ON THE SUBJECT'S POINT OF VIEW

JACQUELINE GUERON

Université Sorbonne Nouvelle Paris 3

Introduction

In this paper I defend the hypothesis that the grammar provides a number of mechanisms which unambiguously represent the speaker's point of view, but none which unambiguously represent the point of view of the subject of a sentence.[1] Point of view is defined in (1).

(1) "Point of view" refers to the grammatical expression of the way a human consciousness perceives the situation a sentence describes.

I will review a number of grammatical mechanisms which allow the expression of the manner in which a human consciousness perceives a situation which are accessible to the speaker but inaccessible to a sentential subject.

1. The syntactic domain of point of view

The sentence is divided into a number of syntactic domains identified by different syntactic and semantic properties, the vP domain, the TP or IP domain, and the CP domain. The CP domain consists of a number of distinct projections entirely devoted to the expression of the speaker's point of view.

Cinque [1999] identifies a hierarchy of speaker-controlled projections within the split CP domain. These are illustrated in (2) and identified by a proto-typical adverb located in the Specifier position of each projection. I have added, above the projections proposed by Cinque, a Discourse Setting which implicitly identifies the speaker, the hearer, and the Here and Now of the Speech Act.

(2) Disc(ourse Setting) – Speech Act (SA) P – Eval(uative) P – Evid(ential) P – Epist(emological) P - Force P (CP) -Tense P (IP)

(2) Discourse Setting

---

[1] A first version of this work was presented at a colloquium organized at the University Paris 3 by Claude Delmas in 2007, "Qu'est-ce qu'un verbe?"

```
      / \
   Spec Disc'
   | / \
I/II Disc. Speech Act P
Here / \
Now Spec SA'
   | / \
   | SA Eval.P
   | / \
   | Spec Eval'
   | | / \
   | | Eval. Evid.P
   | | | / \
   | | | Spec Evid'
   | | / \
   | | Evid. Epist.P
   | | / \
   | | Spec Epist'
      | / \
      | Epist. Force P(CP)
      | / \
      | Spec Force'/C')
   | [ | | | / \
   | | | | | Force/C TP(IP)
   | | | | | / \
```

Frankly sadly allegedly apparently [Decl] John is here

The TP/IP projection contains the core proposition. VP denotes a situation – event or state – which a tense morpheme in T, the head of TP/IP, places at a point in time calculated from the enunciation or discourse time. When the

sentential Force is Declarative, TP shows the canonical order of constituents - SVO in English - and is construed at the syntax-semantics interface as a proposition subject to evaluation for truth.

The speaker, associated with the first person "I" in the discourse setting, C-commands in syntax the entire sentential domain, and in particular the left- peripheral CP domain. We may call this the domain of the Speaker Point of View since no other animate identity which could constitute a rival point of view is introduced between the Discourse Setting and the subject position in Spec TP. The speaker controls, in particular, the Force Phrase in CP. While Declarative force can be embedded, other forces, Interrogative, Exclamative and Imperative, cannot be. These define Root Sentences, all of which are Speaker-controlled. Such sentences may invert the unmarked order of constituents associated with Declarative Force. Thus, in English, inversion of subject and verb is limited to root sentences. Other Root operations raise sentence -internal phrases to periperal informational Topic and Focus nodes above CP which link the sentence to the discourse as a whole.

The speaker controls the time reference of the sentence. The NOW of the speaker in the Discourse Setting binds a deictic Speech Time tense morpheme in the Complementizer node which anchors an Event Time morpheme in T. Events are predicated either of the speaker's NOW or of a time before or after NOW. Here too, syntactic inversion of constituents has semantic effects controlled by the speaker. The speaker can invert the syntactic order of two successive events or subevents. She can describe the end point of a spatio-temporal trajectory before its beginning point, as in (3a), or the consequence of an event before its explicit or implicit cause, as in (3b).

(3) a. Into the breach leaped the soldiers.

    b. Mary left after /because/when John arrived.

Thus the entire left periphery of the sentence (and the right periphery as well, which contains Extraposed or Right Dislocated material and which we do not discuss here) is devoted to the speaker's point of view.

But there does not seem to be any syntactic domain dedicated to a subject's point of view.

