (pouvoir exprimer + PC → estimer + PR)

Generally, the usage of the modality *pouvoir* before a speech verb can give rise to modifications.

In rare cases, following the example of example (24), it is deleted:

(22) Lors de dialogues avec les éducateurs elle a pu dit son envie raisonnable de poursuivre sa formation , elle pu se remettre à préparer sérieusement son travail scolaire, mais n'a pu exprimer sa difficulté aux semaines de cours que par la fuite. REFERENCE CORPUS

But the most frequent case is the addition of the modal

(23) Cette dame a mis [peut mettre] Monsieur DEVERE (père de Sandra) sur un piédestal et a tenu [tenir] des propos négatifs à l'égard de Madame OUALI. (Sandra, rapport d'échéance)

(24) S. rapporte que Mme O trouve qu'elle a trop de liberté au SAFE → S a pu rapporter que Mme O trouvait [...] (Sandra, rapport d'échéance)

In fact, the usage of *pouvoir* in this context can be qualified as a real professional routine, as our analysis of repeated discourse segments has already shown (cf Sitri, 2011).

## Conclusion

Following from the work of Rey-Debove and C. Doquet, we are going to claim that when the speaker corrects his own text, he is making a meta-enunciative return (a loop) to it. But in the absence of gloss to accompany the corrective gesture, the interpretation of the sense of the gesture has proved to be a difficulty of the genetic enterprise. This difficulty is reinforced by the fact that our analysis bears on a relatively small, explorative corpus. Inversely, our knowledge of genre and the sphere of the activities concerned, generated by frequent consultations of the educative reports in their final stages, can bring the corrections into perspective with relation to the writing's pragmatic dimension.

A certain number of modifications are, in a certain way, expected because they concern sectors whose importance had already been demonstrated in our preliminary analysis.

Such is the case for the additions of speech verbs, which correspond to the explicit directions in the writing guides. We noticed, however, that the corrections can go in the opposite sense – meaning that the writer then focus not on the punctual occurrence of an expression capacity but, rather, on the presence of a stable state of mind.

The modifications affecting quotation marks (deletion and/or addition) affirm this mark's importance as the indicator of the existence of a delicate relation with another discourse or of the taking into account of the reader.

On the other hand, the modifications around the epistemic modalities that can be both removals and additions have not permitted us to draw any definitive conclusions.

Concerning the marks of the writer's presence or, in other words, the indications of person, our analysis delivers a new, interesting hypothesis in that it may allow for us to distinguish two positions of the writer: first, that of an interpreter and educational professional and, second, that of making recommendations, where he must succeed at convincing the addressee. It is at this point where we must compare our results to the work being conducted on argumentative approach (*argumentation*).