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### Data and metadata across discourse domains

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# Quotation

## Data and metadata across discourse domains

Anita Fetzer\*

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### Abstract

In diesem Beitrag wird vorgeschlagen, dass Sprecher:innen die sprachliche Realisierung des kommunikativen Akts des Zitierens an die kontextuellen Beschränkungen des zitierenden Diskurses anpassen. Der Beitrag nimmt eine diskurspragmatische Perspektive auf die Formatierung und die diskursiven Funktionen von Zitaten ein und befasst sich mit deren (1) konstitutiven Bestandteilen und *felicity conditions*, (2) sprachlicher Formatierung und Textualisierung von Daten und Metadaten, (3) diskursiven Funktionen und (4) (Re-) Kontextualisierung. Die untersuchten Diskursdomänen sind die dialogischen Diskursgenres von politischen Interviews und Parlamentsdebatten, politischen Rede und Zeitungsschlagzeilen. Der Beitrag zeigt, dass Zitate nicht nur Kontext in den Diskurs importieren, sondern dass ihre Erwähnung auch impliziert, dass einige angenommene Kontextualisierungen neu ausgehandelt werden müssen.

**Schlagwörter:** Context, communicative act, entextualisation, quotation

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## 1 Introduction

Discourse is a multi-layered, complex phenomenon. It comes in various formats and various semiotic modes – written, spoken, computer-mediated, and combinations thereof. In discourse pragmatics, participants perform communicative actions in discourse and with discourse. The linguistic and semiotic realisation of discursive contributions depend on linguistic and social context, and generally contributions are produced and interpreted in accordance with discourse-genre constraints, in particular sequentiality and dovetailedness at local and more global stages in the discourse. Grice describes a ‘dovetailed’ conversational contribution as “such as is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which you [participants in discourse, A.F.] are engaged” (1975: 45), implying that contributions are linked by one or more common goals manifest in prior and succeeding discourse. Participants anchor their discursive contributions in local and more remote layers of context to which they may refer in more and less explicit ways. Participants’ references to context and the entextualisation of these references in the ongoing discourse is referred to as context importation. Context may be imported with deictic and other indexical expressions, e.g. *here* and *there* (Fetzer 2011), with linguistic material of a more determinate nature, e.g. quotations (Fetzer 2015), with pictures, video clips, and other types of multimodal discourse.

This paper examines the strategic use of the communicative act of quotation across the discourse domains of political discourse and news discourse, focussing on the dialogic discourse genres of political interview and political debate (Prime Minister’s Questions), the more monologic genre of political speech, and newspaper headlines. All data are from the British cultural context; the transcriptions of the spoken data have been checked against delivery and been adapted accordingly.

The research design is based on the premise that discourse in the media shares the fundamental premises of natural-language communication, which do not only hold for natural-language communication and media discourse as-a-whole, but also for their

constitutive parts: discourse genre and its constitutive communicative acts, e.g. assertion, rejection, and quotation. In media discourse, this paper argues, these generalised constraints may undergo context-sensitive particularisation, thus illustrating the synergetic effects between pragmatic theory and a fine-grained analysis of data in context. The research subscribes to methodological compositionality, integrating the fundamental premises of pragmatics, particularly rationality, cooperation and intentionality of communicative action (Brown & Levinson 1987; Grice 1975; Searle 1969), and interactional sociolinguistics, i.e. indexicality of communicative action, conversational inference, language as socially situated form, and linguistic variation (Gumperz 1992). The main bridging points between pragmatics and interactional sociolinguistics lie in the explicit accommodation of context as a complex dynamic whole.

The following section, *Quotation as context importation*, analyses quotation as the entextualisation of a communicative act which is considered to have been felicitous in another context. Section 3, *The strategic use of quotations across discourse domains*, discusses their distribution, linguistic formatting and discursive functions. Particular reference is given to the entextualisation of data and metadata across political interviews (3.1), Prime Minister's Questions (3.2), political speeches (3.3) and newspaper headlines in the quality press (3.4). Section 4 contains the conclusion.

