

The Difference between SAYING and MAKING: *fer/fare* as a Quotative Verb in Catalan and Italian

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In Catalan and Italian (but not Spanish), the general action verb for making (and doing) derived from Latin FACĒRE can be used as a quotative verb, which introduces direct speech together with a highly mimetic component of the representation of the speech act (Spitzer 1924; Guardamagna 2010). A corpus study of Italian and Catalan shows that the usage of Catalan and Italian fer/fare ‘make/do’ differs from the verb of saying dir/dire ‘say’ in several aspects. Fer/fare in its quotative use is not transitive, but unergative (the quote cannot be pronominalised, the verb cannot be passivised etc.) and it can only introduce direct speech. We discuss the general properties of the verb in the two Romance languages and then the specific properties of quotative fer/fare as described in the literature and as observed in our corpus study. Possible bridging contexts (between sound and speech) will serve as a clue for our analysis, which includes a pragmaticalisation process. Drawing on the phenomenon of mimesis (e.g. Guldemann 2008), we argue that quotative uses of fer/fare stress the manner component of quotation, similarly (but not equal) to colloquial English be like. Thus, fer/fare sub-categorises a covert manner demonstrative, i.e. a combination of encoded similarity (cf. be like) and demonstration (cf. Davidson’s 1968/69, 1979 demonstrative theory of quotation). Lastly, we claim that fer/fare is reduced in some contexts of usage, thus possibly at the beginning of a grammaticalisation process, but still to be analysed as a quotative verb.

Keywords: Quotation, Romance, light verbs, mimesis, corpus study

1. Introduction

In Catalan and Italian (but not Spanish), the general action verb for making (and doing¹) derived from Latin FACĒRE, namely Catalan *fer* and Italian *fare*, can be used as a quotative verb, which introduces direct speech together with a highly mimetic component of the representation of the speech act (Spitzer 1924; Guardamagna 2010). Example (1) contains an Italian joke from Guardamagna (2010) and, in (2), we see an example from written Catalan from a study of the phenomenon in Cuenca & Herbeck (2024):

- (1) Un egocentrico incontra un amico e gli *fa*: «Ciao, come sto?»
an egocentric meets a friend and him make.3SG ciao how be.1SG
‘An egocentric encounters a friend and he says to him [lit. he makes to him]: “Hi, how am I?”’ (Italian; Guardamagna 2010)
- (2) Però aleshores ell la subjecta, immobilitzant-la, i mig girat cap a
but then he her hold.3SG immobilize.GER=her and half turned towards at
la porta *fa*: — Ve algú.
the door make.3SG come.3SG somebody

¹ In what follows, we will use MAKE/DO as a placeholder for this verb. Note that, as in several other Romance languages, verbs derived from Latin FACĒRE are also used for causative constructions.

‘But then, he holds her, immobilizing her, and half-turned towards the door, **he says [lit. makes]:** “Somebody is coming.”
(Catalan; Pedrolo, Manuel de: *Totes les bèsties de càrrega*, 1967; apud. Cuenca & Herbeck 2024)

This use of MAKE/DO exists in various Romance languages (such as Catalan, Italian, (Old) French, among others), but not in Spanish, nor in English or German, for instance, where the use of MAKE/DO is restricted to the introduction of interjections and onomatopoeia, as in (3) and (4):

- (3) Er **sagte** /***machte**: “Da kommt jemand.” (German)
‘He said/*made: “There is someone coming.”’
- (4) “Aaahhh!” **machte** er. (German)
“‘Aaahhh!’ he made.’”

The multiple aims of this paper include addressing the following research questions: Which variables influence the use of MAKE/DO as a quotative verb, i.e. are there grammatical and/or contextual restrictions on its use in quotation contexts? Are there cross-linguistic differences between the closely related Romance languages Catalan and Italian? And furthermore, how can the quotative use of MAKE/DO be formally analysed? Has *fer/fare* already undergone a process of pragmaticalisation (in the sense of Aijmer 1997; Detges & Waltireit 2007, among others) such that it could be considered a quotative ‘particle’, i.e. a (more) discourse functional element?² Or is it still a lexical verb with a full VP (with full argument structure)? What is the syntactic structure of utterances containing MAKE/DO as SAY? To answer these questions, it is essential to compare the verb MAKE/DO in quotation contexts with a prototypical verb of saying – Catalan *dir* and Italian *dire* ‘say’.

In this paper, we first discuss the properties of MAKE/DO with reference to the current research literature (§2). Chapter 3 contains our corpus study: we first present the methodology (§3.1) and then the data from Catalan (§3.2) and Italian (§3.3); §3.4 illustrates some possible bridging contexts in the corpus data for the development from action verb to quotative verb. The differences between Catalan and Italian are discussed in Chapter 4. Chapter 5 contains the syntactic analysis of the data: We show that Cat. *fer* and It. *fare* are still quotative verbs (§5.1), whose use is influenced by the speaker’s intention to express iconicity (§5.2), and that *fer/fare* subcategorise a covert manner demonstrative (§5.3). In §5.4, our syntactic analysis is presented. A short conclusion follows in Chapter 6.

² The notion of *pragmaticalisation* is used to describe a development of linguistic elements towards discourse-related functions, such as with modal particles and discourse markers. These exhibit peculiar characteristics relative to canonical grammaticalised elements (from lexical to more grammatical). We don’t believe that a clear-cut distinction between grammaticalisation and pragmaticalisation is possible, since the grammatical properties (*langue*) and the use of linguistic elements in context (*parole*) condition one another. A more thorough discussion of these notions, which would include the question of whether pragmatics are part of core grammar, is outside the scope of this paper.

2. Properties of MAKE/DO: State of the art

The use of MAKE/DO as SAY can be rooted back to Late Latin (Spitzer 1924: 350; Petersmann 2001), and it is also found in older stages of Romance, e.g. Old French (Spitzer 1924). Its basic semantics is ‘producing a sound’, which is then extended to the meaning ‘articulate, say’ (Spitzer 1924: 351; Petersmann 2001: 446); this use starts with interjections and onomatopoeia.

According to Guardamagna (2010), possible bridging contexts for this development are contexts where an action consists in producing sound, which then can be speech sounds. This high degree of mimesis/imitation links the use of MAKE/DO as SAY to narrativity (Spitzer 1924; Cuenca & Herbeck 2024) and the vividness of the narration, which includes a higher degree of imitation.

Note also that according to Güldemann’s (2008: 303) survey on African languages “semantically generic performance/action verbs like ‘do’” constitute the 2nd largest group of non-utterance verbs to be used as quotative verbs – after “equational and inchoative verbs like ‘be’ and ‘become’” and before “motion verbs like ‘go’” (the latter is a well-known quotative verb in English, cf. e.g. Butters 1980; Buchstaller 2003, 2014; see also the English translation in (14) and (15)).

There are, however, some restrictions on the use of MAKE/DO in Catalan and Italian: *fer/fare* can only be used as a verb of saying if it introduces direct speech (as in (1) and (2)), but not for the introduction of indirect speech (5) (see Spitzer 1924; Schmid 2016; Cuenca & Herbeck 2024):

- (5) *I **fa** **que** ve algú. (Catalan)
and make.3SG that come.3SG somebody
(intended: ‘He says that somebody is coming.’)

Furthermore, *fer/fare* as a quotative verb cannot have a pronominal object, i.e. the direct speech that is introduced by this verb cannot be doubled by a pronoun like Catalan *ho* (6), i.e. (7) can only mean that something specific is done or made, but not that something specific is said; thus, quotative *fer/fare* does not seem to have a direct object complement (cf. Guardamagna 2010; Cuenca & Herbeck 2024) and, consequently, the verb cannot be passivised; see (8).

- (6) * I **ho fa:** «Ve algú.» (Catalan)
and it.CL make.3SG come3SG somebody

- (7) #I **ho fa.** (Catalan)
and it.CL make.3SG
‘He makes it.’ / Not: ‘He says it.’

- (8) a. La mamma **fa:** «Oggi c’è il sole.» (Italian)
the mum make.3SG today there=is the sun
‘Mum says: “Today it’s sunny.”’
b. *«Oggi c’è il sole» è **fatto** dalla mamma.
today there=is the sun is made by=the mum (Guardamagna 2010: 7)

Moreover, MAKE/DO cannot be used in the imperative (see (9)), which is a sign of grammaticalisation according to Heine (1993):

- (9) *Fa': «Oggi c'è il sole.» (Italian)
make.IMP.2SG today there=is the sun (Guardamagna 2010: 11)

On the other hand, *fer/fare* is not fully grammaticalised. For example, the verb clearly has argument structure, as can be seen in the optional expression of the dative argument representing the addressee, as in (10).

- (10) (li) fa: «Ve algú.» (Catalan)
(him) make.3SG come.3SG somebody
'He said (to him): "There is someone coming."'