2. Attitude verbs, pronouns and logophors.

2.1. Attitude verbs

It has been claimed, however, that sentences introduced by a matrix "attitude" verb of saying or thinking identify the point of view of the matrix subject. If, for example, in (4) below, the embedded object "his mother" is construed as referring *de dicto* rather than *de re*, then the sentence would represent the point of view of the subject. If in (5) "his" is construed *de se* rather than *de re*, so that the subject is aware that it's his own pants which are on fire, then the sentence is in the subject's point of view. And if in (6), the embedded verb is in the past tense, obeying Sequence of Tense (SOT), then the sentence represents the subject's point of view. On the contrary, if "his mother" in (4) or "his pants" in (5) is construed *de re*, or if the tense in (5) is in the present, triggering what is called the Double Access (DAR) construal, the sentence is in the point of view of the speaker. In such cases, where two construals are available, one would be attributed to the speaker's point of view and the other to that of the subject.

(4) Oedipus said/declared that he wanted to marry *his mother*. (*de dicto* or *de re*)

(5) Looking in the plate glass window of the store, Kaplan said/saw/noticed

[that *hi*s pants were on fire]. (*de se* or *de re*)

(6) Last month, John said/announced that Mary *was (vs.is)* pregnant. (SOT vs DAR)

However, although pronouns and tenses are referential elements, they are not deictic elements when their antecedent is in the discourse *text* rather than in the discourse *world*. The difference between the *de dicto* and the *de re* construal of "his mother" in (4) or the *de se* vs the *de re* construal of "his pants" in (5) may make a difference in the truth value of the sentence. Thus if Oedipus said that he wanted to marry Jocasta, not knowing that Jocasta was his mother, (4) would be true in the *de re* reading but false in the *de dicto* reading. It is necessary to identify the referent of an NP in order to derive a proposition subject to evaluation at the syntax-semantics interface. But propositional utterances are incompatible, I claim, with Point of view as defined in (1).

On the contrary, grammatical elements which do establish a point of view, such as Interrogative, Exclamative, or Imperative operators, or speaker-oriented adverbs like "unfortunately" or "luckily", do not influence the truth value of the sentence. There thus seems to be a complementary distribution between elements contributing to the truth value of a

proposition and those which express point of view. This seems reasonable: an assertion is falsifiable but a point of view, being personal and subjective, is not.

Sentences such as (4) – (6) can indeed suggest a subject point of view under one of the available construals of their referential elements. Such a construal is only an implicature, however, which is allowed by the grammar, rather than an entailment determined by it. The implicature of subject point of view is undone by any number of speaker-controlled grammatical operations which can invade the sentence, reinforcing their propositional status at the expense of their point of view construal, such as Negation in (7a), Contrastive Stress in (7b), and information-driven root operations like Topicalisation in (7c) or Clefting as in (7d).

(7) a. Oedipus did *not* say that he wanted to marry his mother.

b. Oedipus said he wanted to marry *his OWN MOTHER*.

c. *Mary John said was/is pregnant.*

d. *It is Mary* whom John said was/is pregnant.

Similarly, in (8), even if Kaplan recognizes that his own pants are on fire, the modifiers *beautiful* and *Armani* may well be interjections by the speaker. The subject may think his pants are ugly and not know that the pants come from an élite clothing store.

(8) Kaplan saw that his *beautiful Armani* pants were on fire. (cf. (5))

2.2. Logophoric pronouns and tenses

2.2.1. It has been claimed that *logophors*, pronouns obligatorily construed as coreferential with an antecedent in a previous clause of the same sentence or in a previous sentence of the discourse, identify that antecedent as a "subject of consciousness", defining a subject's point of view. Logophors are not subject to the locality conditions which constrain morphological anaphors such as reflexive clitics in the Romance languages. Examples are *yè*, an obligatory logophor in Ewe (9) [CLEMENTS, 1975] and the reflexive pronoun which functions as a logophor in a non-local context in English (10) [ZRIBI-HERTZ, 1989].

(9) a. Kofi$_i$ be yè$_i$-dzo.

Kofi say he-LOG-leave

b. * Kofi$_i$ be **e**$_i$-dzo

Kofi say he-NON-LOG leave

(10) a. *John thought that Mary washed *himself*.

b. John thought that Mary liked her other friends more than him/*himself*.

It has also been claimed that only attitude verbs of saying or thinking, license logophors. This would reinforce the hypothesis that logophors appear in sentences representing the subject's point of view. However, Baker [1995] identified logophors in Jane Austen's novels which are not introduced by attitude verbs and which clearly express the point of view of the speaker rather than that of the subject, as in (11a). Nor does an attitude verb introduce (11b).

(11) a. Sir William Lucas, and his daughter Maria, a good humoured girl, but as empty- headed as **himself**, had nothing to say that could be worth hearing....

(11) b. Tomorrow, John will meet the girl whom the boss promoted in preference to **himself**.