## **2 Quotation as context importation**

Quotations are pervasive in and across discourse. They are analysed in linguistics, pragmatics, discourse analysis, conversation analysis, media studies, and philosophy. Questions addressed are (re)contextualisation and entextualisation; hypothetical discourse; talking voices and allusion; sense and reference; use and mention; presentation and metarepresentation; their status as demonstrations; and their linguistic formatting and discursive functions (cf. Brendel et al. 2011; Bublitz 2015). Quotations are referred to as *direct* and (*free*) *indirect speech*,

*narrative reports of speech*, or *quotes*. They are classified according to their linguistic formatting and functions as *direct quotation*, *indirect quotation*, *mixed quotation*, *hypothetical quotation*, *focussing quotation*, *free indirect discourse*, *echo quotation*, *scare quotation*, *fake quote*, and *free indirect discourse*. Their multifarious, context- and quoter-dependent functions reach from endorsing quoted content and its source to deflecting responsibility from the quoted and assigning it to its source (Fetzer & Weiss 2020).

In a discourse-pragmatic approach, quotation is seen as context-importation. The kind of context imported is reflected in the quoter's entextualisation of a prior discursive contribution and of its contextual embeddedness. This is in line with the relevance-theoretic conceptualisation of quotation as a kind of metarepresentation which can only "be analysed in terms of a notion of *representation by resemblance*" (Wilson 2012: 243; original emphasis) and therefore can never be a verbatim metarepresentation. Brendel et al. (2011) have pointed out that not all constitutive parts of a quotation can be metarepresented: indexicals, metaphors, gesture, prosodic and facial cues cannot be bound by the quoting context.

Quoting in discourse is communicative action, but communicative action of a particular kind. Quotation is composed of one or more speech acts – or one or more of their constitutive parts – which have been produced in another discourse in which they are taken to have been felicitous, to use speech-act-theoretic terminology. In interactional-sociolinguistic terms, quotations discursively recontextualise the content and force of felicitous speech acts.

With the communicative act of quotation, the current speaker in their role as quoter entextualises another communicative act in accordance with the discursive constraints of the quoting discourse. The quoter may thereby entextualise the speaker and their discursive roles and functions in the constitutive part of source, which tends to be implicit in the original context. The quoter may also entextualise the illocutionary force, which is generally also implicit in its original use, in a quotative; they may entextualise the propositional content and its linguistic representation in the quoted; and they may entextualise the

contextual embeddedness of the discursive contribution. It is that kind of quoter-intended context importation which invites the addressees to reconsider the status of the Austinian felicity conditions of the quotation, which specify social context, linguistic context, and cognitive context (cf. Oishi & Fetzer 2016), and their taken-for-granted validity. This may require the recontextualising of content, force and felicity conditions. The entextualisation of the illocutionary force in a quotative – of the original propositional content in the quoted – and of other relevant contextual coordinates is used strategically to provide evidence for the validity of the quotation in both quoted and quoting discourse.

The following section discusses the strategic use of quotations in political interviews (3.1), Prime Minister's Questions (3.2), political speeches (3.3), and newspaper headlines in printed broadsheets (3.4).

### **3 The strategic use of quotations across discourse domains**

In discourse pragmatics, the communicative act of quotation carries the presupposition that the quoted communicative act has been felicitous in another discourse but now is on the table for renegotiation. The analysis of quotations across discourse domains is based on the following quotation formats:

- *Direct quotation* is a linguistic format in which what has been said – the data – is entextualised in the quoted, the illocutionary force is entextualised in the quotative, and the producer is entextualised in the source. To count as a direct quotation, only the quoted needs to be entextualised; all other constitutive parts of quotation can remain implicit.
- *Focussing quotation* is described as exploiting the linguistic formatting of direct quotation and the entextualisation of its constitutive parts. Its quotative is entextualised in a pseudo-cleft-like focussing construction, foregrounding the quoted. To count as a focussing quotation, the metadata of source and quotative need to be entextualised accordingly.

- *Indirect quotation* is a linguistic format in which deictic and temporal shifts are entextualised in the quoted. Source and quotative also require entextualisation. Indirect quotations may display inversion in the introductory phrase and be furnished with the complementiser ‘that’.
- *Mixed quotation* is a hybrid format composed of selected parts of the act of quotation formatted as direct, indirect or scare quotation, and is signalled accordingly.
- *Mixed type of quotation* is another hybrid format. It has both direct-speech formatting, that is no deictic shifts in the quoted, and indirect-speech formatting, that is an entextualised quotative and source.
- *Scare quotation* is an elliptically realised act embedded in another communicative act of which it is a constitutive part. Scare quotation entextualises an elliptically realised communicative act.

Quotations may vary considerably in length, and they may be multilayered with one quotation embedding another thereby re-quoting it. In the following, the strategic use of quotations and their metadata is examined in the discourse domain of political discourse, starting with political interviews.