Another interesting property, at least for the quotative use of Italian *fare*, is shown by the following example:

- (11) ... allora alla stazione fa dice: «Ma io ero...» (Italian)
then at=the station make.3SG. say.3.SG but I was
'then at the station s/he says: "But I was..." (Lorenzetti 2011)

In (11) the quotative verb *fare* is reinforced by the grammaticalised impersonal quotative marker *dice* (cf. Lorenzetti 2002; Cruschina 2011). Whereas *fare* in (11) still is an inflecting verb of communication, although not a transitive one, Italian *dice* is completely grammaticalised as an invariable quotative marker corresponding to 'people say'. This brings us back to the question of where the quotative use of *fer/fare* is located on a scale starting from the canonical general utterance verb SAY and grammaticalised quotative markers, like Italian *dice* or the well-studied quotative evidential Latin-American Spanish *dizque*.³

3. The study

In this study, we investigate the use of quotative MAKE in Italian and Catalan in comparison to the prototypical verb of saying SAY. To this end, we examine a series of morphosyntactic (such as person/number, TAM), syntactic and contextual factors (clause type, polarity, presence of an addressee argument, reoccurring elements such as discourse markers and adverbs in the context of the verb of saying). Regarding these factors, we formulate the following hypotheses:

- Given the nascent process of grammaticalisation and pragmaticalisation, and the correlated formal reduction, we expect person/number and TAM inflections to be richer with SAY than with MAKE, with the latter showing some signs of reduction. Relatedly, if we assume reduction of argument structure to be a sign of grammaticalisation, we expect the dative addressee argument to be dropped more frequently with MAKE than with SAY.
- Due to the previously observed 'imitative' and narrative component of the quote introduced by MAKE/DO (cf. e.g. Spitzer 1924), we expect quotes to contain more

³ There is a huge amount of literature on *dizque*, starting from Kany (1944) to Travis (2006) to the most recent paper by Martínez Vera & Camacho (2025), to which we refer to for a literature overview. For a general view on Romance, see also Cruschina & Remberger (2008).

expressive and interactional content when introduced by MAKE/DO compared to those introduced by SAY.

- Given the observation made by previous studies that conjunction + MAKE/DO is a reoccurring combination in quotation contexts (see Cuenca & Herbeck 2024), we expect MAKE/DO to frequently appear in coordinated clause types.

In the following chapter, we describe the data and annotation that has been used for the present study.

3.1 Data and methodology

In this study, we compared the use of *fer/fare* as a quotative verb with the use of one of the most common verbs of saying, namely *dir/dire*, in both Catalan and Italian corpus data, by searching a written corpus for each of the two languages. For written Catalan we started from the results of the corpus study of *fer* in Cuenca & Herbeck (2024), which relied on the reference corpus *Corpus Textual Informatitzat de la Llengua Catalana* (CTILC) and contains an analysis of 476 cases of quotative uses in total. To compare the results of this previous study with the prototypical verb of saying *dir* ‘say’, we extracted a random sample of 500 cases of *dir* from the same corpus, applying the query [lemma="dir"] + [form=":"], relying on an orthographical criterion of introducing direct speech in the written texts. For Italian, the *La Repubblica* corpus was used, which is a written corpus containing texts published from 1985 to 2000 in the newspaper *La Repubblica*. For the applied query, we searched for MAKE/DO introducing direct quotation in the written data, relying on the orthographic criterion, hence by retrieving all the examples of the lemma *fare* followed by a colon, i.e., [lemma="fare"][word=":"]. The same query was used to retrieve the occurrences of SAY, i.e., [lemma="dire"][word=":"].⁴

To annotate the data, we started from the categories analysed in Cuenca & Herbeck’s (2024) study of Catalan *fer* and applied it to the Italian data. We first considered whether the examples retrieved by the query were indeed instances of quotation, excluding all non-quotative, agentive uses of MAKE/DO. Furthermore, with respect to quotative use, prototypical cases encoding speech (like Italian (12) for *dire* and (13) for *fare*) were classified separately from ‘intermediate’ cases, where the quote reproduces sounds (e.g., onomatopoeias, interjections, texts, songs), as in the interjection in (14) and the reproduction of text in (15):

- (12) Quotative (speech) with SAY:
Boskov guarda Cerezo poi il campo e **dice** Il campo è migliorato ma non basta. (Italian)
‘Boskov looks at Cerezo, then at the field, and **says**: “The field has improved, but it’s not enough.”’
(La Repubblica)
- (13) Quotative (speech) with MAKE/DO:
perché perdo e io dò spiegazioni tecniche infinite, ma la conclusione è sempre quella:
mi ascoltano, mi guardano e **fanno** sì, va bene, ma quando vinci? (Italian)

⁴ Of course, by this search criterion, we could retrieve only some of the cases in which *fer/fare* is used as a quotative verb. Note that Catalan/Italian quotative *fer/fare* can also appear after the quote, or quote medial, similarly to *dir/dire* ‘say’ (cf. Mortara Garavelli 1995: 443, who claims that, in Italian, quotative *fare* also appears in free indirect discourse). However, since we applied the same criterion to both verbs, the results remain comparable.

‘why do I lose? And I give endless technical explanations, but the conclusion is always the same: they listen to me, they look at me and **say [lit. make]**, “Yes, okay, but when are you going to win?”’ (La Repubblica)

- (14) Intermediate (reproduction of sound; interjection):
[...] e va a precipitare (controllato da un cavo) sul palcoscenico passando sulle teste degli spettatori, che **fanno** Hooooo. </s><s> Il fantasma è interpretato da Michael Crawford, bravissimo attore-cantante. (Italian)
‘[...] and he is going to fall (controlled by a cable) onto the stage, passing over the heads of the audience, who **go [lit. make]** “Hooooo” The Phantom is played by Michael Crawford, a talented actor and singer.’ (La Repubblica)
- (15) Intermediate (reproduction of text)
[...] un’inchiesta da cui risulta che le donne tedesche cantano volentieri oggi una canzoncina che **fa** “Männer sind Schweine / Sie wollen alle das eine” (Italian)
‘a survey showing that German women today enjoy singing a little song that **goes [lit. makes]** “Männer sind Schweine / Sie wollen alle das eine” [Men are pigs / They all want the same thing]’ (La Repubblica)

Within the prototypical quotative uses encoding direct speech, the following categories have been identified: the clause type (main, coordinated, subordinate clause) and its polarity; the inflection of the verb for person and number and for tense, mood, and aspect; the expression of the dative recipient (null or overt), and the presence of other frequently occurring elements in the preceding context of the verb (e.g., conjunctions, adverbs). It should be noted that our query excluded any items between the verb and the colon and, thus, it could retrieve only those datives and recurring elements that preceded the verb, such as clitics and preposed PPs.⁵ Finally, we analysed the content of the quote, keeping track of reoccurring elements that mimic an actual interaction between speaker(s) and addressee(s), i.e., interjections, vocatives, discourse markers, greetings, and exclamations. The basic annotation scheme is summarised in Table 1.

⁵ It is important to note that the same query relying on the orthographical criterion of the presence of a colon “:” has been applied to all items in the two languages – i.e. *fer/fare* and *dir/dire* – to assure comparability of the results. However, as has been stated, relying on this query has the clear disadvantage of excluding postverbal PPs and adverbs from the analysis, such that it only examines preverbal discourse markers, adverbs and clitics. Most reoccurring elements, such as the conjunction *i/e* ‘and’ and several discourse markers, only appear preverbally in the data. The same is true for the investigation of dative clitics, which only appear preverbally. However, it is important to stress that our results do not allow conclusions to be drawn about the use of postverbal optional elements and postverbal subjects. Thus, for example, the possibility for Italian *così* and Catalan *així/aixina* ‘so’ to occur with *fer/fare* (cf. (29) and (30)) had to be searched manually and could not be examined quantitatively.

Table 1: Categories of data annotation for quotative MAKE/DO and SAY

Level	Category	Value
Quotation		verbal quote, intermediate (songs, texts, sounds, etc.), non-quote
Matrix clause (<i>fer/fare</i> and <i>dir/dire</i>)	Clause type	main, coordinated, subordinate
	Polarity	asserted vs. negated
	Person/number	1sg, 2sg, 3sg, 1pl, 2pl, 3pl, non-finite, impersonal
	TAM	Present tense, imperfective past, perfective past, conditional, subjunctive, imperative, ...
	Dative argument	null vs. overt clitic (Cat. <i>em, et, li</i> / It. <i>gli, mi, ti</i> ...)
	Co-occurring elements	conjunction + <i>fer/fare</i> , adverbs, discourse markers, etc.
Elements inside the quote		interjections, vocatives, discourse markers, greetings, exclamations

3.2 Italian data and results

In the search using the *La Repubblica* corpus, 163 occurrences of *fare* ‘make’ and 179 occurrences of *dire* ‘say’, both introducing direct speech, were analysed. In this use, the two verbs show a considerably different behaviour with respect to the following characteristics: TAM inflection; the clause type in which the verb appears; the expression of the dative recipient as a clitic pronoun; and the presence of elements inside the quote that mimic the actual interaction between the speaker(s) and the addressee(s).

With respect to TAM inflection, *dire* ‘say’ shows a much more varied inflection than *fare* ‘make’. As Figure 1 shows, *fare* is exclusively inflected for indicative mood in our data, and it appears in the vast majority of cases in the present tense. On the other hand, *dire* appears with non-indicative moods, i.e., infinitive, gerund, subjunctive, and conditional; moreover, it is found in a wider variety of tenses.