As Clements points out, a logophoric pronoun is essentially a disambiguation device which blocks the free reference that the use of a non-logophoric pronoun allows. If so, logophoric *himself* in (11b) is just a long-distance variant of the anaphoric *himself* which blocks free reference in a simple sentence like "John washed himself".

Clements mentions that Ewe uses logophors in adjunct clauses of purpose and consequence. As shown by the English example in (12a) a purpose clause may but need not represent the subject's point of view. Suppose we replace PRO by a coreferential pronoun as in (12b). Coreference does not prove that the point of view is that of John rather than that of the speaker. For either sentence of (12) could be followed by an expression like "although he would deny it" which situates the purpose clause squarely in the scope of the speaker.

(12) a. John went to that party [PRO to annoy Mary].

b. John went to that party [so that he could annoy Mary]

2.2.2. Schlenker [2003] points out the existence of logophoric tenses parallel to logophoric pronouns. In Russian, for example, as illustrated in (13), present tense in a verb embedded under an attitude verb can denote either the Speech Time, creating a Double Access Reading (DAR), or else a Sequence of Tense (SOT) past Reference Time anaphoric to the matrix past.

(13) Ivan skazal chto Masha plachet.

(a) Ivan said that Masha is crying (now). (DAR)

(b) Ivan said that Masha was crying (then). (SOT)

However, as pointed out by Vogeleer [2011], the past imperfect tense is also possible in (13) and it is obligatory in (14). In Russian, while the present tense can refer to a past overlapping with the matrix past, only the imperfective past tense can refer to a time overlapping with a time previous to the matrix past.

(14) Ivan skazal chto Masha *plachet/ plakala [kogda on vstretil eje].

Ivan said that Masha *is crying/ was crying [when he met her].

The present tense in (13a) and (14), like the logophoric pronoun in (11a) in Ewe or in English in (11b), is essentially a grammatical disambiguation device which limits the search area of a dependent referential item, tense or pronoun, to the immediate discourse context. The disambiguation necessary to establish truth value is in principle independent of point of view.

I would like to claim, however, that not only do logophors not signal a subject point of view, but that strong reflexive anaphors in general, whether local or long-distance, obligatory or optional, necessarily indicate, on the contrary, the speaker's point of view.

Consider local anaphora in (15).

(15) a. John saw himself in the mirror.

b. John washed himself.

A strong reflexive pronoun, in French or English, has the same syntactic distribution as a non-reflexive pronoun.

(16) a. John washed himself/him.

b. Jean a lavé *lui-même/*lui.

A pronoun may be considered as a kind of variable which ranges over a set of possible referents. The addition of a reflexive morpheme to a pronoun, or the choice of a reflexive instead of a non-reflexive pronoun, adds a restriction to interpretation requiring a local referent. But only an observer not actually involved in the reported event, that is, only the speaker, is in a position to scan the set of possible referents and identify the closest one as the antecedent of the reflexive. The speaker alone can deny the identity of two referents, as in (17a), or impose an identity which the subject is unaware of and does not intend as in (17b-c).

(17) a. John thought he saw himself in the mirror but it was his brother.

b. John got himself fired.

c. John talked himself out of the job.

A strong pronominal, anaphor or not, requires the selection of one individual out of a set of possible referents as its antecendent. When there is no set to scan, as is the case with predicates construed as lexically reflexive, an anaphor is not necessary, as in English (18) or French (19a).

(18) a. John washed, shaved, and dressed.

b. Bill confessed.

(19) a. Jean est fier de lui/ a honte de lui.

b. * Jean est jaloux de lui/* est fâché avec lui.

Moroever, logophors may search for an antecedent in a sentential or discourse domain larger than that over which a sentential subject has syntactic and semantic scope. In (20a-b) below, the antecedent and the anaphor participate in separate spatio-temporal situations. The envelope in the second sentence of (20a) was addressed before John's opening the drawer described in the first sentence. Mary in (20b) likes people or not independently of what John thinks. As only the speaker has access to the time line associated with the entire discourse, only she can identify individuals who participate in two distinct spatio-temporal situations as being the same individual.

(20) a. John opened the drawer. In it was an envelope adressed to *himself*.

b. John thought that Mary liked everyone more than *himself*.

We claim, therefore, that pronominal and temporal anaphora is a grammatical device which disambiguates reference in order to derive a proposition with a truth value. Anaphora is unrelated to point of view, which has no propositional function.