### 3.1 Political interviews

Political interviews have been described as displaying a clear-cut division of labour (Blum-Kulka 1983), which is reflected in their constitutive question-and-answer sequences, clear-cut roles and identities regarding interviewer (IR), interviewee (IE), and audience (A); and clear-cut rights and obligations. In political interviews, both IR and IE may use quotations, and this also holds for the A, if they participate in the interaction. The main discursive function of quotations used by IR and A is to challenge the IE.

In the political interviews all formats listed above have been used, but the quantity and quality of metadata varies. All quotations are furnished



with optionally entextualised metadata referring to their original contextual embeddedness. The entextualisation of these contextual coordinates has the discursive function of underlining the validity of the quoted, quotative and source, and thus the credibility of the quoter. If the source is a public figure and assumed to be part of the collective discourse common ground, introducing them with a proper name – sometimes supplemented with title or affiliation – is considered sufficient, as in excerpt 2 ('Peter Mandelson'). If the quoter or source are ordinary citizens, they may either introduce themselves and add relevant metadata which makes them qualify for taking over a media function, as in (1) or they may be introduced by IR or IE:<sup>1</sup>

**Excerpt 1** (Jonathan Dimbleby interviews Tony Blair; audience member A takes on IR role)

A Thank you. Erm, since voting Labour at the last election, I've been really appalled to see you continue the sleaze, lies, hypocrisy and incompetence in fact of the previous administration. **When you came into office, you SAID THAT your government would be different.** WHY DID YOU SAY THAT IF YOU DIDN'T MEAN IT? (05 May 2001, ITV, Ask Tony Blair)

**Excerpt 2** (Jonathan Dimbleby interviews Tony Blair)

IR **Peter Mandelson SAID *the other day*, there's been too much spin, there ought to be more vision.** DO YOU ACCEPT THE CHARGE THAT THERE'S BEEN TOO MUCH SPINNING? (05 May 2001, ITV, Ask Tony Blair)

In (1) the quotation is formatted as an indirect quotation. The audience member's entextualisation of relevant metadata, i.e. the background

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1 To facilitate readability, the transcription adheres to orthographical standards. Relevant linguistic cues are formatted as follows: the quoted is underlined, **the source** is printed in bold, the QUOTATIVE (and complementiser) is printed in bold small caps, and **relevant contextual information of the excerpt** is printed in bold italics. The SPEAKER-INTENDED PERLOCUTIONARY EFFECTS are printed in small caps.

information that the quoter voted Labour in the last election and that the quoted is from the last election campaign, intensifies the perceived element of betrayal, which the quoter couldn't have indicated had they not voted for the IE. This is particularly important because of the social hierarchy between the communication partners with the IE being not only Prime Minister, but also the source of the quotation and at the same time the direct addressee and direct target. Another political-discourse specific feature is the entextualisation of quoter-intended perlocutionary effects, which are not only formulated in rather explicit terms but also assigned the status of an object of talk.

In political interviews, participants may quote their direct communication partner, as in (1), or other sources. While the former tends to have a challenging function, the communicative function of quotations from absent sources depends heavily on the local context and on the kind of relationship between source and participant. In (2), the IR uses a mixed type of quotation from an ally of the IE, the Labour politician Peter Mandelson. As in (1), the relevant metadata of source and quotative are entextualised, while the original temporal frame is underspecified (*the other day*). The intended perlocutionary effect is also made explicit and Tony Blair is requested to comment on the criticism. It is not only the quantity of metadata, which contributes to the force of the challenge, but also the quoter and quoting discourse.

The negotiation of the validity of quotations can also target the source's footing and social role as in (3):

### Excerpt 3 (Charles Kennedy interviewed by Jonathan Dimbleby)

- IR But **you're also the only party leader who**, SAYS, *as you said to me-*
- IE Indeed I did.
- IR **not so long ago**, erm, **when I ASKED you WHETHER users of cannabis were criminals, you SAID, I don't regard them as criminals.** And **you SAY** – I'm right, aren't I? – **you don't regard them as criminals.**
- IE I-I- **that's what I SAID to you, in a- in another studio, in an equivalent programme some time ago, that is my personal view. It is not the position**

*of the Liberal Democrats*, let me be quite clear about this. (17 May 2001, Question Time Special, BBC2, Challenge the Leader)

Excerpt 3 exemplifies the strategic use of mixed quotation and mixed type of quotation, targeting the credibility and ideological coherence of the IE without mentioning the quoter's intended perlocutionary effects. Instead, he requests the IE to confirm the validity of the original contextual coordinates. While the IE confirms all of them, he makes it very clear that he did not speak in his role as leader of the Liberal Democrats, which is implied in the formulation '*the only party leader who says*', but as an ordinary citizen. Thus, it is not only source, quotative, quoted and contextual and discursive coordinates, which need to be ratified for the communicative act of quotation to be felicitous, but also the footing and social role of the source.