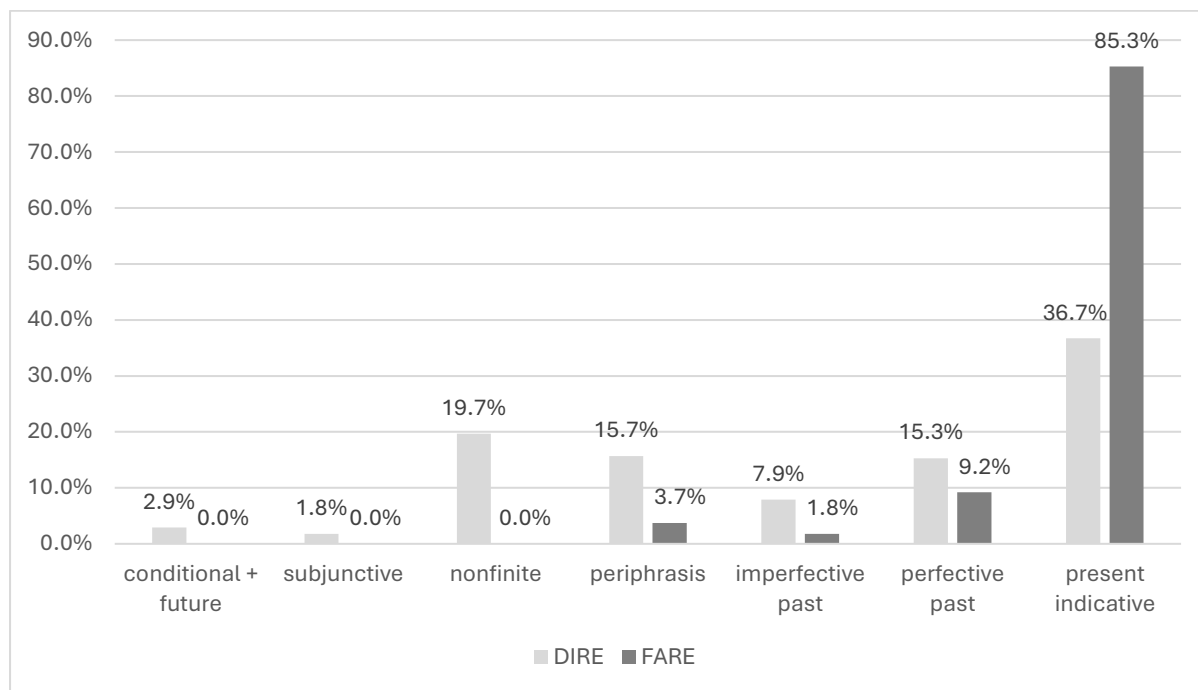


Figure 1: Relative frequency of TAM markings with Italian *fare* and *dire* in quotation contexts⁶

Dire also shows a somewhat more complex distribution than *fare* with respect to clause type. ‘*Dire* is found in a main clause in 52% of examples, in a coordinated clause in 21%, and in a subordinate clause in 27%. *Fare* is found in a main clause in 32% of examples; in a coordinated clause in 58%, and in a subordinate clause in 10%. The occurrences of *fare* in coordination contexts are all cases of conjunct coordination (*e fa* «...» ‘and s/he makes: “...”’), 60% of which consist of two coordinate verbs with the same subject, the first often being a motion verb (see e.g. (16), where the two verbs *viene* ‘s/he comes’ and *fa* ‘s/he makes’ are coordinated). Instead, *dire* also appears coordinated through the adversative coordinator *ma* ‘but’. Moreover, subordinate *fare* only appears in relative clauses and adverbial clauses with temporal value as in (17), while *dire* is also found embedded under a functional verb (e.g., a modal), in sentences that are theta-selected by another verb, and in the protasis of conditional sentences.

- (16) Poco dopo **viene uno e mi fa**: tu stasera sfilo per Armani. (Italian)
‘A little later a guy comes and says to me: you are modeling for Armani tonight.’
(La Repubblica)
- (17) Il punto di svolta della salute viene **quando il mio chiropratico mi fa**: ora puoi saltare, sei sbloccata. (Italian)
‘The turning point of health comes when my chiropractor says to me: now you can jump, you are unblocked.’
(La Repubblica)

⁶Applying a chi-square test to the observed differences in TAM markings between *dire* and *fare* (with the categories ‘present indicative’, ‘perfective past’, ‘imperfective past’ and all further markings grouped as ‘others’), the results are highly statistically significant ($\chi^2 = 54,96$, $p < 0.0001$).

With regard to the expression of the dative argument, the two verbs display very different behaviour: while *dire* is found in 73% of the examples without the dative addressee, *fare* is accompanied by a dative clitic in 91% of the examples in our sample (see Table 2).

Table 2: Appearance of the dative addressee in Italian⁷

Dative	<i>dire</i> ‘say’	<i>fare</i> ‘make’
no	130 (73%)	15 (9%)
yes	41 (23%)	148 (91%)
PP (preposed)	7 (4%)	0 (0%)

Finally, the two verbs seem to differ with respect to the content and shape of the quote that they introduce. In 42% of the quotes introduced by *fare* and only in 14% of those introduced by *dire* they contain elements that structure the interaction between the speaker and the addressee, namely vocatives (18), discourse markers (19), interjections, and greetings. This would suggest that *fare* more often than *dire* introduces quotes whose goal is to mimic an actual communicative interaction between speaker(s) and addressee(s).

- (18) Il barbiere, diciamo così, mi guarda e **mi fa**: «**Amico**, se aspetti due minuti servo pure te.» (Italian)
‘The barber, let’s say, looked at me and said: “My friend, if you wait two minutes I’ll serve you, too.”’ (La Repubblica)
- (19) C’era un gruppo di medici dall’aria perplessa e gentile, e uno **mi fa: guardi**, lei non potrà recuperare del tutto l’uso delle braccia. (Italian)
‘There was a group of doctors looking puzzled and kind, and one said to me: look, you will not be able to fully recover the use of your arms.’ (La Repubblica)

An interesting observation concerns the cooccurrence of *fa* with the discourse marker *guardi* in (19): Whereas *fa* is used as a quotative verb, i.e. it announces the quotation, *guarda/guardi* (i.e. familiar and formal ‘Look!’) has been analysed as a quotative marker that signals the beginning of the quote itself (see e.g. Waltereit 2002).

3.3 Catalan data and results

In Catalan, differences between MAKE and SAY in terms of frequency can be observed with respect to the following properties: TAM inflection, the combination (or not) with a coordinating conjunction, the presence of a dative clitic, and the occurrence of interactive

⁷ As already observed in footnote 3, we could not consider postposed PP arguments, due to the type of query, which relied on the orthographic criterion of *fare* followed by a colon. In theory, this could be interpreted as a confounding factor. However, even with the applied query, the difference between *dire* and *fare* is unexpected, given that the same query was applied to both verbs. Furthermore, as we will see below, the same query was also applied in Catalan and the tendency is different from that observed in Italian.

elements inside the quotes. Even though the properties seem similar to Italian, the balance is different in several cases, most evidently in the presence vs. absence of a dative argument.

Let us start by looking at the TAM specifications of the verbal forms of *fer* vs. *dir*. Figure 2 contrasts the relative frequencies of TAM markings with quotative *fer* from the study of Cuenca & Herbeck (2024) with the results of *dir* from the present study. Although all the TAM markings examined appear with both verbs of saying (except for the imperative, which does not appear with *fer*), quotative *fer* most frequently appears in the imperfective or perfective past or in the present tense, with only 5.3% appearing with other TAM markings (cf. Cuenca & Herbeck 2024: 48). Although these same tense forms also appear to be the most frequently used in direct speech with *dir*, other TAM forms of the paradigm are present to a greater extent with *dir* (in total 27%) than with *fer* (5.3%). On the other hand, present tense forms are used to a greater extent with *fer* (47.5%) than with *dir* (29.7%) when used in quotation contexts.

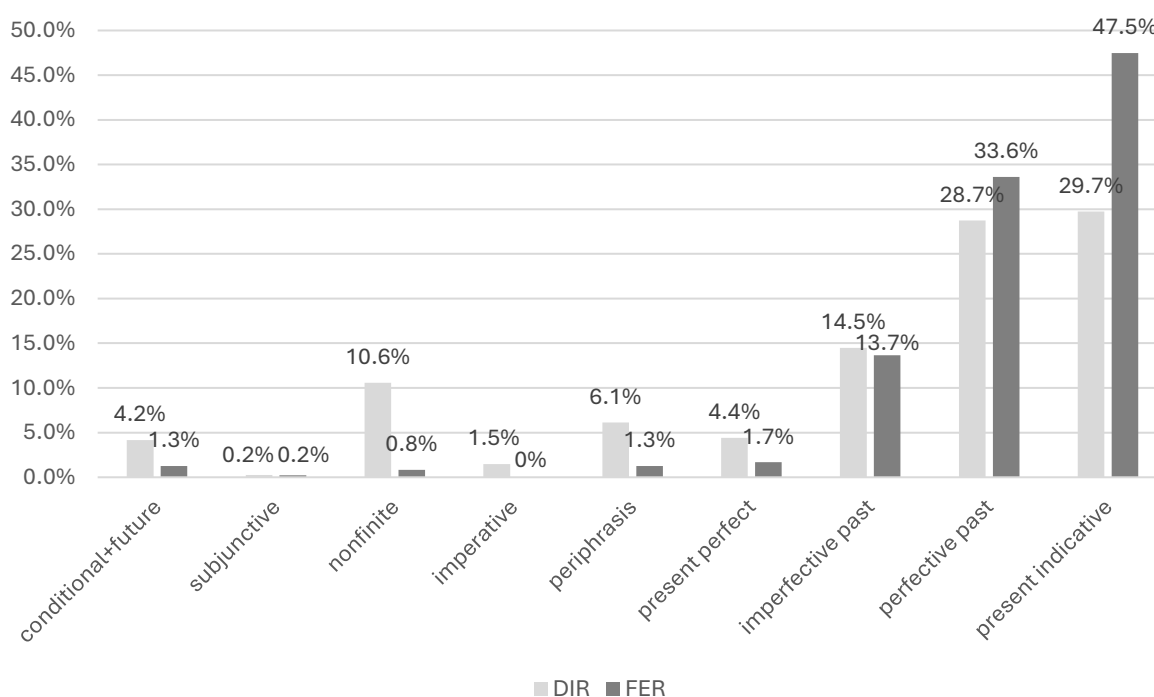


Figure 2: Relative frequency of TAM markings with Catalan *fer* and *dir* in quotation contexts

Although the difference is less marked than in the Italian sample (see §3.2), we nevertheless seem to observe a reduced range of TAM markings with quotative *fer* compared with *dir* in our data sample.⁸

With regard to the possibility of combining with a dative clitic, in written Catalan it seems to be the case that the more frequent pattern is the absence of a dative clitic for the addressee for both quotative *fer* (cf. Cuenca & Herbeck 2024: 50) and *dir*, (see Table 3) but this absence is even more frequent with the former. We thus do not observe the same tendency

⁸ If we apply a chi-square test to the observed differences in TAM markings between *dir* and *fer* (with the categories ‘present indicative’, ‘perfective past’, ‘imperfective past’ and all further markings grouped as ‘others’), the results are statistically significant ($\chi^2 = 87.40$, $p < 0.001$).

for MAKE/DO to appear with an expressed dative argument that we saw in the Italian data (compare Tables 2 and 3).