3. Verbs of saying or thinking

3.1. What about verbs of saying or thinking? Don't they represent the point of view of the subject with which they agree grammatically rather than that of the more remote speaker? I propose, on the contrary, that when the Force of the sentence is declarative, verbs of saying or thinking function primarily as *evidential* verbs. In such cases, the subject of the sentence functions as a source of evidence for the truth of the proposition asserted by the speaker. In such cases, there is a mismatch between the syntactic subordination of the embedded sentence and its semantically dominant propositional content. When a verb of saying or thinking functions semantically as an evidential auxiliary introducing the embedded sentence, propositional operators like interrogation or negation can target a sentence embedded under an attitude verb as though it were a matrix proposition. This is the case even when the

embedded sentence contains a *de se* pronoun as in (21a) or a logophor, as in (21b).

(21) a. How badly burnt did Kaplan say his pants were?

b. How many people does John think Mary likes more than himself?

3.2. We claim then that speaker-controlled operators in the matrix sentence which extract constituents out of an embedded sentence constitute evidence of the evidential status of the main verb and therefore of the speaker's point of view . If so, then, if there were a context in which extraction from a sentence embedded under an attitude verb is blocked, that context could provide evidence for a non-evidential construal of the matrix attitude verb and perhaps identify a grammatical mechanism establishing a subject point of view. Erteschik-Shir [1973] discovered just such a context. She showed that while verbs of speaking allow wh-extraction from an embedded sentence, verbs of *manner of speaking* do not.

(22) a. John said/declared that Mary was/is beautiful.

b. Who did John say/declare was/is beautiful?

(23) a. John blurted out.whispered/giggled that Mary was/is beautiful.

b. *? Who did John blurt out/whisper/giggle was/is beautiful?

In addition to blocking extraction from an embedded sentence, the manner feature of a verb of speaking also forces a *de dicto* reading of sentences like (4) ((24a)), and a *de se* reading of (5) ((24b)). Furthermore, it blocks DAR in (6) ((25b)).

(24) a. Oedipus groaned/sighed that he wanted to marry his mother. (de dicto only)

b. Kaplan gasped/groaned/screamed this his pants were on fire (de se).

(25) a. Last month, John said that Mary is pregnant.

b. ?* Last month, John chuckled/guffawed that Mary is pregnant.

A manner feature in a verb of speaking disqualifies it as an evidential mechanism. Consequently, it blocks semantic focusing of the propositional content of the embedded sentence.

Does the manner feature which excludes an evidential function for the matrix verb also identify the sentence as expressing the point of view of the subject? We argue that it does not. Rather, the manner feature blocks the evidential reading of the matrix verb in favor of an agentive event reading.

Only eventive verbs which select an Agent have a manner feature which licenses a manner adverb.

(26) a. John set the table *clumsily/ carefully*.

b. * John saw Mary in the garden *clumsily/carefully.*

(27) a. This shirt washes *easily*.

b. * This shirt admires easily.

(28) John understands Mary (* awkwardly/cleverly/noisily).

More precisely, as proposed In our work on the literary style of Free Indirect Discourse [GUÉRON 2008, 2011], a manner of speaking verb constitutes an indirect *demonstration* of a speech act by a subject as perceived by the speaker. When the focus of the sentence is on the subject's manner of speaking rather than on the propositional content of the speech, then one cannot extract a wh-item from an embedded sentence for the same reason one cannot extract one from the quotation in (29) or the free indirect discourse in (30). The embedded sentence does not assert its propositional content.

(29) a. John said "I love you very much Alice"

b. * How much did John say "I love you Alice"?.

(30) a. "He would be back from India one of these days, June or July...." (Virginai Woolf, Mrs. Dalloway)

b. * Where would he be back from one of these days, June or July?

Manner of speaking verbs, which demonstrate how a subject speaks, belong to the system of deixis which is controlled by the speaker. A matrix verb of saying thus allows two construals. As a kind of evidential auxiliary, it focuses the propositional content of the embedded sentence. As a demonstrative manner of speaking verb, it is itself focused. The embedded sentence belongs to the background or presupposition of the sentence and is opaque to sentence operators, as is illustrated by the failure of embedded sentence negation in (32a).

(31) a. John said Alice was sad.

b. But she isn't.   (Evidential *say*)

c. No he did not say it. (Agentive *say*)

(32) a. John giggled/muttered that Alice was sad.

b. * But she isn't.   (* evidential *giggle/mutter*)

c. ?? No, he didn't giggle/mutter. (Agentive *giggle/mutter*)

Note that in its deictic construal the matrix verb cannot be felicitously negated either, for demonsations are not evaluated for truth or falisity (cf. (33a-b)).

(33) a. Here is my hand (with gesture)

b. * No, your hand is not here.

(34) a. Ha ha ha (laughter).

b. * You are wrong.

A verb or saying or thinking can alternatively be construed as an agent ive proposition. In such cases, it cannot embed a propositional complement, as shown in (35b) and (36c).