### 3.2 Prime Minister's Questions

Prime Minister's Questions (PMQs) take place while Parliament is sitting once a week. They always begin with the same tabled question to the Prime Minister (PM), all other questions are supplementary. The focus of analysis is on question-and-answer sequences between the PM and Leader of the Opposition (LO). As with the interviews, all quotation formats listed above have been used, and all are furnished with optional metadata. The intended perlocutionary effects of the quotation are also spelled out in a rather direct and elaborate manner, explicating the implicata of conversational implicatures and formatting them as – almost – unmitigated statements or questions, thereby assigning them the status of an object of talk. What is quite common is the use of the performative quotative *I quote* co-occurring with the entextualisation of source making explicit the multi-layered scenario of the discourse. Excerpt 4 is part of a sequence in which the LO quotes a relevant other, an energy and broadband supplier, and provides relevant information about their goals. This is elaborated on in a recontextualisation of the quoted reflecting the LO's disapproval. He translates the implications of

the source's goal into ordinary language, making his intended perlocutionary effects accessible to the general public. Building on that, he requests the PM to take sides with either 'energy companies' or 'consumers'. The PM responds by quoting a member of the opposition. This focussing quotation is furnished with precise metadata, not only mentioning the source's position in the former government, but also the temporal context (*9 September*). The intended perlocutionary effects are made explicit, assigned the status of an object of talk, and elaborated on:

#### Excerpt 4 (PMQs 16 October 2013)

PM (David Cameron, Conservatives)

Oh dear! (...) Let me remind him (...). They have absolutely no economic policy, and that is why **the former Chancellor, the right hon. Member for Edinburgh South West** (Mr Darling), SAID THIS *on 9 September*: "I'm waiting to hear what we've got to say on the economy". WELL, WE HAVE ALL BEEN WAITING, BUT I THINK WE SHOULD GIVE UP WAITING BECAUSE THEY ARE A HOPELESS OPPOSITION.

Quotations are rather frequent in PMQs and occur with optional metadata. The entextualisation of source seems obligatory while the quality and quantity of references to other contextual coordinates varies. Quotations are used strategically to challenge the opponent, to align with political positions and ideologies, and to construct, deconstruct and reconstruct political selves and their ideologies (for the Austrian context, see Gruber 2015 and 2019). Relevant technical terms are frequently entextualised in a less formal style. Thus, politicians do not leave it to the addressee and audience to infer their intended perlocutionary effects, but rather guide them in their process of recontextualisation. This may be due to the mediated status of PMQs and the intended addressee: the potential electorate.

### 3.3 Political Speeches

Quotations have also been found in political speeches in all the formats listed above. Because of the more monologic character of political speeches, the functions of quotation are constrained to the expression of various degrees of alignment and to the construction, de- and reconstruction of ideological and argumentative coherence.

In (5) David Davis identifies the source with a proper name (*Margaret Thatcher*). The mixed type of quotation has a past-tensed quotative (*said*), underspecified temporal metadata (*then*) and perfective aspect and future-orientation in the quoted. The politician imports a highly relevant historic figure and the ideology she represents into the ongoing discourse, underlining her relevance to the here-and-now. Using a focussing quotation, the politician follows up on Margaret Thatcher, aligning with her ideology and implying that she has been right and that he will also be right. In this way he can present himself as a potential successor. (6) is from a speech by David Cameron. The quoter identifies the source with a proper name, the Labour MP *Ed Balls*, and leaves the original local and temporal frames underspecified (*a few weeks ago*), as has frequently been the case in the interviews and in PMQs. The quotation is formatted as a mixed quotation, an indirect quotation embedding a scare quotation. Unlike in (5), the quoter-intended perlocutionary effects are entextualised in very explicit terms, echoing the scare quotation in an ironic manner thus challenging its validity. That challenge is elaborated on and generalised to the Labour Party as a whole. The speaker-intended perlocutionary effects are assigned the status of an object of talk and are elaborated on to secure uptake with audience:

**Excerpt 5** (David Davis (Conservatives), 5 October 2005, Manchester)

**Margaret Thatcher SAID *then*:** This attack has failed and all attempts to destroy democracy will fail. And I CAN TELL **you THIS:** this new threat will fail too.