Table 3: Appearance of the addressee in the form of a dative clitic in Catalan

dative?	<i>dir</i> ‘say’	<i>fer</i> ‘make’
yes	143 (34%)	101 (21%)
no	274 (66%)	375 (79%)

Also worthy of note is the fact that, similar to Italian, quotative *fer* ‘make’ is frequently introduced by the conjunction *i* ‘and’ in coordination with another verb (in 44.5% of all cases of quotative *fer* in Cuenca & Herbeck 2024), as in (20). In our study of *dir* ‘say’, this tendency is less marked, with the quotative verb occurring in coordinated contexts in only 30% of cases.

- (20) Jo aleshores l'engrupo pel clatell, *i faig*: «Digues qui ets, [...]!» *I fa*: «Em pots arrencar la cabellera, que no et diré qui sóc [...]» (Catalan)
‘I then grab him by the back of his neck, and I make [lit. say]: “Tell me who you are, [...]!” And he makes [lit. says]: “You can tear my hair off, but I won't tell you who I am [...]”’ (CTILC)

Another difference concerns the combination of a relative pronoun *que* plus *fer* which has been 73 times in total in Cuenca & Herbeck (2024), i.e. with a frequency of 15% of all cases. The authors observe that within this collocation, there is an interesting structure that has no main verb in the relative clause and consists of a proper name or pronoun plus the relative pronoun *que* followed by *fer* ‘make’ and a direct quote. This construction seems to be similar to a (reduced) cleft sentence:

- (21) L'altre, evasiu, li respon: «/Soy l'alcalde, yo», i ella **que li fa**: «Tant se me'n dona el que siguis, tu.» (Catalan)
‘The other replies evasively: “It's me who is the major”, and she says to him [lit. and she that makes to him]: “I don't care who you are.”’
(Camps i Pinós, Nicasi (1984): *Cèlia Farrerons alcaldesa amb decisions o de l'acció catòlica a un ajuntament d'esquerres*; apud. Cuenca & Herbeck 2024: 50)

In our study of *dir*, the combination with the relative pronoun *que* does not appear with the same frequency – only 15 out of 417 cases in total (i.e., 4%). Furthermore, we do not find structures comparable to the (reduced) cleft sentences in (21).

Lastly, let us turn to the presence of interactive elements inside the quote, guiding speaker-addressee interaction, such as vocatives and interjections. Vocatives (22) are slightly more frequent in Cuenca & Herbeck's (2024) study of *fer* (18%) than in the present sample of *dir* (11%).

- (22) i, després d'un silenci, **va fer**: —Doncs, miri, **senyoreta**, si vol escriure ha de tenir en compte dues coses. (Catalan)
‘and, after a moment of silence, he said [lit. made]: “Well, look, madame, if you want to write, you have to take into account two things.”’ (CTILC)

With respect to other interactive elements, Cuenca & Herbeck (2024: 46) observe that the quote is introduced by interjections or contains onomatopoeia in 36 out of 476 cases in total, i.e. 7.5%. In several cases, like in (23), *fer* just introduces an interjection:

- (23) L'Atticus havia apagat la ràdio de cop i **havia fet**: «Bah!». (Catalan)
'Atticus had suddenly turned off the radio and had said [lit. made]: "Bah!"' (CTILC)

Examples like this suggest that the manner component of the quote is crucial when it is introduced by *fer* 'make', which is also evident in cases where it introduces onomatopoeia. With *dir* 'say', on the other hand, we do not find onomatopoeia, and interjections are also less frequent inside the quote (16/417 = 3.8%) when compared with the numbers for *fer*.

It thus seems to be the case that the quotative use of Catalan *fer*, similarly to Italian *fare*, is more closely related to an imitative and interactive component than quotative *dir* and, consequently, focusing the manner component of quotation has a crucial role (see §5.2 for further discussion of the concept of *mimesis*).

3.4 From action to quotative verb: Possible bridging contexts

Both languages under investigation display many intermediate cases where the "quoted" part introduced by *fer/fare* oscillates between verbal quotation proper and the reproduction of sound or prefabricated pieces of text (see Guardamagna 2010; Cuenca & Herbeck 2024). This is typical for the use of *fer/fare* but very rare, if not impossible, with *dir/dire*. Thus, in the Italian example in (24) there is no verbal answer; just a sound is reproduced (see also (14)).

- (24) A Boston feci la stessa domanda⁹ a un costumista giapponese.
in Boston make.PST.1SG the same question to a designer japonese
Fece: mmh. (Italian)
make.PST.3SG mmh
'In Boston I asked a Japanese costume designer the same question. He went: mmh.'
(La Repubblica)

We have already observed Italian examples in which no direct speech appears after *fare*, but instead a citation of text (such as the lyrics of a song in (15)). In the Catalan example (25), the sound of violins is imitated, and in (26) and (27), *fer/fare* introduces a gesture accompanied by quoted verbal material (see also Cuenca & Herbeck 2024):

- (25) y aquí els violins **fan**: «nyigu». (Catalan)
and here the violins make.3PL nyigu
'and here the violins make: «nyigu»' (CTILC)

- (26) Y'l jutge va anar seguint: y, amb el cap, **feya**: que sí, que sí.

⁹ Note that here *fare* is used with a direct object that encodes a particular speech act. The use of MAKE/DO as a light verb is a separate topic; cooccurrences of *fare* with such speech act encoding nouns like *una domanda* 'question', *un commento* 'comment', *un'osservazione* 'observation' etc. are certainly an additional factor in the development of its quotative use.

‘and the judge went on: and, with his head, he made: yes, yes’ (Catalan)
(Caseponce, Esteve (1907): *Contes vallespirenchs*. apud. Cuenca & Herbeck 2024:
42)

- (27) ti sfottono per i classici stereotipi italiani, sì, pizza pasta e mandolin, sì, e poi ti **fanno**
così con il segno tipo di ma va che (Italian)
‘they make fun of you for the typical Italian stereotypes, yes, pizza, pasta and mandolin,
yes, and then they make so to you with this type of sign “but come on”’
(La Repubblica)

These examples are interesting in the sense that the quotative use of *fer/fare* probably developed its use as a typical verb with internal arguments that represent sounds, communications, texts and, also, speech acts (cf. also Guardamagna 2010; Cuenca & Herbeck 2024 for discussion; also our fn. 9). They also demonstrate that the quotative complement of *fare/fer* has an imitative component – of sounds, words, gestures, and texts.

Together with the observations from the previous chapter regarding interjections and vocatives, the MANNER component of *how* the sound and linguistic elements are reproduced seems to be crucial. Some further evidence for the relevance of the manner component in the use of *fare/fer* is that although the direct quote cannot be doubled by an accusative pronoun (contrary to *dire/dir*; see (28b)), it *can* be doubled by a manner demonstrative, i.e. the adverb It. *così* / Cat. *així* or *aixina* ‘like this / so’: see the example from the database of spoken Valencian Catalan *Museu de la Paraula* (29) and from the *La Repubblica* corpus (30), which is again an intermediate example, see also (27):

- (28) a. La mamma **dice/fa**: “Oggi c’è il sole.” (Italian)
‘Mum says/makes: “Today it’s sunny.”’
b. “Oggi c’è il sole” lo **dice/*fa** la mamma.
““Today it’s sunny.” Mum says/*makes it’. (Guardamagna 2010: 6f [adapted])
- (29) I ma mare **fa aixina** “quants trellats esteu parlant!” (Catalan)
‘And my mother says [lit. makes] so “how many things you are talking about!”’
(*Museu de la Paraula*; Rafelguaraf_MOOR01)
- (30) ha detto addio al ritmo di una celebre canzone, che **fa così**: “Blue moon, you saw me
standing [...]”
‘he said good-bye to the rhythm of a famous song that says [lit. makes] so: “Blue moon,
you saw me standing...”.’ (La Repubblica)

Valencian Catalan *aixina* in (29) and Italian *così* correspond to English *so*, which could be paraphrased by ‘like this’ and clearly contains both a MANNER component and a demonstrative.

4. Discussion: Similarities and differences between Catalan and Italian

So far we have seen that the quotative use of Catalan *fer* and Italian *fare* is quite similar. Both *fer* and *fare* have reduced TAM inflection and an even higher dominance of present indicative than the canonical verb of communication *dir/dire*. We have also seen that the reduced range

of TAM inflections with MAKE is more pronounced in the Italian data (in which 85% of quotative uses of *fare* are in the indicative present compared to 36% with *dire*) than in the Catalan data (48% indicative present with *fer* vs. 30% with *dir*).