(35) a. You should think more before you speak.

b. # You should think more that John will arrive at 10.

(36) a. I think/am thinking that we should redo the living room.

b. Quiet I am thinking!

c. ?* Quiet I am thinking that we should redo the living room.

When the sentential force is imperative rather than assertive, then verbs like *think* and *say* have a performative use. This variant of the demonstration construal, in (37b), unlike evidential *think* in (37a), blocks NEG transportation into the embedded sentence.

(37) a. I do not think that John will arrive by 10. (evidential *think)*

(= I think he will NOT arrive by 10)

b. Do not think that you are about to go on stage. Think of something else.

(=/= think that you are NOT about to go on stage) (performative *think)*

4. Verbs of desire or feelings.

Even if we dismiss verbs of saying and thinking as lexical vehicles of the subject's point of view, should we not consider verbs expressing desire and emotion as devoted to the expression of the point of view of the subject? I claim that such verbs do not create a subject point of view either. Rather, they project sentences in which the speaker reports a subject's desires or feelings. Such sentences are propositions subject to questioning as in (38b) or denial as in (38c).

(38) a. Mary is sad today.

    b. Really? How sad is she?/Why is she sad?

    c. It's not true. She herself told me she is happy.

In (39a-b) the subject seems to expresses his own feelings. The sentences are not easily falsifiable. Yet the speaker can intrude at any point to evaluate the subject's statement, thus asserting her control of the propositional force of the sentence and backgrounding the subject's role. In (40a), the speaker evaluates the subject's feelings. In (40b) she demonstrates more knowledge about the target of the subject's feelings than the subject has. In (40c), she compares the degree to which John thinks he is smart and the degree of his real intelligence. In all these cases, the desires and feelings of the subject are forced into the presuppositional part of the sentence by grammatical manipulations asserting the primary role of the speaker.

(39) a. John wants to marry Mary.

    b. Bill feels that he is smart.

(40) a. John unwisely wants to marry Mary.

    b. John wants to marry a murderer.

    c. Bill feels that he is smarter than he is.

5. Conclusion

We conclude that the grammar does not license a subject point of view. All embedded sentences, like all root sentences, are in the syntactic scope of the speaker and represent her point of view. Matrix verbs of speaking or thinking have, in general, a modal evidential function with respect to the embedded proposition: or define an event, subject to evaluation for truth; or else, if the verb contains a manner feature, take on a demonstrative force which identifies the sentence as belonging to the system of deixis controlled by the speaker.

Beyond attitude verbs, the speaker may intervene in any assertion, whether embedded or not. If so, then all sentential propositions must be in the scope of the speaker so that the assertion of a propositional content excludes subjectivity on the part of a sentential subject. The attribution to the subject of a point of view is indeed possible, expecially with verbs of desire and feeling, but only as a defeasible implicature which is not grounded in any grammatical mechanism.

References

BAKER, C.L. "Contrast, discourse prominence and intensification, with special reference to locally-free reflexives in British English". *Language* 71-1 (1995) : 63-101.

CINQUE, G. *Adverbs and Functional Heads : A Cross-Linguistic Perspective*. Oxford: University Press, 1999.

CLEMENTS, G. "The Logophoric Pronoun in Ewe : Its role in Discourse", *Journal of West African Languages* 2 (1975) : 141-177.

ERTESCHIK-SHIR, N. "On the Nature of Island Constraints". Dissertation, MIT, 1973.

GUERON, J. "Verba dicenda : On the limits of logophoricity". Colloque Qu'est-ce qu'un verbe, Sept. 2007, U. Paris 3, 2007.

_____ "Remarks on the Grammar of Unspeakable Sentences". *In* KAWASHIMA, R. *et al*. (eds.) *Phantom Sentences : Essays in Linguistics and Literature presented to Ann Banfield*. Bern: Peter Lang, 2008 : 165-191.

_____ "Subjectivity, Subject of Consciousness, and Free Indirect Discourse" (submitted for publication), 2011.

RIZZI, L. "The Fine Structure of the Left Periphery". In HAEGEMAN, L. (ed.) *Elements of Grammar*. Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1997 : 281-337.

SCHLENKER, P. "A Plea for Monsters". *Linguistics and Philosophy* 26 (2003) : 29-120.

VOGELEER, S. "Polyphonic effects of tenses in (free) indirect speech and thoughts : De Dicto, De Re and De Se readings of tenses in Russian". (submitted for publication) 2011.

ZRIBI-HERTZ, A. "A-type Binding and Narrative Point of View". *Language* 65 (1989) : 695-727.