**Excerpt 6** (David Cameron (Conservatives), 1 October 2014, Manchester)

*A few weeks ago, Ed Balls SAID something interesting* [LAUGHTER] *he SAID in thirteen years of Government, Labour had made 'some mistakes'. 'SOME MISTAKES'. EXCUSE ME? YOU WERE THE PEOPLE WHO LEFT BRITAIN WITH THE BIGGEST PEACETIME DEFICIT IN HISTORY (...) WHO DESTROYED OUR PENSIONS SYSTEM, BUST OUR BANKING SYSTEM (...). SOME MISTAKES? LABOUR WERE JUST ONE BIG MISTAKE.*

Through the use of quotations, quoters not only import context into an ongoing discourse, but also entextualise it, put it on the table and assign it the status of an object of talk. They thereby indicate that the quotation may require recontextualisation.

### 3.4 Newspaper headlines

From a discourse-pragmatic perspective in which the whole is more than the sum of its parts, headlines are a constitutive part of the news story. This is reflected in headlines containing indexical expressions with their janus-like anaphoric and cataphoric referencing potentials, connecting not only the headline with the news story, but also the news story with the headline. It is also reflected in the strategic use of quotations, which refer anaphorically to some prior stretch of discourse produced in another context and cataphorically to the news story in which relevant metadata of the quotation may be entextualised and discussed in accordance with the discursive constraints of the printed quality press.

Newspaper headlines are designed to attract readers' attention to a singled-out event while at the same time luring them into reading the news story. The contextual constraints of the printed press require headlines to be brief and eye-catching, and that is why they tend to contain indexical expressions rather than complex noun phrases and be syntactically incomplete. For quotation headlines, bare quotations seem to be good candidates for doing that job while the entextualisation of

optional metadata may raise particular expectations on the side of the reader.

In news discourse, the quoter has a special function, representing their own voice – if singled out and entextualised with full name and affiliation – and at the same time that of the media collective. The quoter thus counts as a kind of meta-quoter, and it is their entextualisation of source, quotative, quoted and contextual coordinates which fulfil a more important discursive function in the news discourse than that of source and quoted only.

In an analysis of quotations in newspaper headlines, direct quotations were the most frequent format of *The Guardian* (TG), with scare quotation coming in second. Scare quotation were the most frequent format of *The Times* (TT), with indirect quotation coming in second. The least frequent formats were focussing, mixed and mixed type of quotation. All quotation formats have been signalled typographically and linguistically. The entextualisation of contextual coordinates has only been found if it was relevant to the recontextualisation of a former communicative act, as in (7) where the local metadata underline the urgency of action. In (8), the entextualisation of the quoted – but not of its source – is considered sufficient. In (9), the entextualisation of the metadata of source, quotative and addressee boost the directive communicative act, which requires renegotiation. In (10), the entextualised quotative puts the validity of the quoted in doubt, and in (11), the journalist and news outlet deflect responsibility from the entextualised scare quote:

- (7) **Navalny from jail: why we must fight corruption – and Putin**  
(TG 20/08/2021)
- (8) 'Levelling up needs funding on same scale as German reunification' (TG 16/08/2021)
- (9) Get back to the office, ministers ORDER staff (TT 09/08/2021)
- (10) Jailed lawyer is an MI6 spy, claims Iran (TT 12 August 2020)
- (11) Duke 'not above law' (TT 13/08/2021)

Quotation headlines are related to the news story which they frame. They narrow down the contents of the news story by indicating what the story is going to be about.

#### 4 Conclusions

This contribution has analysed the communicative act of quotation with respect to the quantity and quality of metadata contributing to the quotation's discursive function in and across discourse domains. It considered the linguistic formatting of the quotation as direct, focussing, indirect, mixed, mixed type and scare and found that it is mainly the furnishing of the communicative act with optional metadata which has contributed to its discursive function. The communicative act of quotation indicates that the act, its constitutive parts and felicity conditions, which have been considered felicitous in another context, require renegotiation, recontextualisation and re-evaluation. It is the quoter's entextualisation of the communicative act in question and of optional metadata, which differs for the discourse genres under investigation. In both monologic and dialogic data, the entextualisation of optional metadata is used to undermine the quoted act's validity regarding source, quotative, quoted and context. Putting the act in question on the table and thus in another context demonstrates that its original interpretation has not been as it should have been, considering the present context and its premises more fully. In the headlines, the entextualisation of optional metadata is more constrained. It thus indicates that these contextual coordinates are of immediate relevance to both headline and news story.

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