As we have mentioned, the quotative use of *fer/fare* emphasises the manner component of the quotation, i.e. an imitation or mimic reproduction of the quotation is attempted, as also observed by Spitzer (1924). This leads to a higher presence of ‘interactional’ elements in the quote. Furthermore, in both languages *fer/fare* in its quotative use frequently combines with the conjunction *i/e* ‘and’ (It. *E fa ...* / Cat. *I fa...*), which seems to be due to the flow or continuity of the narration. On the contrary, quotative *fer/fare* is never subordinated under another verb, unlike *dir/dire*, in our data.

In both languages, quotative *fer/fare* shows a reduced distribution, use, and the partial specialisation for “interactional” and expressive contexts, with a focus on the manner component of the quotation. Often the quote contains questions or exclamations, vocatives, colloquial language and discourse markers (cf. (31), (32)). This matching pattern would suggest a common path of pragmaticalisation towards a use as discourse markers, a subgroup of which have been shown to have interactional and expressive functions (cf. Bazzanella 1995 for Italian; Cuenca 2002 for Catalan; see also the overview in Remberger 2021); see (31), with an interjection as well as colloquial expression in the quote, and (32), containing a vocative as well as a rhetorical question:

- (31) Te la vaig ensenyar, aquella carta, i **vas fer**: —Ai la punyetera, com en sabia la paia!
Vaig dubtar. (Catalan)
‘[...] I showed the letter to you. And you said [lit. made]: “Oh my God, how did the old lady know!” I hesitated.’
(CTILC)
- (32) Mi squadrò inorridito e **fece**: «Nemtsov, perché ti vesti di stracci? Sei un governatore o no? Ora ci penso io.»
‘He looked at me, horrified and he said: Nemtsov, why are you dressed in rags? Are you a governor or not? Now I will take care of this.’
(La Repubblica)

Nevertheless, there are also some differences between the quotative use of Catalan *fer* and the quotative use of Italian *fare*. One difference concerns the presence of dative arguments, usually clitics, that represent the addressee. In Catalan, both *fer* and *dir* more frequently appear without a dative argument, and this tendency is even stronger with *fer* than with *dir* (see §3.3). Strikingly, Italian *fare*, contrary to *dire*, is very often accompanied by a dative clitic. This difference is shown in Table 4:

Table 4: Appearance of dative clitic for the addressee (Catalan vs. Italian)

dative?	Cat. <i>fer</i>	It. <i>fare</i>
yes	21%	91%
no	79%	9%

In the next chapter, we will outline a possible syntactic analysis of the observed similarities as well as a few differences between the quotative verbs MAKE/DO and SAY in Italian and Catalan.

5. Syntactic analysis of quotative *fer/fare*

5.1 Quotation theory and the crosslinguistic view

The study of quotation has a long-standing tradition, especially in semantic and philosophical research. Some of the central questions defined in this tradition concern how quotations refer, what they refer to, and what the difference is between mentioning expressions and using expressions.¹⁰ We start our argumentation from Davidson's (1968/69, 1979) influential demonstrative theory of quotation, but we will also take into account further developments in the theory of quotation, especially the depictive aspect of demonstrations, as outlined by Clark & Gerrig (1990). Demonstrations consist in the “non-serious” – as they call it – use of actions of which the depictive aspect – in contrast to the descriptive use of language – is one; other aspects (supportive, annotative, incidental, cf. Clark & Gerrig 1990: 768) are difficult to grasp in a non-multimodal language corpus and thus cannot be considered in our study. However, it is important for the speaker to demonstrate and for the addressee to recognise the boundaries between descriptive and depictive language. In quotation, the boundaries are usually marked by quotation marks in written language, but also by gestures or intonation in spoken language.

Davidson's assumption is that a quote is not subordinate to the quotative verb; instead, it stands in a paratactic relation to it. Indeed, in many languages of the world, quotative verbs, or “general verbs of utterance”, do report speech (Jäger 2010; Heine & Kuteva 2002; Klamer 2000; Thompson 2002) but are not transitive, i.e., they do not embed an object. In these languages, sentences like *John said that* or *John said it* are impossible.¹¹ In Kambara, for example, a central Malayo-Polynesian language studied in this respect by Klamer (2000), the quote lacks the usual transitive marker, i.e., it is not marked as an object (clause). In this language the quote (and also indirect speech) is simply juxtaposed to the verb of saying but is not subordinated by it. Verbs of saying have often been noted not to behave like canonical transitives, even in English. This was observed by Partee (1973) and Longacre (2007: 386–388), who notes that, in English, direct speech consists of a “quotation formula plus a quote”; however, the quote cannot be analysed as an object but must be seen as a “co-ranking structure”. Moreover, the quotation formula is a unit, whereas the quote itself seems to be independent from it; the quotation formula or reporting frame is shorter and usually less prominent than the quote itself and therefore prone to developing into a (parenthetical) comment clause (see also D'Arcy 2015: 48; 51–52). Güldemann (2008) gives an overview of this discussion in his chapter 3.4.1; he also explains that a quote is a strange kind of object in general since there is “an intonational separation found frequently between QI [quotative index] and quote”, which would be “atypical for a canonical verb-object relation.” Further studies on the (in-)transitivity of verbs of saying are Munro (1982) and Amberber (1997), for non Indo-European languages, and Buchstaller (2014: 38–41), for quotation in English.

Quotation as a demonstrative or illustrative act and the supposed intransitivity of certain quotative verbs are both reminiscent of the quotative use of *fer/fare*.

¹⁰ An overview of the most important views is given in Cappelen & Lepore (2012) and the earlier handbook by Cappelen & Lepore (2007); cf. also De Brabanter (2010) for an overview.

¹¹ Munro (1982: 304–305) and Amberber (1996: 214–215) include Godić, Hausa, Classical Chinese and Amharic as languages “which do not allow pronominal or more concrete objects with the verb *say*.”

5.2 *Fer/fare* as a quotative verb

One of the major questions of this study is whether *fer/fare* displays a reduced inflection and distribution to such an extent that it could be considered a quotative ‘particle’ rather than a verb. This line of reasoning starts from the observation that the distribution of this form is indeed restricted to direct quotation. Our data show that although its use is confined to limited contexts, and it displays a reduced TAM inflection to some extent (see §3), *fer/fare* is still a lexical verb that assigns theta-roles, at least, to the external argument, with which it agrees, and the optional internal dative argument encoding the addressee. The quote cannot be analysed as the direct object, since it cannot be substituted or pronominalised by an accusative clitic, nor can it be raised to subject position in passivisation. These properties, together with the fact that a complement clause introduced by *que/che* ‘that’ leads to ungrammaticality, show that the quote itself cannot be directly subcategorised by the verb. We therefore need to further investigate the role of the quote in the utterance and to explore the type of relation that is established between the quote and quotative *fer/fare*.

Quotative *fer/fare* mainly occurs in root sentences (but also in relative clauses and certain adverbial clauses, as in (17) for Italian and the cleft-like structure in (21) from Catalan) and, in this context, it is often the second conjunct of a coordination of two parallel verb forms with the same subject, particularly in Italian. A similar phenomenon was also identified by Güldemann’s (2008: §3.5.1; 245–255) survey on quotatives in African languages where he observes several patterns of “clausal linkage” or “clause chaining” before quotative verbs, some of them very similar to our data (see his example (155), 251), which he claims represent a typical “narrative storyline”.¹² Quotative *fer/fare* always introduces direct discourse (DD), i.e. no hybrid cases of mixed-quotation occur, and the boundary between used language and demonstrated language is not blurred. The DD or quote is pointed at (mentioned) but not used as a referential expression in the sense of a DP. Furthermore, it is often iconic and its form, i.e. the manner of speech, is of particular relevance, as indicated by the presence of exclamations, vocatives, interjections, discourse markers, and similar in the quote. The manner of the quote or reproduction is so relevant that gestures (see (26) and (27)), sound and onomatopoeia, i.e. non-verbal elements of communication (which unfortunately are not all completely retrievable in our corpus), can also be introduced by *fer/fare* (cf. the bridging contexts in §4).

We therefore claim that the DD or quote is not only a demonstration of verbal speech, in line with the demonstrative theory of quotation (cf. Davidson 1979), but also a (probably selective, cf. Clark & Gerrig 1990: 769) demonstration of its performance. It is mimetic and the superordinate speaker (not the speaker of the quote) is a kind of performer, player or animator (Güldemann 2008: 291, fn. 41). The superordinate speaker interprets what is quoted from his or her perspective, imitating the relevant selected aspects for illustration. The quotative use of *fer/fare* seems to work like this, as an instrument of narration and vividness, which tries to reproduce the speech acts of others, and to approximate it in some way. It is therefore more like the quotative *be like* in English than the prototypical verb of saying *dir/dire* ‘say’ (cf. §5.4).

¹² Güldemann’s example is from the language Supyire and translates as follows: ‘He was cross with himself and went and caught the dog and caressed it and said to it...’ (Güldemann 2008: 151, (155), from Carlson 1994: 620).

5.3 Iconicity of the quote: *Mimesis*

The possibility of introducing DD or quotes that are highly iconic is called *mimesis* by Güldemann (2008; 2012) (a notion for quotation already used by Spitzer 1924); see the following definition:

Mimesis in language is a second mode of representing states of affairs in addition to the descriptive mode with canonical linguistic signs; it evokes for both speaker and hearer a sensory perception, rather than a mental representation, this by expressive, iconic means like sound symbolism, suprasegmental speech modulation and representational gestures. [...]

Direct reported discourse can thus be modeled as a true intersection of the two domains [= the opposition between (extreme) direct and indirect reported discourse], whereby each has some categories not shared with the other, that is, non-mimetic (e.g. extreme indirect) reported discourse on the one hand and non-reporting mimesis, like iconic gesture, ideophones etc, on the other hand.

(Güldemann 2012: 138-139, our highlighting)

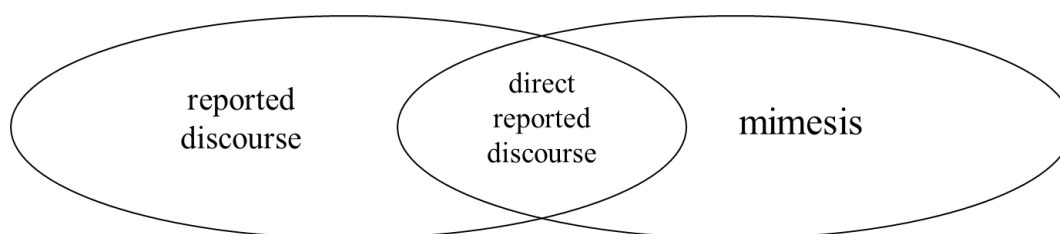


Figure 3: Direct reported discourse as an intersection of two domains (from Güldemann 2008, 2012)

As Figure 3 (from Güldemann 2008, 2012) suggests, direct reported discourse can contain not only reported discourse, but also the imitation of discourse elements. This again strikingly recalls the use of quotative *fer/fare* as described in the preceding chapters.

5.4 Subcategorisation of a covert manner demonstrative

In order to analyse the manner component of quotative *fer/fare*, it is helpful to look more closely at English quotative *be like*. This phenomenon has been observed from the 1980s onwards, first in American English (cf. Butters 1982; Blyth, Recktenwald & Wang 1990; Romaine & Lange 1991 among others), and later also in other varieties of English (cf. Tagliamonte & D’Arcy 2007; Macaulay 2001). *Be like* introduces a DD/quote, but it also occurs with non-verbal, iconic elements as well as “pro-speech uses of gestures” (Schlenker 2019: 736; cf. Stokke & Ball 2025). Buchstaller (2003: 2) observes that *be like* has a high percentage of occurrences where it introduces “mimetic enactment”. As with quotative *fer/fare*, with *be like* the quote itself cannot be pronominalised and embedded complement clauses introduced by *that* are impossible.

Furthermore, it has also been argued that quotative *be like* is ambiguous between the reproduction of speech and the reproduction of thought (Buchstaller 2003; Haddican, Zweig & Johnson 2012); i.e. *be like* can also introduce a report of a thought or of mental states/dispositions, which do not need to be uttered verbatim. Its interpretation is highly

In particular, it is a non-speech verb used as a quotative verb, one of the possible indices given in Table 5. According to Güldemann (2023), exactly this happens in many languages:

The second group of non-speech verbs used in Qis are generic performance or action verbs. The very general semantics of such lexemes can readily account for the fact that they are regularly found to do more than just indexing DRD [= direct reported discourse]. Their functional range is broad, and so they can attribute a wide range of mimetic expressions to a referent.
 (Güldemann 2012: 306)

We saw above that quotative *fer/fare* behaves differently from both SAY and BE LIKE. For *fer/fare* as a quotative verb or quotative index we do not only need an element that indicates similarity (as does *be like*) but also the demonstrative element already proposed by Davidson (1979). We need elements corresponding to *like this* or *so*.

The analysis that we propose for quotative *fer/fare* is therefore that it does not immediately select a complement but that there is more functional structure that more closely resembles English *so*, Cat. *així/aixina* (see (29)), Italian *così* (see (30)), above), Italian *così*, German *so*, etc. (i.e. the “demonstrative *so*” described by Umbach & Ebert 2009). Note again that Romance elements like Catalan *així* ‘so’ and Italian *così* ‘so’ etymologically clearly contain a deictic/demonstrative element (< Lat. ECCŪ(M) SĪ(C) ‘look there’ + ‘so’). The functional structure it requires encodes both similarity (LIKE) and demonstration (THIS). This functional structure then selects an utterance containing a quote (or other iconic material). The different quotative indices mentioned are listed in Table 6.

Table 6: Quotative verbs: similarity and demonstration

Verbal part	Functional structure	
SAY (speech verb)		+ THIS (demonstration/index)
BE (copula)	+ LIKE (similarity)	
DO (performative verb)	+ LIKE (similarity)	+ THIS (demonstration/index)

On the basis of this preliminary analysis, we can now look more closely at the syntax of quotation.

5.5 The syntax of quotation

Generative syntax offers relatively few proposals for the syntactic structure of quotation, but there are some that we can adopt for quotative *fer/fare*. Let us first outline the syntactic derivation of a general utterance verb like SAY. As we know, in the languages at issue here, SAY can introduce both direct and indirect speech. The corresponding structures are given in Figure 4 and Figure 5:

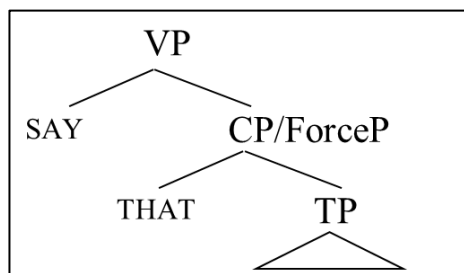


Figure 4: Speech verb SAY+CP

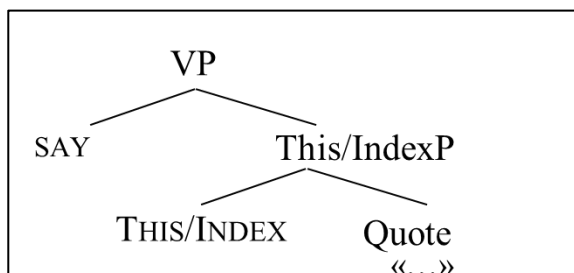


Figure 5: Speech verb SAY+(THIS=) QUOTE

Usually, indirect speech as in Figure 4 can be pronominalised by a personal pronoun (36), whereas pronominalisation of quotes seems to lead to a demonstrative interpretation when a personal pronoun is used (36b). We assume, with Davidson (1968/69), that quotes are introduced by an index or an empty demonstrative (cf. THIS/INDEX in Figure 5).

- (36) a. It was said by Einstein that knowledge is limited.
b. Einstein said (it/this/the following): “Knowledge is limited.”
- (37) a. ?* “Help!” was said.
b. ?* It was said (to me) (by som[on]e), “Your house is haunted”.
- (Munro 1982: 308)

In a certain sense, SAY in (36a) is transitive, whereas it seems to be more complex with (36b); see also (37) for the impossibility of passivisation. While we cannot discuss these subtle differences here,¹⁴ we can be sure that neither pronominalisation nor passivisation works for quotative *fer/fare*, because it selects a manner component.

For English *be like*, Haddican & Zweig (2012) propose a syntactic analysis that relies in part on a proposal by Kayne (2007). They also distinguish between the ‘inner thought’ reading and the direct speech reading of *be like*. For the latter, they propose the following structure:¹⁵

- (38) [_{TP} She [_{T'} was [_{DP} SOMETHING [_{PP} like [_{DP} THAT [QUOTE]]]]]]].
(Haddican, Zweig & Johnson 2012: 86)

However, they need the empty SOMETHING (which was proposed as GOING SOMETHING by Kayne 2007) to distinguish between a stative and an eventive reading for English BE.

We would prefer to follow the analysis of Stokke & Ball (2025), who focus more on the manner reading and thus do not need a distinct analysis for the various readings of *be like*, which they show to be highly context dependent. They claim that *be like* uses a quotation in

¹⁴ Keizer (2009: 847): “in [...] direct speech the referential act is a (reproduced) discourse act, while in indirect speech it is the (reformulated) communicated content of an earlier discourse act.”

¹⁵ Haddican, Zweig & Johnson (2012) rely in part on a proposal by Etxepare (2010) for the quotative use of the complementizer *que* ‘that’ in Spanish, where he introduces a functional category REL (relation). Note, however, that quotative *que* also introduces indirect speech and the quote can also be pronominalised. The structure that Haddican, Zweig & Johnson (2012) propose is highly complicated, since it also considers a further distinction between BE and HAVE (Haddican, Zweig & Johnson 2012: 19), which is irrelevant for our paper. For Etxepare (2010), see §5.6.

order to attribute a property to its subject. It is a kind of predicate, but the subject is only similar to this property, i.e. similar to what is demonstrated or imitated in the quotation.

Translating these properties of English *be like* into functional categories, we would propose the structure given in Figure 6 for *be like*, with LIKE encoding similarity and PRED (for predicate) a property. German *und ich so* also has a subject but is not a verbal quotative. It does not attribute a property to the subject but introduces direct speech, similarly to quotative *fer/fare*. Thus, we interpret *so* as what it is, namely a manner demonstrative (cf. again Umbach & Ebert 2009), which can be broken down into LIKE + THIS, as in Figure 7.

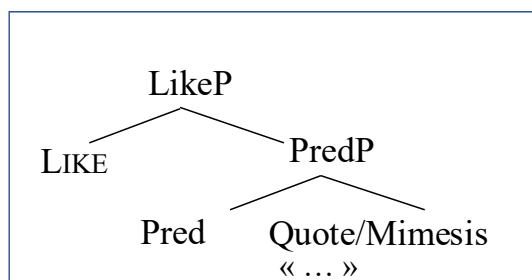


Figure 6: BE+LIKE+QUOTE

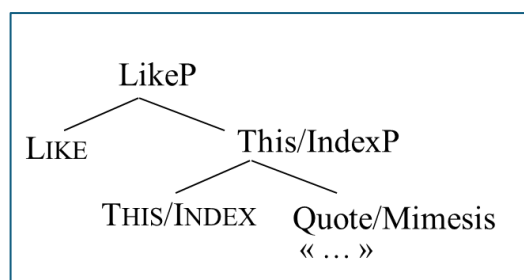


Figure 7: SO(= LIKE THIS)+QUOTE

Consequently, quotative *fer/fare*, in a similar vein, first subcategorises a covert element that indicates similarity, i.e. a covert LIKE, which then selects the demonstrative element, as in Figure 8:

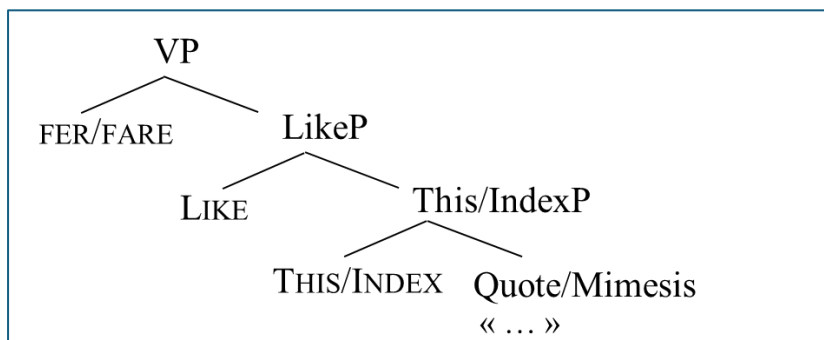


Figure 8: Performative verb DO+SO (=LIKE+THIS)+QUOTE

The structural elements required by quotative *fer/fare* are most frequently covert, but as we have mentioned, they can also be overtly realised (as with *aixina* ‘like this / so’ in the Catalan example (29)). This combination – LIKE+THIS/INDEX – encodes the manner component that is present in the data examined in Chapter 3: a number of features seem typical of narration as a kind of performance, including the narrative chain that often presents quotative *fer/fare* in the second conjunct, interjections, vocatives and other elements of speaker-hearer interaction inside the quote, and the possibility of realising the manner component by the demonstrative SO. When SO is realised, its morphological structure is inverse (see the etymology in §5.4), i.e. the demonstrative element precedes the similarity element; this could be easily explained by syntactic movement, which makes it possible that both elements THIS+LIKE can be realised by

one vocabulary item (e.g. THIS+LIKE can be realised as *així* ‘so’ in Catalan *ell fa (així): «...»*), as shown in our Figure 9.

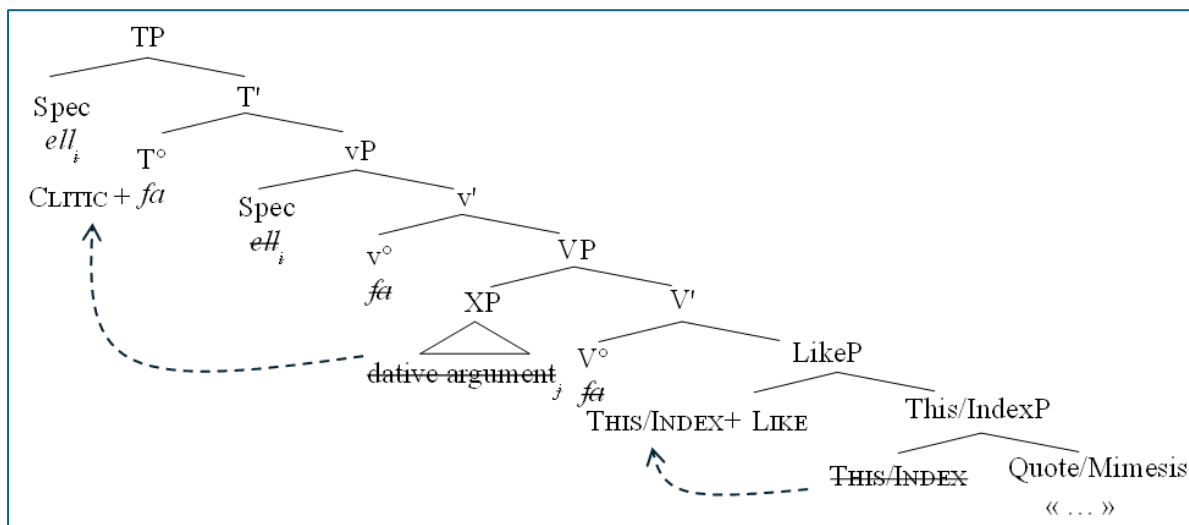


Figure 9: Syntactic structure of quotative *fer/fare* (illustrated for Catalan)

Of course, there are some differences in the use of quotative *fer* in Catalan and quotative *fare* in Italian. The most obvious is the high frequency of a clitic dative argument in Italian, which represents the addressee of the performance, i.e. an entity involved in the performance as a member of the public. The frequent appearance of the dative clitic can then perhaps be explained by certain differences in the use of applicatives in Catalan and Italian. These, however, are questions that cannot be resolved here and are therefore left to future research.

5.6 The syntax of the quote

One aspect of the syntax of quotation that has yet to be discussed is the relation between the covert demonstrative and the quote.¹⁶ In traditional grammar a quote is usually interpreted as the complement (a direct object) of a communication predicate. As we discussed in §5.1, however, several researchers have questioned this interpretation, even for English, particularly since the work of Davidson (1968/69). Although we would like to maintain the analysis presented in §5.5, we need to further discuss the link between the covert demonstrative (or the covert similarity marker + the demonstrative) and the quote. If the demonstrative as an index¹⁷ points to the quote, the link is indeed not an intra-sentential syntactic relation, but a “cross-discourse phenomenon” (Amberber 1997: 2). The question thus arises of how discourse deixis in parataxis is modelled.

In the literature, several ideas have been proposed for a syntactic analysis of the quote:

(39) The quote (or the quoted material) has been analysed as

¹⁶ We are very grateful to one anonymous reviewer who asked the right questions on the syntactic role of the quote. This recently added section tries to answer most of them.

¹⁷ Note that the demonstrative is assumed to be distal. However, this depends on the perspective taken: It is distal since the quote is usually from a different utterer who is thus distal from the speaker, but it could also be interpreted as proximal, since it immediately follows the quotative index (see also Elbourne 2008).

- a direct object, thus a (DP-like) complement of the communicative verb (the traditional view as illustrated e.g. by Munro 1982: 301; Amberber 1996: 221); thus, also a fronted complement as in quotative inversion (see e.g. Suñer 2000).
- a head phrase modified by the (postponed) quotative frame as an adjunct (e.g. Bonami & Godard 2008)
- a subject of a small clause (Etxepare 2010)
- a category-less predicate (Amberber 1996: 227)
- [...]

We will briefly describe the approach by Etxepare (2010) since it seems to be the most compatible with our analysis in §5.5, which can then be seen as a simplified presentation of a discourse-semantically more complex structure. Etxepare’s (2010) analysis examines quotative *que* in Iberoromance; the main idea that we adopt is that the introducer of the quote (*que* in Iberoromance¹⁸, the covert demonstrative in our Davidsonian approach) is a kind of “Linker” to the quote. With this notion we can capture the fact that the quote is not a direct complement but is paratactically, cross-discursively linked to the demonstrative index. The claim that a quotation is not subordinate to its quotative frame but is in parataxis, as proposed by Davidson (1968/69), means that quotative constructions are two proper sentences. The second sentence, the quote, introduces a predication on its own. This is modelled by Etxepare (2010) where the Linker (Iberoromance *que*) introduces a category-less Small Clause, named simply RelP (for “Relation”) with the quoted material as the subject and a predicate that encodes that the quoted material is indeed an utterance, a speech act. In our case, with quotative *fer/fare*, this speech act introduced by the predicate can also be called a speech action because of the stage-like effect introduced by *fer/fare* and the mimetic property introduced by the covert similarity marker belonging to the quotative verb. Translating the structure proposed in Etxepare (2010) we would have the following structure for the quote (Figure 10):

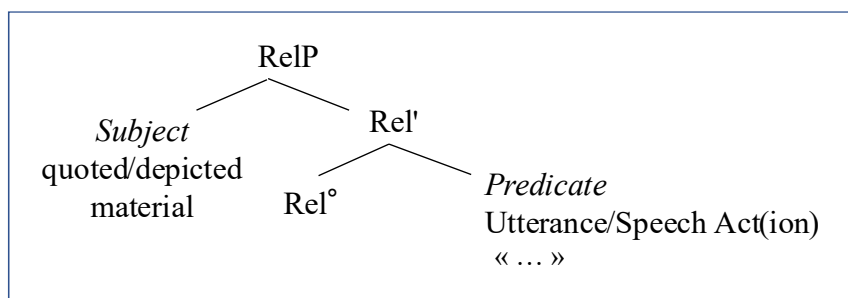


Figure 10: The quote as a Small Clause RelP (adapted from Etxepare 2010)

The structure containing the quotative verb linking to this Small Clause in Figure 10 is like Figure 9, with the difference that instead of the quote/mimesis in an apparent complement position the RelP is introduced by a Linker. How deixis is established between the quotative frame provided by *fer/fare* and the following discourse referent, the quote, is a question that concerns the theory of demonstratives in general. In this respect, we refer to literature like

¹⁸ As D’Arcy (2015) has noted, there are varieties of English that also use an overt *that* when a direct quote is introduced, see e.g. (i):

(i) There was a chap in Jubilee who said that “I can’t do anything about uh this guy.”
 (Kenyan English, D’Arcy 2015:46).

Elbourne (2008), Maes, Kramer & Peters (2021) and Diessel & Breunesse (2020). In the terminology of Maes, Kramer & Peters (2021) the empty demonstrative would probably be endophoric and text-based, usually cataphoric and with a non-nominal postcedent (although anaphoric examples with a non-nominal antecedent are also possible with *fer/fare*; see Guardamagna 2020).¹⁹ Elbourne (2008) would characterise a canonically referring demonstrative determiner as a DP that provides an index variable *i* and a relation variable *R* (cf. 40a), whereas a bare demonstrative has an empty ONE instead of the NP (cf. 40b); the similarity demonstrative introduced by *fer/fare* would thus be as shown in (40c), with *i* as the discourse index for the quoted material and *R* expressing the fact that the quoted material is a speech act:

- (40) a. [DP [[that *i*] *R*] NP]
b. [DP [[that *i*] *R*] ONE]
c. [LIKE [DP [[THAT *i*] *R*] ONE]]

Diessel & Breunesse (2020) present a cross-linguistic inventory of demonstrative clause linkers, i.e. demonstratives that are employed for a discourse-deictic use; they include a full subchapter on quotative markers (314–317), which they define as a “conjunction-like element that serves to mark direct speech”, noting that (as observed by Güldemann 2008) in African languages “they are also frequently derived from manner demonstratives” (314). Diessel & Breunesse (2020: 315) also note that German *so* and French *ainsi* often indicate direct speech. However, the article does not provide a syntactic or semantic analysis of those markers but outlines possible grammaticalisation paths of “demonstratives in clause linking constructions” (305).

These observations regarding the general properties and analyses of demonstratives, however, are theoretical considerations that probably go far beyond the topic of the present article. We thus continue to represent our linker, the empty similarity demonstrative as LIKE and THAT and remain agnostic on the question of how to instantiate the discourse reference by providing THAT with a colon (Linker: RelP).

In the final syntactic representation of our quotative construction we would like to additionally capture the phenomenon, found particularly in Italian, whereby *fare* is not only accompanied by a clitic addressee (or spectator) but often also appears in a coordinate structure with another preceding verb in the same tense and with the same subject (Figure 11):

¹⁹ Maes, Kramer & Peters (2021) is based on a written corpus only; nevertheless their taxonomy also seems to be useful for our study.

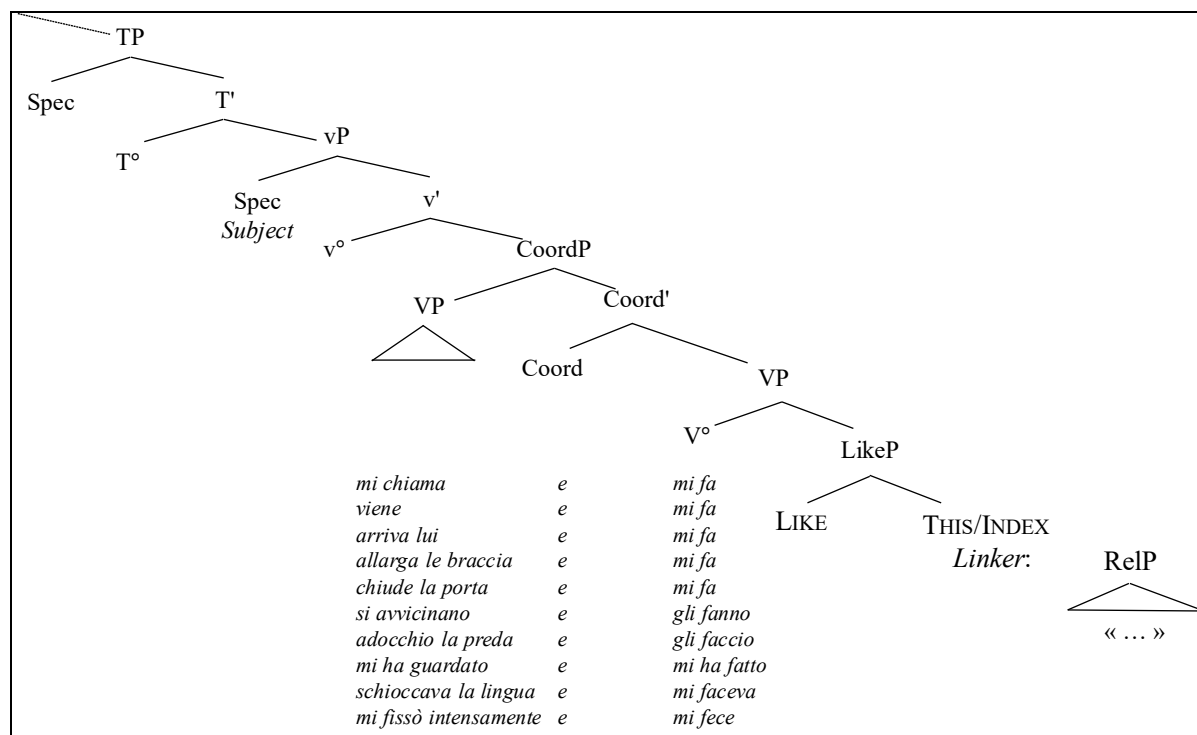


Figure 11: Coordinated structures (La Repubblica)

This type of “clause chaining” has also been observed cross-linguistically (Güldemann 2008: §3.5.1; 245–255) and seems to represent both a narrative style and a somehow routinised structure for introducing quotation.

6. Conclusion and outlook

In summary: In the introduction, we asked to what extent *fer/fare* can be considered a quotative verb or a quotative ‘particle’. Here we can answer that it is still a quotative verb (a quotative index), but it does not select a CP, i.e., it is not transitive. Evidence that it is still to be considered a verb comes from the fact that it displays verbal inflection, albeit with a reduced variety in comparison to prototypical *dir/dire*, and that it displays a full-fledged subject. With regard to the syntactic structure of MAKE/DO as SAY, we have shown that it clearly has the argument structure typical of quotative verbs, i.e. it has a subject, an optional dative argument, and it introduces a quote. However, a crucial difference between *fer/fare* and prototypical SAY-verbs introducing quotations is the focus on the manner component of the quotation in the former case. We have attributed this to the assumption that the quotative value of *fer/fare* is highly iconic (mimesis), and it selects a (silent) demonstrative element SO, or better, a combination of LIKE + THIS, which in turn selects the quote.

Although the quotative use of *fer/fare* is still clearly verbal, we have seen that there are some signs of reduction in the inflectional paradigm (TAM) that cannot solely result from the fact that it is a verb of communication (cf. the comparison with SAY). There seem to be some routinised patterns (conjunction chaining, expressives, etc.) that might suggest the start of a development towards a more pragmaticalised element.

It is important to note that the observations in this paper are based only on written Catalan and Italian. Future studies should consider the use of MAKE as a verb of saying in current spoken language. A first indication that this line of research might be very promising can be found in a preliminary look at the use of *fer* with different TAM markings in spoken corpus data of Catalan (*Museu de la Paraula, Parlars 1.0* for spoken Valencian Catalan). Although an in-depth quantitative study is pending, there is some indication that TAM inflection is further reduced with *fer* as a verb of saying. Thus, there is a clear tendency to use the imperfective past tense (and not the perfective past), even if we are dealing with punctual events of saying (and not necessarily habitual, repetitive or durative events, as is prototypical for imperfective aspect), as shown in (41) and (42):

- (41) Diu “ara, hagueren estat mesclades de xics...” I ell **feia** “calla!” (Catalan)
‘He says “now they would have been together boys and...” and he said [lit. **made.IMPFV**]: “Be quiet!”’ *Museu de la Paraula; Rafelguarraf_MOOR01*
- (42) I el meu germà **feia**: “Jo aniré i tu te'n vas a segar per a les vaques.” (Catalan)
‘And my brother said [lit. **made.IMPFV**]: “I will leave, and you are going to mow for the cows”’ *(Museu de la Paraula; L'Ènova-H32_MOOR05)*

This use of the “narrative imperfect” (cf. Pérez Saldanya 2002) is predominant in the past tense forms of *fer* in the spoken narrations of the Catalan data and might indicate (i) a further reduction of the TAM forms compared to written language and, thus, a further degree of grammaticalisation and (ii) the relevance of narrativity for the use of MAKE/DO as a pragmatized quotative verb. However, future studies will shed light on this aspect by systematically examining spoken data from both Catalan and Italian.

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Abbreviations

AUX = auxiliary
AUXP = auxiliary phrase
CL = clitic
CTILC = IEC: *Corpus Textual Informatizat de la Llengua Catalana*
DP = Determiner Phrase
EXST = existential
IPF = imperfect
p = little p
p = little p phrase
P = preposition
PP = prepositional phrase
PRED = predicate
PST = past
QI = QUOTATIVE INDEX
SG = singular
SAP = Speech Act Phrase
REL = Relation
TAM = Tense, Aspect, Mood
T = Tense
TP = Tense Phrase
v = little v
vP = little v Phrase
V = Verb
VP = Verb Phrase

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